



Art at Ilsley

A local artist's mixed-media show at the Ilsley draws on a lifetime of memories. See Arts + Leisure.



Split on ice

The young Panther men's hockey team split two home games this past weekend. See Page 1B.



Ski time

With many improvements, the Snowbowl is ready for this Saturday's opening. See Page 14A.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Vol. 77 No. 49

Middlebury, Vermont ♦ Thursday, December 7, 2023 ♦ 46 Pages

\$1.50

State law offers paths to educate the accused

Risk assessment, state board rules are also tools

Part 2 of a 2-part series
By MARIN HOWELL
VERMONT — Occasionally, school districts throughout the state must determine how to educate students who have been accused of crimes.

Such situations are infrequent, but the question of how they are handled has recently garnered local attention following two fatal shootings in Addison County in which juveniles were accused of being the shooters.

Last week, the *Independent* explored how county school districts approach educating students in these circumstances. This week, we learn more about how such cases are generally handled statewide and about the guidance provided to school officials under state law.

Tyler Allen serves as the adolescent services director for the Family Services Division of the Vermont Department for Children

and Families, or DCF. While there is some variation in how such cases are handled, he noted that in general accused youth continue to receive an education in a school.

“Tutoring may be an interim solution while a risk assessment, IEP meeting, or until a re-entry meeting occurs.”

— Tyler Allen of DCF

“Depending upon the crime committed, if it is high level crime, the school or DCF may arrange for risk assessment to be completed prior to a youth re-entering the school,” he told the *Independent*. “In most circumstances, whether a youth is adjudicated or not does not impact them being educated in a school. Schools follow their own discipline procedures.”

Allen said challenges may arise from youth missing in-person instruction while these situations are resolved.

“Tutoring may be an interim solution while a risk assessment, IEP meeting, or until a re-entry meeting occurs,” he added.

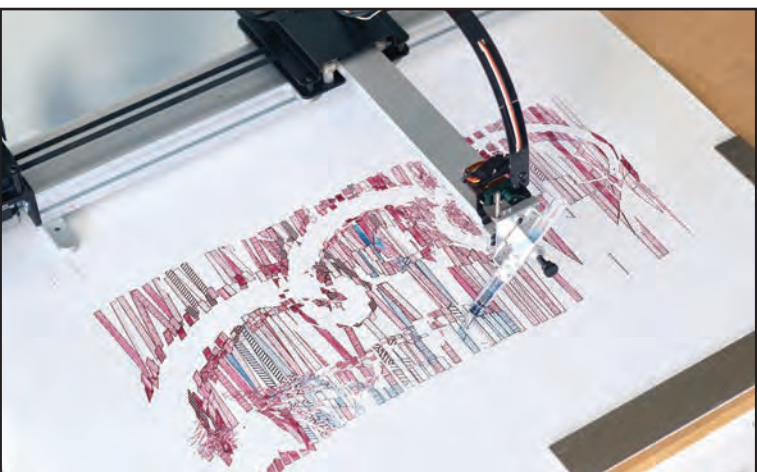
As previously reported, Vermont (See Education, Page 12A)



Santa who?

SANTA CLAUS AND 7-month-old Logan Zeno of East Middlebury size each other up during the jolly old elf's Saturday morning visit to Middlebury's Town Hall Theater during the Better Middlebury Partnership's Very Merry Middlebury festivities. Logan's 3-year-old brother, Lucas, seems to be more interested in the photographer who was on hand. See more photos on Page 8A.

Independent photo/Steve James



BRISTOL ARTIST JAMES Merrill uses the pen plotter shown here to create generative artwork. Merrill first writes a program that is then used by the plotter to produce a unique drawing.

Local artist creates by coding

Merrill uses programs & pen plotters

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — Pablo Picasso had paint, Michelangelo worked with marble.

Bristol artist James Merrill's medium is computer codes.

Merrill specializes in a newer art form known as generative art, a practice in which artwork is made using an autonomous system, such as by plugging an algorithm into a computer to generate a piece of digital art. In this new artistic medium, Merrill is gaining

national attention in the art world and even making some money with it.

“My role as the artist is to build these systems, and the way that I do that is through coding,” Merrill explained during a recent interview.

The origins of generative art can be traced back to the 1950s and '60s, when artists such as John Whitney and Vera Molnar began experimenting with using early computer systems and other

machines to make art.

“Artists would write generative programs and then send them to pen plotters, which is essentially the technology we used before we had ink-jet printers,” Merrill said. “You would write a program, and the pen plotter would draw it, and you wouldn't even know what it was going to look like until the pen plotter finished.”

Today, generative art can take many different forms, from AI-generated poetry to the digital (See Artist, Page 13A)

Homeward Bound head to step down

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Homeward Bound Executive Director Jessica Danyow has truly been a dog's best friend during her 10 years overseeing Addison County's Humane Society.

During that time she's seen 10,451 animals come into Homeward Bound's Middlebury shelter at 236 Boardman St. Around (See Danyow, Page 11A)

Marshall looks back on a century

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Joyce Marshall lives by a heartwarming credo that, if emulated globally, would prevent a lot of suffering.

“The main thing is keeping happy,” she said. “Everything else will go along fine if you have a good spirit and love everybody. I don't have any enemies, and I don't hate anybody.”

It's a principle that has sustained Joyce for 100 years. She officially joined the centenarians' club on Oct. 21 and still finds plenty of reasons to wake up in the morning and discover new things.

Most folks who meet Joyce are incredulous to learn she's logged a century on life's odometer. She remains sharp, alert and vital.

(See Marshall, Page 17A)

ACSD enrollment is expected to be flat

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Student enrollment within the Addison Central School District will remain fairly flat during the next decade barring a significant infusion of young families to the Middlebury area.

That's the takeaway from two separate enrollment projections offered by ACSD board Chair Barb Wilson and Interim Superintendent Tim Williams. They both recently unveiled charts chronicling the district's annual enrollment since 2004-2005, as well as projections on where student numbers could be headed by the 2032-33 academic year.

Both officials also offered the



BARB WILSON

same measuring stick for each of the ACSD's seven elementary schools, in Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge.

Williams and Wilson crunched the enrollment numbers to offer district officials another long-range planning tool to use

in prioritizing investments in school infrastructure, programming and personnel.

The pair arrived at slightly different numbers, a result that Wilson explained.

“The only thing different between my projections and Dr. Williams's was the method for how (See Enrollment, Page 16A)



WILLIAM WERNER FASTENS a tree onto a customer's car at Werner Tree Farm last week. The Middlebury tree farm lost a substantial portion of its crop due to heavy rains this summer, though other county tree farms were less affected by the extreme weather.

Independent photo/Steve James

Tree farms start season strong

Local crops healthy; prices stable

By MARIN HOWELL

ADDISON COUNTY — With the holiday season underway, county Christmas tree farms have begun welcoming visitors in search of the perfect tree and other greenery to fill their homes.

Local tree farmers say this year's selection and prices are comparable with that of previous seasons. Though, some farms saw their crop damaged by a late spring

frost and heavy rains this summer.

“This was probably our most challenging growing season that we've had since the farm started, and that's because of all of that rain,” Amanda Werner, marketing manager at Werner Tree Farm in Middlebury, told the *Independent*. “We estimated that we lost about 50% of the trees that we had in the ground at the main farm.”

Werner Tree Farm grows balsam

firs, white pines and other tree varieties on 20 acres in Lincoln and Middlebury. Each year the farm sells between 1,300 and 1,500 trees, available pre-cut or for individuals to choose and cut themselves.

The farm is one of several tree farms throughout Addison County and is part of a larger group of Christmas tree farms scattered throughout the state. As of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (See Tree farms, Page 18A)

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MALT eyes Wright Park upgrades

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Area Land Trust (MALT) is seeking around \$200,000 in federal funds to repair and upgrade Wright Park, a well-used, 150-acre tract of publicly accessible land off Seymour Street that includes a popular 3.8-mile trail network.

Liam Hickey is MALT's trails and volunteer coordinator. He's been carefully surveying the nonprofit's vast network of trails — dominated by the 19-mile Trail Around Middlebury — since he started his job this past May, taking notes on where Mother Nature has taken its toll on gravel

pathways, footbridges and other infrastructure that public through hundreds of acres of conserved land in the Middlebury area.

It's not unusual for a public trail system to experience wear and tear during a typical year, according to Hickey. But 2023 has been far from a typical year. This past summer was one of the wettest on record, punctuated by particularly

"The hope is that is we have culverts directing water under the trail, and then resurface and regrade the trail so that it sheds water rather than keeping it on."

— Liam Hickey

ferocious storms in July and early August. The Aug. 3-4 storm dumped six inches of rain on the county's already saturated shire town during a two-hour span, causing massive flooding that invaded many basements and also swept through MALT's trails.

"Wright Park was one of the places that sustained the most amount of damage," Hickey noted.

Hickey acknowledged Wright Park infrastructure was showing signs of wear and tear even before the COVID-era swell of trail users and this summer's storms.

"It was built more than 30 years ago and a lot of the timber is reaching what would be considered the natural end of its lifespan on a trail," he said.

Consequently, MALT wants to make a number of needed Wright Park trail and infrastructure improvements, including:

- Replacing six boardwalks.
- Constructing six new boardwalks or other equivalent infrastructure.
- Replacing three bridges.
- Resurfacing or rerouting around 0.75 trail miles.
- Installing five culverts.
- Revegetating 0.2 miles of bank alongside Otter Creek.

MALT officials don't simply want to rebuild what was damaged; they want to make the new infrastructure more capable to withstand the bad weather to come.

"We want to have the first half mile or so of the trail at Wright Park resurfaced and get a couple of culverts put in," Hickey said. "The hope is that is we have culverts directing water under the trail, and then resurface and regrade the trail so that it sheds water rather than keeping it on."

The organization estimates all the work will cost \$165,000 to \$220,000 — a price range that's well outside a small nonprofit's budget. So MALT is looking for help, through the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) grant program.

"Our hope is to... basically overhaul all of the infrastructure at Wright Park, to make it more resilient for (future) flooding," Hickey said. "We feel like it's a good time to put these resources into Wright Park, because of how

(See MALT, Page 9A)



LIAM HICKEY, TRAILS and volunteer coordinator for the Middlebury Area Land Trust, crouches on a bridge that crosses a stream on the Wright Park trail system. That bridge, along with other trail infrastructure, was damaged by summer flooding and needs to be replaced.

Independent photo/John Flowers



DEB CHAMBERLIN HAS helped Monkton's Russell Memorial Library for nearly 38 years, at times helping guide the organization through big changes. The library is now preparing for another big shift, as Chamberlin gets ready to retire at the end of this year.

Independent photo/Marin Howell

Monkton librarian closes the book

Deb Chamberlin retires after 37 years at Russell Library

By MARIN HOWELL

MONKTON — When Deb Chamberlin moved to Monkton nearly four decades ago, she didn't have to look far for an opportunity to get involved around town. Her new home was a stone's throw away from the Russell Memorial Library, a community space she was eager to check out.

Chamberlin discovered the library was closed and in need of a new librarian, and she applied for the job.

"I wrote a letter about how I love libraries and was interested in serving my community as a newcomer, and they hired me," she recalled during a recent interview.

Since taking over as lead librarian nearly 38 years ago, Chamberlin has helped the Monkton public library transition away from card catalog, weather a global pandemic and move into a larger space. Now, the Russell Memorial Library is readying for another big shift as Chamberlin prepares to retire at the end of this year.

It's a change that Chamberlin is readying herself for as well.

"I had one person say, 'I don't know what I'm going to do when I can't ask you what to read,' and that really wrenched me," she told

the *Independent*. "It's not easy; it's the end of something."

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

When Chamberlin first took over at the Monkton library, the tiny building on Monkton Ridge was only open two hours every other week and the position paid around \$300 a year.

"At that point, I really didn't care, because I wanted to do something in the community, and it was near

my home, so I lunged in," she said. Chamberlin worked with the board of trustees to start opening the library every Saturday from 10

a.m. to noon. During the week, she divided her time between a part-time position at Williston's Dorothy Alling Memorial Library and working to obtain a Certificate of Public Librarianship from the Vermont Department of Libraries.

Upon receiving that certificate and licensure for school librarianship, Chamberlin stepped away from her post in Williston to take a job as the school librarian at the Addison and Ferrisburgh central schools in the Addison Northwest School District, positions she held

for around 25 years before stepping down from them in 2017.

Back in Monkton, the Russell Memorial Library continued to expand its hours and eventually took on another librarian, Dawn Thibault.

"We shared the job at that point," Chamberlin explained. "That really helped because two heads are better than one, and we had strengths that were maybe overlapping but not totally the same."

While the library's open hours

and staff were slowly increasing, the organization's offerings for many years remained limited by a lack of physical space. From 1971 to 2021, the Russell Library was housed in a 600-square-foot, one-room building, located at the intersection of States Prison Hollow Road and Monkton Ridge Road; that didn't offer much room for programming.

Chamberlin noted that library staff would at times move around bookshelves and borrow chairs in order to host author talks and other events.

"One of our issues about programming was the space," she said. "We just didn't have room."

The Monkton library in 2021 relocated from its smaller home into more than 1,600 square feet in the new town office building at 92 Monkton Ridge Road. Chamberlin said the move has provided the library with more space for programming and prompted generous donations from patrons to help support future events.

In its new digs, the library has resumed story hours twice a month, developed a seed library for patrons and begun hosting a variety of programs for community members of all ages.

"One of my goals was to stay in that (former) building and keep working until we could get into a new building, and it happened and that's really awesome," Chamberlin said.

BIG CHANGES

Throughout the years, Chamberlin has helped the library navigate other major changes. One of them was automating the Russell Library's collection, a process that Chamberlin and others at the library began around 15 years ago.

(See Chamberlin, Page 3A)

"Deb has well-honed skills at book suggestions and knows how to get just the right book into a particular patron's hands. Deb has always taken her job as lead librarian very seriously and it is apparent how deeply she feels about the library."

— Monkton Library Board Chair Jane Low

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MAUSD community weighs in on FY’25 budget

By MARIN HOWELL
BRISTOL — Members of the Mount Abraham Unified School District community last week got a glimpse at what the district’s FY’25 budget could look like and were invited to share their priorities and suggestions for spending in the upcoming fiscal year.

Around a dozen community members tuned into the Nov. 29 budget discussion, which was held by the MAUSD Board’s Finance Committee. During the meeting, committee members highlighted the major factors impacting the FY’25 budget, shared a draft version of the spending plan and encouraged community members to offer their input to help shape future versions of the budget.

“The purpose of this meeting, and realistically, the purpose of crafting any budget is to figure out ‘How do we best allocate resources to meet the ends that we want to see in our district,’” MAUSD board member Mike Dash said. “While we know we have our initial budget, and we know we have these constraints, it’s just as important to keep in mind, ‘What are the changes that we might make to support the desires that we as a community might have?’”

FY’25 CHALLENGES
Committee members at the Nov. 29 meeting discussed the key challenges district officials are facing in building the FY’25 budget. Those factors include inflation, such as an estimated 15.9% increase in healthcare premiums, continued declining enrollment, and the loss of federal ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) funding.

The district has used the \$4.4 million of ESSER funds it received to support one-time purchases like infrastructure improvements and ongoing costs such as licenses for educational software and staff positions aimed at meeting a variety of student needs. Those positions include school counselors, social workers, behavioral assistants and

interventionists.

“As these funds expire, to maintain educational licensing that’s already in place and this enhanced support for social emotional learning and student support, we’re going to have to roll those costs into the new budget that weren’t present in last year’s budget,” Dash said.

Another major factor affecting the FY’25 spending plan is the forecasted impact of the revised education funding formula outlined in Act 127. The new formula was signed into law in 2022 and is intended to correct inequities in how the state funds the cost of educating students with different needs.

“There’s a recognition that students have different needs; some students based on those needs might have increased expenditures or costs associated, and that the weighting of those pupils should reflect the needs of those students,” Dash explained.

Act 127 changes the equalized pupil calculation to a measurement of long-term weighted average daily membership and applies new weights to students based on grade level, poverty and English Language Learner status.

“The real take-home for this for us is that if we have fewer weighted students, which is the end result of Act 127 for MAUSD, that decreases the spending capacity that we have as a district. That produces a constraint on the building of the budget for ’24-’25,” Dash said.

Dash noted there is a silver lining, as districts that limit spending per pupil increases to 10% qualify for a 5% homestead tax rate cap offered under Act 127. Districts with cost

per pupil increases that exceed 10% will be required to appear before a tax review board to determine their eligibility for the cap.

“In other words, they’re mitigating some of the increased expenses in terms of their impact on our taxes,” Dash said. “However, as soon as we go over that 10% per pupil spending threshold, we run the risk of having to bear the entire cost, which could have substantial tax increases.”

The MAUSD Board has set a goal of limiting the district’s increase in spending per equalized pupil to less than 10% in the upcoming fiscal year in order to qualify for the cap.

EARLY BUDGET FIGURES
Last week, the finance committee shared with community members the most recent draft of the FY’25 budget, which Superintendent Patrick Reen presented to the school board on Nov. 21. That version of the spending plan retains nearly all of the district’s ESSER funded positions but reflects a 10.36% increase in spending per pupil, a hair above the 10% target.

The Nov. 21 figures are based on an estimated \$30,379,052 in education spending, \$97,780 more than the district’s target. In addition to the inclusion of ESSER-funded positions, those figures also factor in negotiated salary increases; the creation of a handful of positions in the district, including two new administrative jobs at Bristol Elementary School; and anticipated inflation of construction costs and other expenses.

The draft version of the FY’25 budget also factors in how declining

enrollment and the new weighting formula will affect the district’s weighted pupil count. The district is anticipated to experience a reduction of 36.22 in long-term weighted average daily membership for FY’25, based on the district’s enrollment projections and the new weighting formula.

As a result of those changes and increased spending, the draft budget anticipates an increase of 10.36% in spending per pupil, or \$1,606 to \$17,119. Those numbers are based on an estimated count of 1,774.56 in equalized pupils.

“If we maintain essentially the previous budget, account for the increased costs and decreased spending capacity, maintain the ESSER funded position so that we maintain those supports, we basically hit a target that’s right about 10% per pupil spending over our previous year,” Dash summed up.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK
Community members at the Nov. 29 meeting were invited to share their spending priorities and suggestions for how the FY’25 budget could be revised to reflect those priorities.

Starksboro residents Herb Olson and Nancy Cornell told the committee they’d like to see spending address a couple of trends reflected in the ENDS monitoring report released in October, specifically a gap in achievement between low-income students and the rest of the student body, and a decline in students’ academic achievement once they reach middle and high school.

“Those two issues ... they go to the core of what this district needs to focus on. So, I think those need to be the priorities,” Olson said.

In order to address those priorities and various budget constraints, Olson recommended the district lean on the recommendations included in a 2022 report created for the district by educational consultant Nate

Mauch takes helm at VSC

By PETER D’AURIA
VTDigger.org

Elizabeth Mauch, the president of Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kan., will be the next chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges, trustees announced last week.

Mauch will step into the position on Jan. 1, replacing outgoing chancellor Sophie Zdatny. In that role, Mauch will oversee the two institutions that make up the state colleges system: Vermont State University and the Community College of Vermont.

“This is a critical time to shape the future of public higher and continuing education in Vermont, as higher education rapidly evolves and changes across the country,” Mauch said in a Dec. 29 press release.

“I look forward to collaborating with state and community leaders, our institutions and their teams, and our faculty, staff, and students to build a thriving Vermont State Colleges system that continues to transform lives and communities across the state,” she said.

Mauch has spent three years as the president of Bethany College, a private Lutheran institution with roughly 750 students as of the fall of 2022. She has also held faculty and leadership positions at Pennsylvania’s Bloomsburg University.

Rep. Lynn Dickinson, R-St. Albans Town, the chair of the Vermont State Colleges board of trustees, touted Mauch’s “impressive experience in bringing strategic and visionary approaches to leadership” in the press release.

“The board is confident in Mauch’s ability to implement ongoing progress and secure continued support of system-wide transformation,” Dickinson said.

Vermont State University has spent years undergoing structural changes in response to financial struggles. The institution, also known as VTSU, formally launched this summer through the merger of Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College.

This fall, administrators announced a slate of wide-ranging cuts across VTSU’s multiple campuses. Those cuts have stoked anger amid faculty, staff and students, some of whom have called for the elimination of the chancellor’s office as a cost-saving measure.

But trustees have rebuffed that demand.

“Proposing to cut the
(See Mauch, Page 9A)



ELIZABETH MAUCH

Chamberlin

(Continued from Page 2A)
The effort consisted of grouping the library’s approximately 700 patrons and more than 3,000 books into separate electronic databases. Chamberlin noted Kat Cyr, a long-time patron and volunteer for the library and now serves as an assistant librarian, and other volunteers contributed to the feat.

“Various people helped with that, but it was a long process. It didn’t happen overnight,” she said.

Another major shift for the library came in early 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced the library to modify its operations.

“The pandemic was very challenging for us because we didn’t have six feet of clearance, or even three feet of clearance, in a lot of the space in (the former building),” Chamberlin said.

Abiding by COVID restrictions in a small space forced Chamberlin and other library staff to explore innovative ways of operating.

“People would knock on the door and say ‘Deb, I need a book,’ and so I’d say ‘Well, what do you like,’ and I’d run and find something and offer them two or three (options) and they’d wait outside,” Chamberlin said. “Or, we had people email and ask for something and we’d get it

ready and have it outside the door for them.”

During the pandemic, Chamberlin also began assembling “craft to go” kits. Community members could pick up the kits, which included materials for various crafts, and complete projects at home.

“Some of them were seasonal, like valentines or things that you could do outdoors,” she said. “That kept us busy; we tried to have something once a month or so.”

HELPING PATRONS
Chamberlin has had a hand in establishing other popular offerings at the library, including the annual Strawberry Festival and Used Book Sale. The event has been held on the last Sunday of June for the past 34 years, offering strawberry shortcake and a selection of gently-used books.

The librarian noted that the event has grown a lot since library officials first began organizing it.

“We used to do it right on the front lawn of the (former) library. We’d put it all up in one day and took it out at the end of the day, and now it’s a week-long process to put it together with a whole crowd of volunteers,” Chamberlin said.

Finding ways to connect community members with the

library’s offerings has been a big part of Chamberlin’s work over the years. She’s become familiar with patrons’ reading preferences, and library visitors have grown to trust Chamberlin when it comes to finding what they’re looking for.

“That’s one thing that I think has evolved for me personally and at the library, that they know they can get something that they’ll like, even if it’s not self-selected,” she said.

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Jane Low, chair of the Russell Memorial Library board, commended Chamberlin for how she’s served the community in a variety of ways.

“Over her 30-plus years as lead librarian at the Russell Memorial Library in Monkton, Deb Chamberlin has nurtured relationships with library patrons both young and old. She has always loved story hours with early readers and organizing craft activities, especially paper projects. For years, she has involved school-age kids as volunteers in the library; our very own assistant librarian, Kat Cyr, started out as a library volunteer more than 20 years ago,” Low said.

“With our adult library patrons, Deb has well-honed skills at

book suggestions and knows how to get just the right book into a particular patron’s hands. Deb has always taken her job as lead librarian very seriously and it is apparent how deeply she feels about the library. Her knowledge of books and her welcoming smile in the library will certainly be missed.”

Looking back on her time at the Monkton library, Chamberlin said getting to know the library’s patrons has been among her favorite parts of the job.

“Meeting the community of readers and serving them in a way that’s meaningful for me and significant and enjoyable and enriching, that’s probably been the best part,” she said.

Though she’ll be stepping away from her post as lead librarian at the end of next month, Chamberlin won’t be saying goodbye to the Russell Memorial Library community entirely. She’s still living a stone’s throw from the library and plans to continue lending a hand where she can during the years to come.

“If they need a sub, I’m right across the street. If it’s snowing and no one wants to drive, I can do that,” she said.

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Letters received by Monday, December 18th may be published with names in our December 21st edition.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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CHRYSLER DODGE Jeep RAM

Editorials

Truth vs. secrecy: Could ignorance be a better path?

In a two-part series looking at how Vermont schools continue to educate youths accused of violent crimes there are two quick takeaways: First, these are rare instances that seldom involve local schools, and second, there are ample precautions taken within the education and mental health communities to ensure student safety.

That said, here’s a third takeaway: When a local school is involved, the public has a right to be concerned, should be notified and, brought up to speed as soon as possible on how the school will address the challenges ahead.

This third point can be problematic if a school’s first concern is protecting the identity of the student involved, which was the case at Starksboro Central School when a student entered that school mid-semester after a criminal incident involving a fatality, a case still pending in the courts. Without a doubt this was and is a challenging case that has, thankfully, little local precedent. To that end, schools and the broader community can learn from the experience.

We understand the sentiment of mental health and school officials who wish to keep the identify of any student in such circumstances under cover. If the identify can be withheld, the thinking goes, the student is able to continue with their education without fear of retribution, or bullying, or any of the other negative forces that might come into play.

What’s missing in that judgment is the broader community’s right to know, and the realization that very little is kept under wraps for very long in small schools and small towns — and that’s not a bad trait.

As it has played out, concerned parents of students in the school have pressed the school board for assurances of student safety and of an explanation of the school district’s considerations. Those explanations and assurances from school officials were articulate, reasonable and ethical. Meanwhile, parents and families of students in that school are aware of the situation and can act in good faith throughout the year ahead.

In the end, the communities involved are more aware of the training teachers and school leaders receive on how to manage difficult situations such as confronted by the Starksboro school, parents are more understanding of the rights of the accused, and school and mental health officials should be more comfortable being upfront with communities knowing that acceptance of their plan is more likely if they are.

All this yields a fourth takeaway: Secrecy rarely holds a candle to truth. It does require trusting the community to handle the truth in a reasonable manner, but that seems far better than hiding information in the hope ignorance is the better path.

Angelo Lynn

Tie policy to Israeli aid

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders this week voiced strong opposition to President Biden’s proposal to allocate another \$10.1 billion of emergency funding to Israel in its war against Hamas. Without equivocating, Sanders said Israel’s indiscriminate bombing of Gaza civilians was immoral.

Sanders’ statement came as Congress considers the Biden administration’s \$110 billion emergency foreign aid supplemental bill. While Sanders said he is supportive of many provisions of the bill, including additional aid to Ukraine to repel Russia’s invasion, he later voted against the bill, joining most Republicans in a 49-51 defeat. It needed 60 votes to pass.

While the bill’s defeat puts the Ukraine’s war with Russia back into the spotlight, Sanders focused his objection on the staggeringly high death toll of Israel’s invasion of Gaza: an estimated 16,000 Palestinians have been killed in the past two months, two thirds of whom are women and children; tens of thousands more have been injured; 1.8 million people have been displaced from their homes and “are struggling every day to get the food, water, medical supplies and fuel they need to survive; 250 people have been killed in the West Bank since October 7th and more than a thousand Palestinians have been driven off their land there.”

“No, I do not think we should be appropriating \$10.1 billion for the right-wing, extremist Netanyahu government to continue its current military approach,” Sanders continued. “What the Netanyahu government is doing is immoral, it is in violation of international law, and the United States should not be complicit in those actions.”

“We are all clear that Hamas, a corrupt terrorist organization, began this war with their barbaric attack against Israel on October 7. Given that reality, Israel has a right to defend itself. It does not, however, have the right to wage all-out war against innocent men, women, and children who had nothing to do with the Hamas attack.”

Sanders goes ahead to put the high death toll in context. In Ukraine, which has seen the most intense fighting in Europe since World War II, at least 10,000 civilians have been killed since Russia’s invasion in February 2022 — almost two years later. To restate: 16,000 civilians have been killed in Gaza in the past two months.

Sanders acknowledges that Biden’s team has been trying to get the Israelis to be “more targeted in their approach,” but with limited success. How then, Sanders asks, “does giving Netanyahu another \$10 billion with no strings attached help advance the critical policy goal of the United States to protect civilians and allow for a lasting peace?” He then suggests any additional military aid to Israel “must have conditions attached to secure the necessary changes in policy. We cannot be complicit in the current Israeli approach.”

As has been stated from the outset of this invasion, the only thing Netanyahu is likely to listen to is a direct threat to shut off American aid when he goes too far. Sanders is saying that time is now; he’s not wrong.

Angelo Lynn



Happiness is...hot cocoa
AMAYA MORGAN OF Panton is quite pleased to get a warm, sweet drink from the Hot Cocoa Hut in Middlebury’s Cannon Park this past Saturday during the Very Merry Middlebury activities. But only a moment later a grimace spread across the seven-year-old’s face when she found some of the whipped cream had landed on the tip of her nose.
Independent photo/Steve James

Challah bread for the Senator

As soon as I got the fire started in the wood stove this morning, I got out my mixing bowls. There was hot water left in the kettle from making coffee, so I poured some into the biggest bowl, added some cool water, and then sprinkled in a tablespoon of baking yeast. Yesterday, Peter Welch joined the call for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza, and today we will be bringing him a fresh loaf of challah bread to say thank you.

In the weeks since Israel began bombing Gaza in response to the Hamas terror attack, the movement for Palestine has taken the number of members of Congress calling for a ceasefire from zero to almost fifty. Vermont’s one state representative, Becca Balint, spoke out for a ceasefire a couple weeks ago, bravely becoming the first Jewish congressperson to do so. We brought her a challah too.

The Jewish teaching that guides my life is Tikkun Olam. This means “world repair” and has led me to devote my energy to a long list of causes, starting in high school. I don’t think I knew what Tikkun Olam meant then, I just knew I had to be a part of bringing more justice and safety to our hurting world. I was in college in the 1980s, and the big issue on our campus was getting the university to divest from South Africa. We knew the apartheid state, that granted full citizenship to one group of people (South African whites) while oppressing Black South Africans, was morally wrong.

Today we know that apartheid exists in Israel/ Palestine. Israeli citizens live in a modern nation, with

a life expectancy of 82 years, due of course, to access to safe housing, food, and medical care. Meanwhile, Palestinian people in Gaza endure life in an open-air prison, and have to contend with checkpoints, arbitrary arrests (including of children), and lack of access to basic necessities. And this was *before* the bombing began.

I am part of a group of Vermont Jews who are against Israel’s occupation of Gaza. We are angry that our tax dollars, which could be used to house the homeless, feed the hungry, and save our warming planet, are instead funding a campaign of violence against the Palestinian people.

When the yeast started to bubble, I added beaten eggs, melted butter, honey and salt, and whisked it into a slurry. Then I added flour, a cup at a time, until it became too thick to whisk. I turned the dough out onto the counter and kneaded. I’ve made so much challah in the past 5 weeks, since Israel began its bombing campaign in response to the Hamas terror attacks. We have held a Ceasefire Shabbat in downtown Middlebury, a Mourners Kaddish in Montpelier, we have visited the offices of our congressional delegation, we have marched and rallied. I have made this dough so many times I don’t even need to think about it.

But I do think. I think about how this is the bread of my people, who have been through so much. We know what it is to be cast out, disregarded, dehumanized, brutalized. We know what it is to have families ripped

(See Ways of Seeing, Page 5A)

Ways of Seeing

By Joanna Colwell



Are we smart enough to survive?

I was excited to tell you how much my family has loved watching “Life on Our Planet,” the new Morgan Freeman-narrated nature doc on Netflix — a great activity for the whole fam! But then we watched the final episode, and it wasn’t fun and fascinating anymore; it was terrifying.

I should have seen it coming.

The show is structured around the five mass extinctions Earth has endured over the last 500 million years. Each obliteration of ancient species gave rise to a new order of better-adapted survivors. It’s a story about how life finds a way.

Each episode alternates between CGI recreations of prehistoric creatures — a very silly fish with a mouth that can’t close; surprisingly cute, hairless mammals; and, of course, the dinosaurs — and gorgeous footage of animals alive today that exemplify key aspects of evolution: a flamboyance of flamingoes thriving in the desolate Atacama Desert; wolves hunting bison in subzero temperatures; a colorful spider doing a wacky dance to attract his mate.

It’s wild and thrilling, and we all looked forward to watching it together.

Then came the final episode, which charts the arrival of the planet’s most dangerous predator: humans.

We watched a group of prehistoric people use small stone walls to corner a herd of bison against a cliff

before chasing them over the edge to their deaths. My 6-year-old did not like this, even though in previous episodes she had cheered on all the big cats as they hunted their prey. This situation with humans was different. It wasn’t a fair fight, she seemed to intuit.

We all perked up for a rousing scene on the advent of agriculture, but before we knew it humans had taken over every corner of the globe — and were messing it all up.

These kids know about climate change. We talked about it this summer when the air was smoky and the rain wouldn’t stop. It comes up at school and in the children’s book “Ada Twist, Scientist.” But this depiction was scarier: It left us teetering on the brink of a sixth mass extinction.

“Why can’t people just be good?” my 9-year-old asked with despair, while Morgan Freeman enumerated the ways in which we continue to harm the planet, over stark footage of a gigantic claw tearing down a mountaintop for coal.

I didn’t have an answer. I told her that this is the great challenge of our lifetime. And that lots of people are working very hard to save the planet. I reminded her of the things we do to help (even though they seem pointless and small by comparison): riding our bikes to school, planting wildflowers for pollinators.

(See Clippings, Page 5A)

Clippings

By Megan James



Letters to the Editor

Stop the flow of weapons of war

I am sitting in my house, warm, dry, and safe while watching, in real time, the Hamas attack on Israel and now the genocide of the Palestinian people. We have become the people who we have learned about in history who stood by silently witnessing the murder of thousands. We are complicit in the killing, our tax dollars providing the guns, bullets, bombs and equipment. We shrug our shoulders and shake our heads claiming futility to ease our guilt while our fleets provide cover for the perpetrators.

But there is something we can do. Bombs not provided cannot be dropped and bullets not made cannot kill. No more weapons for the Middle East. No more money for Israel. No more. No more.

Steven Brown
Bristol

‘Advantage’ plans a rip-off

The Medicare Open Enrollment period ends on December 7, and I wish I had had the knowledge when I signed up that I now have about MA. “Medicare Advantage” (MA) is not an advantage for seniors and people with disabilities. It’s not even the same Medicare program that Americans are familiar with.

Low premiums lure people like me into Medicare Advantage which can work well, while you are healthy! Long term, it works mainly for the profits of the insurers. Journalists, researchers, and government agencies have shown that many health insurance companies overcharge Medicare by giving patients exaggerated or entirely false diagnoses. Several companies have been fined, or sued, and have agreed to large settlements. Medicare Advantage insurers are taking your tax dollars for conditions they aren’t even treating. That sounds a lot like fraud to me.

Over 50% of Medicare beneficiaries now have for-profit corporations, some like ACO REACH, that are in charge of their care through MA. Insurance companies are highly paid for these plans, money goes to corporate profits instead of care. The companies running MA plans want to take over Medicare entirely, leaving us with no option but to give our money to private insurers.

Investigations into claim denials in MA found that insurers were inappropriately denying treatments and tests that should be covered under Medicare. Physician surveys show that these practices often cause patients to suffer unnecessarily, and can even be life-threatening. In some cases, MA insurers were found to spend just seconds on each claim, and have even denied claims using artificial intelligence instead of medical experts.

I am all for practitioners being fairly compensated for their excellent care, but handing our healthcare over to never-ending corporate greed should end.

Sally Roth
Bristol

City truck woes truly persistent

Are we any closer to a solution to the Vergennes truck traffic dilemma?

Thirty-five years ago, Vergennes citizenry conducted a 36-hour vigil to determine the number and nature of the incessant, oversized, often tandem, trucks barreling through the Vergennes downtown. The traffic volumes were stunning and the documented codes on the sides of many of the trucks indicated hazardous materials that, according to Ralph Jackman, the longtime Vergennes Fire Chief, would prove disastrous should an accident or explosion occur in the city’s midst.

Taking its dilemma to heart, over the years the community conducted innumerable studies and charettes. Upon resulting recommendations, and with

(See Terry letter, Page 5A)

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Periodicals Postage Paid at Middlebury, Vt. 05753

Postmaster, send address change to Addison Independent, 58 Maple Street, Middlebury, Vt. • 802-388-4944 • Fax: 802-388-3100 • Web: www.addisonindependent.com
E-Mail: news@addisonindependent.com • E-Mail Advertising: ads@addisonindependent.com

Editor/Publisher: Angelo S. Lynn

Assistant Editor: John S. McCright
Reporters: John Flowers
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Published every Thursday by the Addison Press, Inc. Member Vermont Press Association; New England Press Association; National Newspaper Association.
SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In State – 6 Months \$36.00, 1 Year \$50.00, 2 years \$90.00; Out of State – 6 Months \$44.00, 1 Year \$60.00, 2 years \$110. All print subscriptions include online access. Discounted rate for Senior Citizens, call for details. 802-388-4944. Online Only – 1 Week \$3.00, 1 Month \$6.00, 6 Months \$25.00, 1 Year \$44.00
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The Addison Independent USPS 005-380

Letters to the Editor

It’s time that the Palestinians get a fair shake

Whatever you think about the very long, ongoing, and endless, crisis in the Middle East, one thing is certain. There never will be peace unless Israel recognizes and respects its Palestinian neighbors. Since 1948, those advocating Zionism, the establishment of a Jewish homeland in their historical homeland, while noble and idealistic, has come at the expense of the Arab residents who had called Palestine home for more than 1,000 years. This was aided and abetted by the western powers, including the U.S., in response to the need to try to right the wrong of the West’s 2,000 years of hateful anti-Semitism, and the collective guilt of what the Nazis did to the Jews during the Holocaust.

The Jews essentially exiled a large population, and has continued to beat them into submission by keeping more than 2 million people locked up in Gaza, an open air prison, and illegally allowing armed “settlers” in the West Bank to confiscate and brutalize Palestinians and whatever remaining homeland

they had left.

The events of Oct. 7, 2023, were indeed horrific for those residents of Israel living near the Gaza border, as well as the entire state of Israel, that has now had to vacate large areas of the country for fear of being attacked. But the brutal and inhumane response of this right-wing, pro-orthodox government by indiscriminately bombing Gaza, killing now over 14,000 (10 times more than were killed by Hamas) is criminal and genocidal. The Israelis should know what genocide is.

I remember the Six-Day War in 1967, and the Yom-Kippur War in ‘73, and was fully supportive of Israel on both occasions. But after seeing years of repressive policies toward Palestinians by their government, especially after Yitzak Rabin’s assassination by a right-wing, orthodox settler in 1995, and the rise of Likud and other conservatives, I really soured on Israel. They had a chance to have peace, but really blew it. Also, Trump’s policies of supporting Israeli deals with other Arab countries at the expense of

Palestinians was really stupid.

I’m sure there are many Israelis that want peace and who don’t support their government’s repressive policies. They need to wrest control from the homicidal Netanyahu and his cronies and work with their neighbors to build the framework for real peace in the area. For every Palestinian killed by the Israelis, there will be 100 recruits for Hamas, Hezbollah, or whatever pro-Palestinian organization crops up, thus leading to more and more Israelis and Palestinians dying.

Palestine needs to be a place where those of all faiths (or none) can live in harmony, not just controlled by one. The U.S. government also needs to withhold any more military support, and stop listening to those fanatical, right-wing evangelicals who have some kind of biblical fantasy of the holy land. Until this happens, there never will be peace there, and Israel’s days are numbered.

**Bruce Acciavatti
Salisbury**

Terry letter

(Continued from Page 4A)

extensive community input, an alternative truck route was proposed and extensive in-city traffic-calming measures were implemented.

Located entirely within Vergennes city limits, the alternative route proposed at the time was offered to divert truck traffic off the Vergennes Main Street while protecting in-city commerce. Well-designed signage would direct travelers to the historic downtown commercial district by contrast to the trucks required to travel the alternative route.

The route was carefully considered at the time. There were many advantages: The residential nature of the community would be reestablished with safety and quality of life as a priority. School children would no longer have to navigate the traffic onslaught making their way to the city’s in-town elementary and high school.

Without having to traverse the city streets, outlying areas of the greater Vergennes community in Pantton and Ferrisburgh would benefit by having greater ease in traveling north or south of the city for work and/or for pleasure. And when an in-town visit was preferable, the greater community would benefit by its calm, restored historic district with

its architectural attractiveness, cultural riches, verdant landscape, and charming commercial enterprises.

Importantly, with two routes to the outlying areas, the fire department and rescue squad would have necessary and improved access in emergencies.

Trucks would no longer have to navigate the dangerous in-city bridge over the Otter Creek with its steep incline in violation of state regulations.

Serving as an economic corridor, the commercial/industrial businesses along Pantton Road would use the truck route to provide an improved, safer, option for employees traveling to work and to expedite deliveries without adding to in-town traffic congestion. With direct access to the alternative truck route, the current Job Corps property could be repurposed to provide an expansive commercial/industrial complex, with professional offices and incubator spaces, as well as needed multi-generational housing.

As a result, the Vergennes City Council resolved to approach Addison County Regional Planning to advocate for assistance, and ultimately the Vermont Agency of Transportation to remediate the traffic dilemma.

Exacerbating the situation, the Federal government declared

Route 22A a federal interstate truck traffic byway, with downtown Vergennes the logjam as traffic converged onto Route 7.

Shortly thereafter, the Vermont State Transportation Board surveyed statewide truck traffic and found Vergennes’s burden to be, by far, the State’s most extreme.

A generation later, options are still being considered, once again. More studies, more surveys.

Each option currently under consideration has its advantages and disadvantages, its advocates and contrarians. Only one option is unacceptable and that is to do nothing and to not provide long-overdue relief to a traumatized community.

Despite the community’s best efforts, thirty-five years later the truck traffic and the dangers have increased exponentially, and meaningful solutions remain elusive.

It is truly time to come to a decision.

**Faith Terry
Middlebury**

For over 35 years, Faith Terry lived across from the historic Vergennes Opera House in her 1795 home on the Main Street/ Route 22A. She spent much of the time seeking solutions to the truck traffic dilemma.

Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)

apart, parents and children arrested, jailed, murdered. We know what it is to be made a refugee, to be forced to flee. So I cannot bear to think of Jewish people inflicting these traumas on others.

When I say I cannot bear to think of it, what I mean is that I cannot accept it, and I believe is it is my responsibility to change it. I can’t do it alone, but thankfully I don’t have to. People all over the world have been rallying for Palestinian freedom like never before. The gruesome images of parents carrying shrouded tiny bodies (the age of the largest group of people killed in Gaza is five years old), of children looking for their family

members in rubble, the stories of people searching for food and water, has galvanized people everywhere to speak out. Many of these people are Jewish like me.

Every year, Israel receives billions of dollars in U.S. aid, more than any other country. For many American Jews, this aid to Israel is something that should never be questioned. A lot of people, even people in my family, feel safe because Israel is a place we can always go to. But can true safety ever come at the expense of our humanity? You don’t need to be a geopolitics expert to understand that safety and justice for Palestinians will make the world more safe for Jews. Everyone

deserves to be safe. Everyone deserves fresh bread to eat.

Joanna Colwell is a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher who founded and directs Otter Creek Yoga, in Middlebury’s Marble Works. Joanna lives in Ripton, where she enjoys taking walks, gardening cooking for Abolition Kitchen, and working with the Middlebury chapter of Showing Up for Racial Justice. Feedback welcome at: joanna@ottercreekyoga.com.

All must stand united for the Earth

“I’m still undecided, but as of right now I’m considering environmental science,” I’ve responded to basically every curious relative who has asked about college plans, even before I started receiving acceptance letters.

“Oh good, we need more people like you to fix this,” my great uncle answered, representing a common stance of his generation. It’s either that or a very emphatic explanation of why climate change doesn’t exist. My great aunt smacked his arm and quickly responded, “It’s not just up to them; we’re still around.” Huh. That’s unexpected.

For years, my generation has been defined as the “climate generation,” the generation that will fix all of the damage done to global health and climate change post-Industrial Revolution. The general thought is that, somehow, we have all the solutions for the problems that have been created by past generations, the ones that gave us this title. This, for the most part, is not true. Certainly, our generation has had the most access to technology and knowledge than any generation before, allowing new innovations and solutions to change the way we approach climate change. However, the focus on our influence excludes everyone who came before us and places the full burden of problems we had no part in creating on our shoulders.



Community Forum

This week’s writer is Middlebury resident Maggie Conklin, a 2023 graduate of Middlebury Union High School and current undergraduate at Dickinson College.

Climate change is a massive problem that seems to be getting worse with each passing year, and no matter where you are, the effects are being felt. According to NASA, the summer of 2023 was the hottest on record. The average temperature during the course of the summer was .41 degrees Fahrenheit over normal temperatures, and August alone was 2.2 degrees Fahrenheit above

average. This year’s sweltering heat contributed to various climate events that wreaked havoc across the world. Canadian wildfires destroyed countless miles of land and homes, and heat waves endangered our most vulnerable groups. In my home state of Vermont, we faced devastating floods that forced residents of Montpelier to paddle through the streets in kayaks and business owners to discard thousands of dollars’ worth of water-damaged goods. Even in areas not devastated by flooding, people spent sleepless nights pumping water out of their basements in an attempt to save their homes and belongings. Weather events have been increasing in size and while, in the past, there has been time to recover between them, now they occur so regularly that it has proven difficult to rebound quickly. As these trends become more apparent, the difficult next step is figuring out where to begin to address them — which is where the older generations tend to step away.

In the game show Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? the phone-a-friend lifeline helps contestants who are stuck on a difficult question by allowing them to call someone who may have the answer. Though climate change is no game, we can take this idea and implement it as a way to manage

this global threat. Rather than pinning all of the blame or work on one generation, we have a unique opportunity to come together and use our strengths for the greater good. Having come of age during the 1960s, a time of great social change, Baby Boomers have been both one of the most politically active generations, and have the most resources at their disposal. Gen Z lacks great influence and experience enacting political change, not to mention time and money to devote to climate causes. Bringing together these generations and their resources opens new doors for change. Organizations like Third Act do just that by organizing events specifically catered to people over 60, often working to create community between younger and older generations to unite them under a common goal. While older residents may not be comfortable participating in outwardly radical action like protests and marches, they can participate in activities like letter writing to legislators and voters, investing their money in ways that align with their values, and organizing political action groups to create a supportive community.

While we cannot wish away climate change and its effects, we can shift our focus to creating a community that will bring about change. Here in Vermont, almost a quarter of the population is older than 60 — the fourth largest percentage of this age group in America. To mobilize the greatest number of climate change fighters, we can no longer consider ourselves divided. My great aunt is right: it’s not up to them. There is no “them.” The hope is with us. All of us.

Clippings

(Continued from Page 4A)

She asked if it would happen in her lifetime, and I think she meant a mass extinction, so I said, no, no, absolutely not. But I know she and her sister will face the worsening effects of climate change throughout their lives. I didn’t tell her that.

Instead I reiterated what Morgan Freeman said at the end of the show, which I found somewhat comforting: The dinosaurs didn’t understand what was happening to their planet, but we do. What are we going to do about it?



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Kent Anderson – Orwell, VT

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Obituaries

Charles “Joe” Bean Jr. 82, of Charlotte

CHARLOTTE — Charles “Joe” Bean Jr., 82, of Charlotte, Vt., beloved husband of June (Garvey) Bean, passed away peacefully on Nov. 7, 2023, at McClure Miller Respite House, Colchester, Vt.

Joe was born in Charlotte, on Dec. 29, 1940, the son of the late Charles and Shirley (Bessette) Bean. He attended Charlotte Grade School and Hinesburg High School, where he met his future wife, June. They were married in May 1962, two years after they both graduated. In 1964, they moved back to Twin Oaks Dairy, where Joe took over management of the family farm. In 1972, Joe and June purchased the farm. In 2000, it was recognized as a Dairy of Distinction by the state of Vermont. Joe and his son, Mark ran the farm together until Joe’s passing.

Joe loved his country and community. In addition to farming, he served in the Air Force Reserve from 1958 to 1966. In the winter, he worked for the road commissioner plowing the roads of Charlotte. He also volunteered for the Charlotte Police Force, plowed his neighbors’ driveways



CHARLES “JOE” BEAN JR.

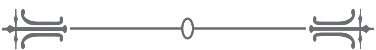
while sometimes catching up on the local gossip. He also helped move many house trailers into place, pulled drivers out of ditches, drove the wagon for day care children in the Charlotte Tractor Parade, and was also an avid NASCAR fan. He loved driving the school bus, first for Charlotte Central School and later for Champlain Valley Union, until he retired in 2014 after driving for 43 years.

Joe is survived by his wife, June; son, Mark; son, Matthew, his wife, Janet, and granddaughter, Jada Bean; daughter, Michelle (Muro) and her husband, John; his brother, Victor and his wife, Wanda; sister, Mary (Clark) and her husband, Richard; his sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Joyce and Larry Roy; brother-in-law, Dale Garvey; numerous nieces and nephews; and the “Farm Boys.”

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister, Elizabeth (Betty) Bean; father- and mother-in-law, Arthur and Luella (Emmons) Garvey; sister-in-law, Lucille (Peet) Garvey; and his beloved dog, Sassy.

Funeral service will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 16, at St. Jude Parish, in Hinesburg, Vt. Calling hours will be held prior to the funeral service starting at 10 a.m. at St. Jude Parish.

The family respectfully request that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to: UVM Home Health & Hospice, specifically for the McClure Miller Respite House, 1110 Prim Road, Colchester, VT 05446, or give online at www.uvmhomehealth.org/give.



Hazel Gladys Grace, 88, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Our dear mother, Hazel Gladys Grace, sadly passed away Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2023, at UVM Medical Center. Mother was born April 16, 1935, in Bristol, Vt., to the late Charles Danbrook and Elizabeth (Danbrook) Atkins and remained a life-long resident of Bristol.

Mom was married to Larry T. Grace, who predeceased her in 2011. Mom is survived by daughters Denny Lathrop (Alan); Lori Grace-Smith (Gary); Nicole Grace-Alleyne (Joel) and Cheryl along with son Larry Jr. (Sandy). Mom is survived by her sister Deanna Steadman and brother Roger Atkins (Beverly). She was predeceased by her brother Reggie Atkins and brother-in-law William Steadman. In addition, she is survived by 10 grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, many nieces and nephews and brother-



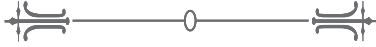
HAZEL GLADYS GRACE

in-law Ellis Grace.

During her lifetime, in addition to being a full-time wife and mother, she was employed at Mount Abraham Union High

School for many years. Her greatest achievement was serving twenty years as a member of the Bristol Rescue Squad. Her proudest moment was becoming a nationally certified Emergency Medical Technician. Our mother had a great passion for traveling the world. We wish many heart-felt thanks to Melanie, her physical therapist, Renay her ICU nurse and other ICU support team members along with Doctors Schotel, Last and Grant.

A private graveside service was held Monday, Dec. 4, at Greenwood Cemetery followed by a celebration of life at the Bristol Legion, Post 19. Thank you to all who attended and shared their love and memories of our mother, Hazel Grace. In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to Bristol Rescue Squad, PO Box 227, Bristol, VT 05443



Donald Michael Castonguay, 65, of Brandon

BRANDON — Donald Michael Castonguay, age 65, passed away Monday, Dec. 4, 2023, at his home in Brandon.

Donny was born in Middlebury on Dec. 8, 1957. He was the son of Edgar and Rena (Charlebois) Castonguay. He grew up on the family farm in Whiting. He graduated from Otter Valley Union High School, class of 1975. He began his working career at Carris Reels in Rutland. He later formed his own house painting business. Donny loved hunting, travelling, and playing cards. He loved the great outdoors.

He is survived by his son, Ryan D. Castonguay of Brandon; two stepsons, Andrew Buckley of Brandon and Jonathan Whittemore of Leicester; and one sister, Lynn Delancey and her husband, Rusty

of Port Orange, Fla. He was predeceased by his parents and his loving wife, Mary Ruth Alberico, who died October 3, 2015.

A graveside committal service and burial will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 10 a.m., at St. Mary’s Cemetery in Brandon. Rev. Maurice Moreau, pastor of Our Lady of Good Help Catholic Church, in Brandon will officiate.

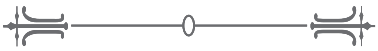
Following the ceremony, the family will receive friends in a celebration of his life at The Lilac Inn, for a time of remembrance.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made, in his memory, to the Brandon American Legion Post 55, P.O. Box, Brandon, Vt., 05733.

Arrangements are under the direction of the Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon.



DONALD MICHAEL
CASTONGUAY



Mary R. Levarn, 96, of St. Albans

ST. ALBANS — Mary R. Levarn, 96, of St. Albans, passed away peacefully in the presence of her daughter, Robin and her fiancée on Dec. 1, 2023.

A complete obituary will appear in a future edition of the *Addison Independent*. Brown-McClay Funeral Home in Bristol is in charge of arrangements.

Anthony R. Smith Jr., 26, of Vergennes

VERGENNES — Anthony R. Smith, Jr. was born on Jan. 18, 1997, in Meriden, Conn. He tragically passed away on Nov. 12, 2023, at the age of 26. Residing in Vergennes, Vt., he leaves behind his parents, Kerri Shara, formerly of Meriden, Conn., and Anthony R. Smith, formerly of New Haven, Conn., and his siblings Keyanah, Trevon (Anna), Kyriek (Maddie), Sierra, Issiah, Monika and Jaylinn Smith.

His survivors include his paternal grandmother, Diane Smith; aunts Kimberley N. Talmadge (Burton), Patricia Shara (Walter Paluszewski), Susan E. Shara and Cyrus A. Smith; cousins Kristi L. Welch (Riley and Peyton), Kelli Marnalse (Dominic), Kaitlyn Marnalse, Sarah Marnalse (Carter, Karson) and Brandon Gauthier (Lauren); several additional cousins; and his girlfriend, Teylor Huff. He will be greatly missed by his nieces and nephews Gabriella, Isabella, Avoriella, Gavin, Olivia

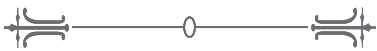


ANTHONY R. SMITH JR.

and his favorite little human best friend Zaidyn.

He is predeceased by his maternal grandparents, Dennis R. and Patricia A. Shara, paternal grandfather, Calvin Lester, and sister Kiara Smith.

Anthony graduated from



Timothy P. Barrows, 67, of Ferrisburgh

FERRISBURGH — Timothy P Barrows, 67, passed away on Sunday, Dec. 3, 2023, at the University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington, surrounded by the love of family and dear friends.

He was born on Aug. 30, 1956, in Middlebury, Vt., the son of Marvin and Sylvia (Sholan) Barrows.

He was an organic dairy farmer in Ferrisburgh, and then he worked at Champlain Cable for many years. He had a love of soccer, playing at Vermont Tech and in men’s leagues throughout the years. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, hiking, beekeeping, and playing his mandolin; and he loved nature and being outdoors.

Tim is survived by his

stepdaughter, Jamie Smith and her children Adeline and Steele Smith; a cousin and best friend, Jacob Pressley and his children Reid and Jack; his siblings Tom and Doreen Barrows, Dewey and Chris Barrows, Danny Barrows, and Debra and Greg Webb; several nieces, nephews and cousins; dear friends Gary and all of his family; and friends at Champlain Cable, and Garry Clark, Bruce Meader and Kirby the bear.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, Dec. 16, from noon to 4 p.m. at American Legion Post 14 in Vergennes. To send online condolences to his family please visit www.brownmccclayfuneralhomes.com.

Vergennes Union High School in 2015. His employment reflected his passion for farming and excavation. An adventurous person, he loved nature and the great outdoors. He enjoyed his time surrounded by his family and friends. He was the life of the party with a smile and presence that lit up the room. Friends Ryan, Cody, J.T. and Josh were a very important part of his life and brought out the best in him.

Anthony will be remembered for his love for his mother, who he adoringly called Maji Faji, and how he always put his family first. He had an infectious laugh and often would go out of his way to make those around him happy. He will be forever missed and loved by his family and those fortunate enough to have known him.

A celebration of life for Anthony will be held on Dec. 9, at The American Legion Post 14, 100 Armory Lane, Vergennes, Vt., at 1 p.m.



TIMOTHY P. BARROWS

Local film sheds light on Alzheimer’s Pamela Smith documentary shows what it’s like to live with dementia

MIDDLEBURY — Everyone is invited to come see the debut of a locally produced film on Alzheimer’s disease followed by a panel discussion this Thursday at Ilsley Public Library in Middlebury. The event is from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

The film, “What it feels like to have Alzheimer’s,” was envisioned, written, and co-produced by Pamela Smith after she recognized a lack of information or opportunity to express what it is like to live with dementia. The East Middlebury resident has been diagnosed with Younger Onset Alzheimer’s.

This 10-minute instructional film includes several pauses where viewers are invited to reflect on how they or those they love are experiencing some of the changes brought on by dementia.

Following the film there will be a panel discussion focusing on the making of the film and services available in Middlebury, the state’s first Dementia Friendly Community. Renee Ursitti from the Ilsley Library will share information about a Memory Café that will start in January. Kristin Bolton from Elderly Services’ Project Independence will talk about the Center for Positive Aging in Middlebury.

A community resource fair will be held at the end as attendees mingle and build community connections. This event is free and open to the public, including those with dementia.

This event is sponsored by

Addison County Home Health and Hospice, AgeWell, At Home Senior Care, Dementia Friendly Middlebury, Eastview

at Middlebury, Elderly Services Inc., Ilsley Public Library, and the Vermont Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association.



EAST MIDDLEBURY RESIDENT Pamela Smith, left, posed for this photo with her daughter, Eryn Smith, at a gathering to discuss Alzheimer’s disease in 2022. She produced the documentary film “What it feels like to have Alzheimer’s,” which will be screened at Ilsley Library on Thursday at 11 a.m.

Photo courtesy of Meg Polyte

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Vt. is changing how it tracks COVID-19 in the state’s wastewater

By ERIN PETENKO
VTDigger.org

Bob Fischer, water quality superintendent for South Burlington, remembers when researchers first realized that they could track the health of a population through its sewer system decades ago.

Measuring all the molecules and organisms that can show up in wastewater requires techniques and tools that started to be developed in the 1980s and 1990s.

Back then, public health officials discussed using it to track drug use at a citywide level. Fischer noticed then that the levels of one substance in particular — caffeine — would go up in the bay whenever University of Vermont students would come back for a semester, and that still happens.

“The fish are probably jonesing when the holiday breaks come,” he said.

More recently, wastewater surveillance has become one of the most promising ways to track diseases like COVID-19 by measuring the prevalence of signs left by the virus in a community’s sewer system.

Experts have said that what we all flush down the drain can offer a more comprehensive picture of what is circulating than individual testing results — most COVID testing today are of the rapid in-home variety that are not regularly reported. Wastewater testing also provides an earlier warning sign than a metric such as the number of people hospitalized with a virus.

However, since the Vermont Department of Health began including wastewater information in its weekly COVID reports in 2022, the tracking effort has been plagued with missing data and confusing or contradictory indicators. For example, figures have sometimes varied wildly from week to week.

State officials hope a new company on the scene can resolve some of the ongoing issues.

Three wastewater systems in Vermont — South Burlington, Essex Junction and Montpelier — are now sending water samples to WastewaterSCAN, a research program run by scientists at Stanford University and Emory University. The program has partnered with Verily, a health technology company owned by

Google-parent company Alphabet Inc., which recently won a contract to support the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s national wastewater surveillance system.

Lynn Blevins, an epidemiologist for the state health department, is hopeful that the new data and a new way of displaying that data provided by the new contractor will provide a clearer view of how COVID is spreading in Vermont.

“We felt like people would be more informed by this graph than the prior table, especially going into respiratory season (and) going into holiday seasons,” she said.

The weeks after Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s historically have been the toughest time for COVID in Vermont. The disease hit its peak in January 2022, when the first Omicron strain spread rapidly and strained hospitals and health care providers.

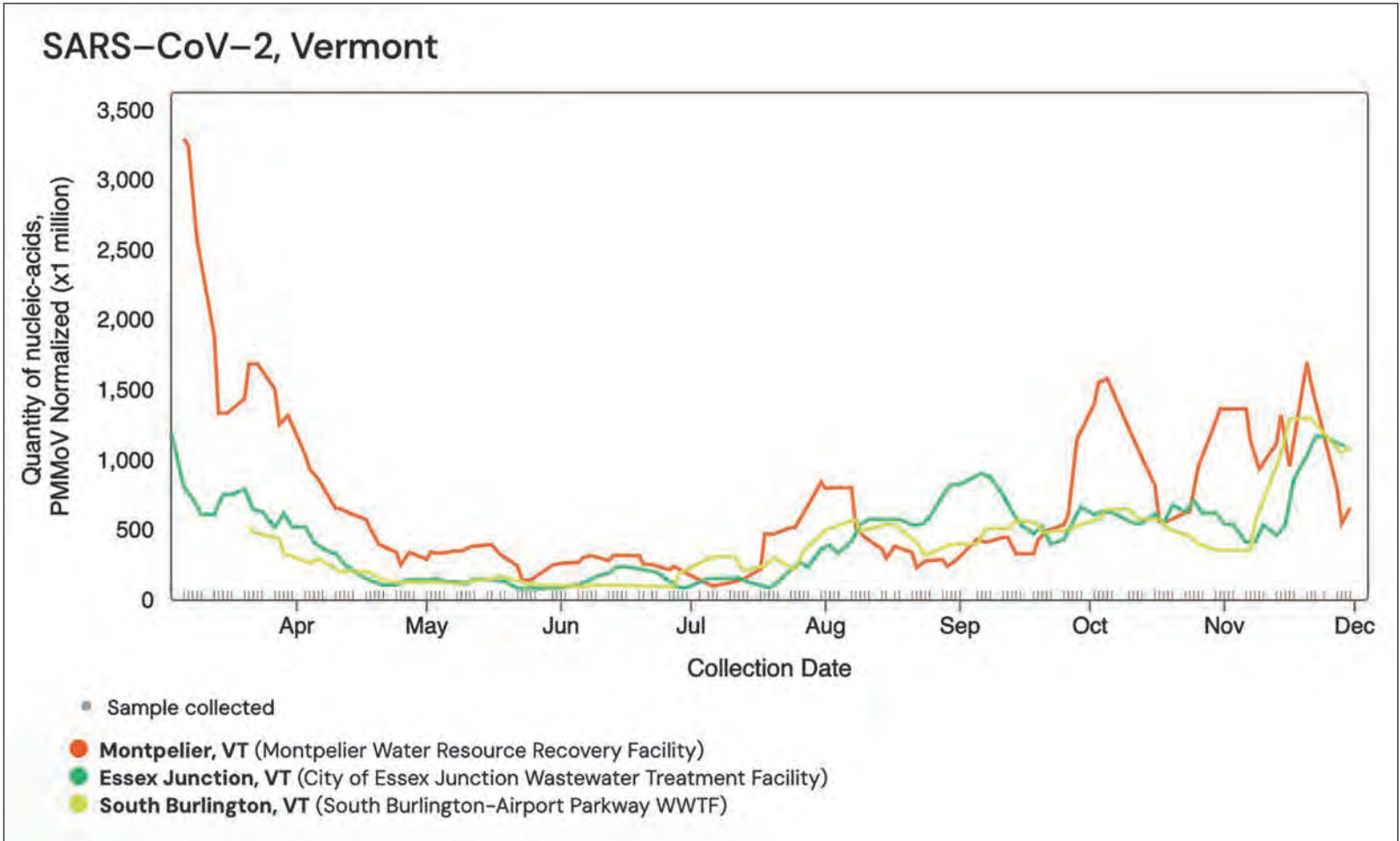
The health department reported on Nov. 29 that COVID levels remain “low,” based on their criteria of hospital admissions for the disease. The department said that 47 people had been newly admitted to hospitals for COVID in the past week, up from 36 the week before.

That’s far from the peak of more than 20 admissions each day during the Omicron wave. Blevins characterized COVID in Vermont as “pretty good” for winter. But she added “it’s not summer, either,” when the state reported only a handful of hospitalizations each day.

Like hospitalizations, data from WastewaterSCAN also indicates that COVID levels are slowly rising, particularly at the South Burlington and Montpelier testing sites. South Burlington also has reported a spike in influenza, even as the health department reports “minimal” disease activity so far this flu season.

WASTEWATER COVID TEST
Testing wastewater for COVID in Vermont started in August 2020, when the city of Burlington began looking for the virus at its three treatment plants. The city detected the early presence of COVID variants, such as B.1.1.7 and Delta in 2021.

Gradually, the CDC stepped in to expand wastewater testing and publish more testing results from the entire nation in a single



THIS SHOWS THE number of people newly admitted to Vermont hospitals with COVID, by week. Note: The hospital admissions count for the week of Oct. 4, 2023, was revised downward, from 64 to 47.

Source: Erin Petenko of VTDigger/ Vt. Department of Health

place. That led to the National Wastewater Surveillance System, which was the original source of the Vermont Health Department’s wastewater data.

The state health department much prefers the graphic format used by WastewaterSCAN, Blevins said. Distilling data from the CDC and its previous vendor, Biobot Analytics, into an easy-to-digest chart or table has been a challenge. The way that the federal agency first reported it — as an increase or decrease by a certain percent — could be misleading, she said.

“It would say like a 100% increase one week, and then a 100% decrease the next week. Which if you’re just kind of looking a week at a time that looks kind of dramatic, when it really was kind of just a blip, and things are sort of the same,” she said.

Earlier this year, the CDC switched to characterizing the test results as an “increase,” “decrease,” or a “plateau,” but that could still be confusing without the context of how it compares with other time periods, Blevins said.

Part of the difficulty comes from how variable wastewater results can be from week to week. Fischer said it’s best to look at the overall trends rather than the specific number.

“You can’t say there’s 25,000 parts, there’s 50,000 parts, but you can certainly see trends. You can certainly see it going up and going down,” he said. (The wastewater results are reported as parts per million, or ppm.)

With all that in mind, the health department has started simply reporting WastewaterSCAN data for the three sites where it’s available, Blevins said.

That’s a drop from the 11 or so sites that have at times reported wastewater data to the CDC. But Blevins said WastewaterSCAN appeared to be focused so far only on cities with a population of 10,000 or more.

“There is this bias towards larger sewer sheds,” she said. She added that smaller, more rural sites often don’t have enough staffing to be able to do sample collection. (Data from the other locations appear to still be available at the Biobot Analytics website.)

Fischer said Verily offered South Burlington about \$15,000 a year for the sample collection, although he was not clear on whether all the Vermont sites were getting paid. South Burlington is still sending data to Biobot but plans to stop doing it when it stops being free.

“Why should we spend money when Verily’s actually paying us to send out the same thing?” he said.

WastewaterSCAN reports extensive details on its methodology on its website, Blevins said. The program also publishes data on more types of diseases, which the health department is still looking into how to use.

The department now has experience with COVID wastewater surveillance and is keeping an eye on viruses like the flu and RSV. What WastewaterSCAN does not track, at this point, is drugs such as opioids or cocaine, which were the original inspiration for wastewater

surveillance. Fischer said that idea never really took off, in part because of privacy and civil rights concerns.

But he’s excited for the direction that this technology has taken.

“We’ve been doing it for close to three years now, and you can see it has endless possibilities,” he said.

Letters to the Editor

Ask your governor and legislators to sort out Medicare insurance

Vermonters on Medicare are struggling with high costs. A bill before the legislature would help.

“I am paying more for premiums for Medicare and Supplemental coverage than I was paying under Vermont Health Connect. I expected it to be the opposite.”

— *Vermonters with Medicare*

Each year, the Office of the Health Care Advocate (HCA) hears from hundreds of Vermonters who have Medicare and are struggling to afford the health services that they need. Twin bills before the legislature (H.118 / S.61) would help many of those Vermonters by raising the income limits for Vermont’s Medicare Savings Programs.

Most people think that when they go onto Medicare, their out-of-pocket costs for health care will go down. But between premiums, deductibles, and 20% cost sharing, many Vermonters find that their costs actually go up significantly. Additionally, many low-income Vermonters are shocked to learn that they no longer qualify for the state and federal programs that helped them afford their health care costs before going onto Medicare. This is because when you turn 65 or qualify for Medicare due to a disability, the eligibility rules change, and many Vermonters get locked out of the state and federal programs that would otherwise help.

This is hard for anyone who has a low or even moderate income in Vermont and transitions onto Medicare. Wages and social security have not kept up with the cost of basic needs like food, shelter, transportation, and health care. But it is especially hard for

Vermonters who have been at an economic disadvantage for much of their lives.

Change the Story’s 2019 report on “Work, Women and Wages in Vermont” describes the cumulative effect that a lifetime of lower wages and exiting the workforce more often or early for child or elder caretaking responsibilities has on women. The authors note that “Women’s lower earnings result in reduced social security benefits — 59% of what Vermont men receive.” This means “44% of Vermont women over 65 do not have enough income to make ends meet.” In a recent Medicare affordability survey conducted by the HCA, one older woman reflected on her transition to Medicare: “Costs went up — I now avoid extra doctor visits as I have no idea what is or isn’t covered and every visit seems to include a copay.”

Vermonters with one or more disabilities are also at a significant economic disadvantage, earning significantly less than those without a disability. In their “2019 Demographics: Vermont Adults with a Disability” bulletin, the Vermont Department of Health concluded: “Vermonters with disabilities experience unequal access to economic opportunities leading to poorer health outcomes, compared to Vermonters without disabilities.”

Over the years, health policy reforms like the Affordable Care Act have expanded coverage options for people who are under age 65 and do not have a disability. These reforms have ignored seniors and people with disabilities resulting in an inequitable system

of financial support, leaving them with less help at a time when many are transitioning to a fixed income and are most in need. Reflecting on the loss of financial support, a Vermont woman described the situation for herself and her husband, both on Medicare:

“After we pay everything, we have nothing left ... we weren’t doing that great before but at least we were surviving. Now we aren’t going to be able to survive with them taking all that money from us. No one seems to want to do anything.”

It doesn’t have to be this way. Governor Scott and the Vermont Legislature can increase the income limits for Vermont’s Medicare Savings Program, following in the footsteps of other states that have taken action, including Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut and Maine. The HCA has promoted the introduction of state legislation (H.118 / S.61) and is encouraged by a growing coalition of supporters, including the Area Agencies on Aging, AARP Vermont, Disability Rights Vermont, the Vermont Alzheimer’s Association, the Vermont Workers’ Center, the Vermont-National Education Association, the Community of Vermont Elders (COVE), the Bi-State Primary Care Association, Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont.

Vermonters with Medicare deserve better. By expanding access to the Medicare Savings Program, the state could enable more low income and disabled Vermonters to afford the care that they need and get it at the right

time. Since delaying care can lead to more costly complications and emergencies down the line, this policy change could lead to less suffering on the part of individuals and lower costs for the overall health system.

Additionally, it could help address the structural inequalities that disproportionately affect older women and people with disabilities. The proposed state legislation to expand the Medicare Savings Program (H.118 / S.61) provides an opportunity to advance meaningful health care reform that has already been tried and tested in other states. We urge all legislators and the Governor to support its passage in the upcoming legislative session.

Michael Fisher
Lincoln

Letters can be found on page 4A, 5A and 7A

Letters to the editor

The Addison Independent encourages readers to write letters to the editor. We believe a newspaper should be a community forum for people to debate issues of the day.

Because we believe that accountability makes for responsible debate, we will print signed letters only. Be sure to include an address and telephone number, too, so we can call to clear up any questions.

If you have something to say, send it to: Letters to the Editor, Addison Independent, 58 Maple St., Middlebury, VT 05753. Or email to news@addisonindependent.com.

The Annual
Champlain Valley Christian School
COOKIE SALE

**Saturday, December 9
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A merry time in Middlebury

FOR SOME OF the youngest members of our community, the holiday season began in earnest this past Saturday morning when the Very Merry Middlebury festivities swept Santa and Mrs. Claus into town for a meet-and-greet with the kiddies at Town Hall Theater. As part of the Better Middlebury Partnership's annual promotion, a horse-drawn wagon took folks on a ride around downtown, children mailed letters to the North Pole using a convenient box at THT, and youths and adults alike enjoyed a warm drink at the Hot Cocoa Hut in Cannon Park, in addition to the Santa visits.

Photos by the Independent's Steve James and by the BMP's Amy Carlin



Caroline Dietrich, 5, of Middlebury



Ivy Gonzalez-Foster, 2, of Middlebury



Lucy, 5, and Billie Bowdish, 7, of Middlebury



Twins Charlotte, left, and Penelope "Poppy" Hanson, 5, of Middlebury



Henri Lajeunesse, 2, of Lincoln



Finleigh Jones, 4, and sister Elbie, 7, of Middlebury



Santa's elves



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Climate matters

Perspectives on Change

It’s time to prepare for climate migration ... now

By RICHARD HOPKINS

I fear that, in some important ways, we Vermonters have our heads in the sand about climate change and its likely impacts.

Yes, all kinds of planning and legislating is happening, mostly about reducing our production of greenhouse gasses in Vermont. The more reductions, the sooner, the better.

The transition to the future low-carbon state needs to be done carefully and thoughtfully, but we can’t wait and we can’t be sure no one will be inconvenienced during the transition. The future we are facing from climate change in Vermont and everywhere else is disastrous, and the disaster has started. Things aren’t going back to normal. It’s going to be uncomfortable and stressful for all of us at least some of the time. We will also have opportunities to do some things better than before.

There will be direct consequences of climate change in Vermont — floods, heat waves, blizzards, tropical storms, windstorms and outbreaks of formerly tropical diseases. These are daunting enough, but are being planned for.

But more than anything I am worried about the consequences for Vermont and Vermonters of climate change elsewhere — especially sea-level rise and extreme heat. Our inland state will still have a relatively benign climate compared to those farther south. We will be an attractive destination for some of the people displaced by those direct effects.

Some people — most prominently our governor — think Vermont needs more people, and housing for more people, and would (at least at first) welcome in-migration prompted by climate change. But I don’t see any coherent planning going on for a future in which, for argument’s sake, Vermont’s population doubles over a 10- or 20-year period. An average of 30,000 new residents each year from 2025 to 2045 would do that. We would end up with about 1.3

million people. (Maybe it will take longer, but the pattern would be the same.)

Some coastal climate migrants will move into cities farther inland, where underused office buildings could be repurposed to housing. If sea-level rise was the only problem, people might move just far enough to get away from recurrent flooding. But the effect of storms — summer and winter — means that the area of frequent inundation is likely to be well above the high-tide mark. So that will push people farther from the (former) coast. The increase in dangerously hot summer days will push people northward.

It’s not just Vermont that will likely see substantial climate-driven migration, of course. States from Maine to Minnesota and beyond are likely to experience in-migration from the combination of sea level rise, storms and excessive heat elsewhere.

At first, climate migrants will be relatively well off, and will arrive with the proceeds of the sale of their houses and reasonable bank accounts, as well as portable job skills. But when New Jersey’s, Connecticut’s and New York’s coastal cities have flooded, over and over, then people will be unable to insure or sell their houses, many banks will fold, and there won’t be much help from the government.

Then we will start to see refugees arriving with just what they can carry in their vehicle and no financial assets to speak of. A good comparison might be the Dust Bowl migration of the 1930s. In our own time, many thousands of people are trying to leave Central America, partly because persistent heat and drought have damaged farming and left food supplies inadequate.

What would a Vermont with 1.3 million people look like? It wouldn’t have to be terrible — that’s about how many people New Hampshire and Maine each have now, after all — but there would be strains on schooling, health care services, drinking water supplies, wastewater treatment, air quality,

housing, roads, social services, law enforcement, recreational facilities, and on and on. We should be doing contingency planning now for a Vermont with 1.3 million people by 2045 or so. The later we leave that planning, the less flexibility we will have.

Our plans for adaptation — the official term for things that we do to reduce the harm done by climate change — are currently focused heavily on dealing with flooding, storms and heat events. Those plans address the increase in population largely by making sure that new physical infrastructure is sited in ways that don’t increase harm from flooding and other disasters.

Our plans for reducing greenhouse gas production include switching building heating from fossil fuels to electric heat pumps, replacing gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles with electric ones, conserving forestlands, and reducing methane releases associated with livestock. This is a series of heavy lifts even with a steady population. Now, consider how heavy the lifts would be with twice as many homes and twice as many vehicles.

Here’s what might be even harder. Vermont rightly prides itself on the civility of its public life, even with noticeable income inequality and rural poverty. Adding large numbers of climate migrants is likely to make Vermont’s population much more diverse than it is now. Climate migrants are likely to include many people who were disadvantaged even before they became



involuntary migrants, because of race, national origin, language or culture. The places where they lived are likely to be the first flooded and least protected. Many will be new to Vermont’s traditions in public life. An important challenge for Vermont will be to welcome all the new climate migrants, and to see them as a source of strength rather than as a problem.

So I see at least a fourfold set of challenges:

- Reduce our own greenhouse gas production as a state as close to zero as possible even while population may be rising.
 - Adapt to the direct effects of climate change (floods, heat waves and so on) in a way that accounts for rising population.
 - Plan for and build out the physical, housing, educational, health and social services infrastructure needed for a future doubled population due to climate migration.
 - Celebrate our new residents and build a new state together with them.
- Let’s get on with it.

Dr. Richard Hopkins is a retired public health official who has devoted himself to volunteer activities to try to reduce climate change. He is a member of the board of the Climate Economy Action Center of Addison County, and of the town of Middlebury Energy Committee.

MAUSD

(Continued from Page 3A)

Levenson’s firm New Solutions K12. The firm was hired to evaluate community proposals to address ongoing challenges of declining enrollment and increasing costs in MAUSD.

“We’re not suggesting this is simple, but we really would like to know what’s the status with the work (of the Levenson report),” Olson told the committee.

Other community members echoed that sentiment in their comments.

“I, too, am very interested in what the board has been doing, and the schools have been doing, to implement the Levenson report,” Bristol resident Brenda Tillberg said. “There’s one thing I think that would be useful in budgeting, one of his ideas, and that is weighted funding for each school according to the enrollment. That would have several useful things.”

Committee members noted that the district has begun implementing some of the suggestions included in the report, such as adopting a cost-effective mindset.

“I think that what has been done is some work on some of the softer recommendations, like the bounded autonomy, like the cost-effective mindset, the intra-district and intra-

school collaboration,” said MAUSD board member Brad Johnson. “Unfortunately, it’s at a point where it’s very difficult, if not impossible, to put a price tag on it and identify particular dollar amounts that could be attributed to these efforts.”

Dash noted that the Levenson report is a resource the finance committee could explore further in the future.

“If this is a place where you can make subtractions in terms of costs so that you can make additions elsewhere, it makes a lot of sense. So, I’m sure we will continue to examine that in our role as the finance committee and beyond to think about its role in the budget,” he said.

Committee members encouraged the community to continue providing feedback as the FY’25 budget building process unfolds.

“The budget creation doesn’t end today,” Dash said. “It will be an iterative process where we go back and forth with ourselves, the community, the administration to try to get ourselves a finalized budget by mid-January that reflects your priorities, that is going to be supported by the community, and ultimately, that actually supports our students in the way that we want the budget to.”

Mauch

(Continued from Page 3A)

Chancellor’s Office is neither serious nor reasonable,” Dickinson argued in a Nov. 28 opinion piece for VTDigger. “With two statewide institutions, a shared services organization, and an even greater demand for nimble and strategic leadership, the chancellor’s role is essential to the success of the

state colleges system and securing continued progress of the ongoing transformation.”

Mauch told the *Seven Days* newspaper that she and her husband wanted to move to Vermont to be closer to their daughter, who is a first-year student at Middlebury College. They recently bought a house in Cornwall.

MALT

(Continued from Page 2A)

popular it’s become.” That popularity in part stems from the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Hickey.

“A lot of people know this is a fact of the world now, but since COVID, pretty much every outdoor recreation area has seen an increase in usership, and Wright Park is no exception to that,” he said.

Once MALT has funding in hand, it will deploy a hefty group of volunteers to get the work done. These will include longtime MALT staff and helpers, Middlebury College athletes, Patricia Hannaford Career Center students and folks from the Counseling Service of Addison County.

In addition to upgrading a public resource, the trail work will provide the young volunteers with job training skills and a chance to give back to their community, according to project organizers.

What if MALT doesn’t receive all — or indeed, any — of the VOREC money it’s seeking?

The organization will pursue donations and other funding avenues, taking on the project in phases, with the most important work coming first. The top priority will be replacing a small bridge at a stream crossing around a half-mile down the trail from the Wright Park parking lot, according to Hickey.

The town of Middlebury selectboard last month unanimously endorsed MALT’s VOREC grant.

“The commitment and support of our community to this project is evident by all the organizations involved,” reads a letter the board has sent to the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources’ Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, which helps administer the VOREC

program. “The town respectfully urges the agency to dedicate

“Wright Park was one of the places that sustained the most amount of damage” during the August floods.

— Liam Hickey

community grant funds to help ensure the timely completion of these important improvements to a well-used and valuable recreational resource in Middlebury.”

Reporter

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

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Oct. state revenue OK

VERMONT — Money coming into the state’s General Fund surpassed its consensus cash flow targets for October, state officials said in a press release this week. Revenues in both the Transportation and Education funds failed to achieve their monthly targets, according to Vermont Secretary of Administration Kristin Clouser.

The state’s General, Transportation and Education fund receipts were a combined \$261.5 million, exceeding the consensus target by \$2.8 million, or 1.1%. Year-to-date combined receipts were \$25.2 million, or 2.5%, more than the \$1.006 billion target.

General Fund revenues for October totaled \$167.7 million — \$5.7 million (3.5%) above expectations. The Transportation Fund missed its \$26.4 million October consensus target by \$1.3 million. Meanwhile, the state’s Education Fund brought in \$68.6 million, which was \$1.6 million less than predicted.

“The mixed results this month reflect the combination of general uncertainty in the economy as a whole and how the July flooding event impacted receipts relative to our monthly flood-adjusted expectations within the context of the state’s forbearance measures,” Clouser said of the October revenue performance.

Cornwall principal on leave; Sears to fill in

By JOHN FLOWERS

CORNWALL — The Addison Central School District has announced that Salisbury Elementary Principal Bjarki Sears will temporarily take over leadership of Cornwall’s Bingham Memorial School while Heather Raabe takes a leave of absence.

Raabe sent the following email Tuesday to the Cornwall community confirming her indefinite hiatus:

“I am writing to let you know that beginning tomorrow, Dec. 6, I will be taking leave for health reasons. The district has arranged for administrator support for Cornwall School while I am out.

Thank you for your understanding. Heather.”

Sears then informed the Salisbury and Cornwall communities of his decision to help during Raabe’s undefined absence.

“Easy to say ‘yes’ because, as a Cornwall resident myself, both of my children attended Cornwall, I was a member of Friend of Cornwall School, I’ve sung ‘Cornwall School’ with Ms. K a million times, and I’ve weeded the garden in the summer. I have a lot of love for the place,” Sears wrote.

He won’t be alone in filling the Cornwall leadership breach.

“I will be joined at Cornwall by Mike Dudek, who is currently

ACSD’s Student Response Coordinator. An experienced principal himself, Mike has been working across ACSD schools to strengthen and standardize how we respond to student behaviors,” Sears stated. “At Cornwall, Mike will act as the assistant principal. He will be at Cornwall full time, while I will split my time between Cornwall and Salisbury.”

Dudek was most recently based at Middlebury’s Mary Hogan Elementary School, helping during a period of several staff vacancies. Mary Hogan Principal Jen Kravitz said she and her colleagues “have crafted a plan to absorb the work that Mike has been doing. We will

always have student safety as our top priority and will be making decisions to ensure safety as well as use student behavior data to inform how we can better meet student needs.”

Fortunately, according to Kravitz, Dudek’s relocation to Cornwall comes after Mary Hogan has “filled nearly all positions that were open when Mike arrived.”

Nicole Carter, the ACSD’s assistant superintendent for Equity and Student Services, said through an email that “We are confident that Cornwall school will be well supported with this (Sears/Dudel) team.”

Midd partnership chocolate bar raffle is back

MIDDLEBURY — The Better Middlebury Partnership’s chocolate bar raffle is back this year, and it features awesome local prizes.

This year’s bar is S’mores flavor, crafted by the team at Middlebury Sweets with labels created by the Little Pressroom.

To enter the raffle, you first

purchase a chocolate bar (available at local stores in Middlebury or reach out to the BMP via email to BMP@bettermiddleburypartnership.org). Each bar comes with a ticket (sound familiar?).

Then enter your ticket number online at tinyurl.com/MiddChocolate or at the BMP website (experiencemiddlebury.com), along with a way to contact you if you win. Ticket numbers are located on the wrapper of the chocolate bar on a hot pink sticker. Good luck!

Prizes include a “Dine out in Midd” gift card featuring Otter Creek Bakery, Two Brothers Tavern, Shiretown Marketplace, Fire and Ice, Haymaker and Crooked Ladle. Other prizes come from the Middlebury Shop/Forth N

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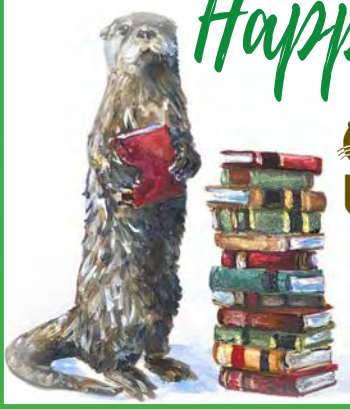
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Organizers offered special thanks to IPJ Real Estate for sponsoring this sale and the local businesses who donated prizes!

Leicester

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NEWS

LEICESTER — The Leicester Historical Society is sponsoring the final Prize Bingo of 2023 on Sat., Dec 9, at 1 p.m., at the Senior Center at the Four Corners. Refreshments served and all are welcome. Prize Bingo will resume in April 2024.

The society is also sponsoring the annual Memory Tree to remember loved ones. The cost is \$5 for six names or \$1 per name. Names and payment can be sent to Diane Benware at 1594 Old Jerusalem Road, Salisbury, VT 05769. Deadline is Dec 21. The tree, in front of the Meeting House, will be lit at 5:00 p.m. on Dec 23. Names will be found on the town website after Dec 24.

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Danyow

(Continued from Page 1A)
8,000 of those furry friends — largely dogs and cats — have been temporary guests at the shelter.

And while her duties largely involve administrative tasks, she's always carved out time to visit with the shelter's four-legged guests. Some have been discarded, some abused, others lost and wanting to be found, but all fortunate enough to have beaten a path to Homeward Bound and a ticket to a forever home.

But by the end of this month, Danyow will herself leave the shelter in search of a new lease on life.

Danyow, 55, began her Homeward Bound tenure in early of May 2013. She had just concluded more than 10 years of service as operations manager for the Rutland County Humane Society. Prior to that, she had spent a few years providing support to the Chittenden County Humane Society.

She recalled succeeding former Homeward Bound Executive Director Jackie Rose — and doing so in the organization's newly renovated shelter building.

"I remember the building was so brand new when I started," Danyow recalled. "The first thing I looked at when I got here was how to give back to the community after this building had been finished. I was lucky enough to inherit it."

So in addition to continuing Homeward Bound's central mission — taking in, caring for, and overseeing the adoption of abandoned dogs and cats and small animals like rabbits — Danyow spearheaded several new initiatives, all contributing to animal welfare.

Among them: "Camp Whiskers & Wags," a kids' camp through which children were able to mingle with, and learn to care for, the animals under Homeward Bound's

care. Sadly, Whiskers & Wags had to be scrapped at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It was a lot of fun to run," Danyow said of the camp, which she hopes Homeward Bound can resurrect at some point.

It was also during Danyow's tenure that the nonprofit engineered animal rescues from states that euthanize dogs if they aren't adopted during a set period of time.

"It was during the era when Vermont's pet overpopulation problem seemed manageable," she explained of the shelter's capacity to help out-of-state pups — primarily down South — whose lives are kept on a short leash if not quickly adopted. Homeward Bound has now suspended its out-of-state transport efforts in light of a growing pet population in our area and because other organizations have taken up the cause of rescuing animals in kill-shelter states.

Danyow was instrumental in hiring an in-house veterinarian for Homeward Bound in 2019. The move was predicated on providing more care to the shelter's four-legged guests, but it has evolved into a service for what she called "community-owned animals."

Knowing that financially strapped families have few resources to feed and get medical attention for their domestic animals, Homeward Bound established the PetCORE (Community Outreach Resources & Education) program, also in 2019. Eligible PetCORE clients may receive parasite preventatives, supplemental pet food, low-cost basic pet wellness care and access to affordable spay/neuter surgery at Homeward Bound. Eligibility is based on provided proof of Addison County residency and proof of income equal to or less than 200% of federal poverty levels.

"PetCORE now has more than 100 clients with a combined 200 animals," said Danyow, an early champion of the program.

With 2020 came COVID, a period that saw Homeward Bound officials have less contact with their fellow humans, but more time to brainstorm ideas for helping animals. One of those pandemic-era ideas was to transform the organization's long-defunct crematorium into a spay-neuter clinic. The service was originally confined to PetCORE clients but was opened up to community-owned animals in 2021.

"We are fully booked," Danyow said of the clinic, which runs three days per week. "I'm proud of the work that everyone here did to make that happen."

Recognizing that Homeward Bound dogs needed to stretch their legs and get exercise, Danyow and her colleagues in 2021 secured funding and land for a small Middlebury dog park. It's a private, fenced-in area exclusively for Homeward Bound dogs, some of whom have anxiety issues that require them to be handled separately from other animals. This park is not to be confused with the public Middlebury dog park off South Street.

Homeward Bound has increased staff through the years to deliver its growing programming for pets and their owners. The organization now has 18 full- and part-time workers, in addition to many dedicated volunteers.

"We've changed the nature of what we do here, for sure," Danyow said.

Among the staff added during Danyow's tenure was Development Director Hannah Manley in 2014.

"She and I have worked very closely on nearly every initiative we've had here," Danyow said.

Danyow's decision to leave Homeward Bound wasn't made lightly and has a lot to do with life changes.

Her husband Gregory tragically died in January of 2022.

"It would be disingenuous to say that hasn't also prompted a lot of reflection on my part," she said.

There's also the desire to do something different after having spent almost half her life in the animal welfare field.

"It's time to see what else is out there," she said. "I don't want to miss out on other shapes (my career) could take."

She's going to take a little time to decompress before choosing her next career move, something that could embrace her culinary interests and/or her instincts to help others. Danyow has been a vegetarian for almost 30 years and loves whipping up meat-free dishes. She has past experience as a line cook.

"I'm hoping to fill my life with a variety of parttime endeavors — work, as well as volunteering gigs," she said. "I clearly have a service orientation, and that won't change much. I don't see myself heading to 'corporate America,' by any stretch."

One thing's for sure — Danyow will remain an Addison County resident for at least the next few years. Her daughter India is a junior at Middlebury Union

High School, and Danyow is committed to seeing her graduate from MUHS.

Asked what she'll miss most about working at Homeward Bound, Danyow paused, collected herself, and said, "watching a dog go from being unloved, anxious, out-of-control, terrified and desperately needy, to a dog that's loved like they all should be, and getting to play a part in that process."

Danyow's last day at Homeward Bound is Dec. 29. The organization's board is currently looking for an interim leader to take on day-to-day operations pending a search for a permanent successor, according to Mark



HOMeward BOUND EXECUTIVE Director Jessica Danyow, walking her dog Fresca, will step down at the end of this month after having led the county's Humane Society for a decade. She was instrumental in adding new programs to help pet owners and their furry friends.

Independent photo/Steve James

Wilch, incoming president of the panel.

"We're going to miss her guidance a lot," he said. "She

leaves big shoes to fill. The board has a huge task in front of it."

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



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By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)
be wasteful. Here are some tips from the Addison County Solid Waste Management District to cut down on holiday waste: Use what you already have for decorations, instead of buying new tinsel and plastic snowmen each year; buy a natural Christmas tree from a local farm, then take it to the district's Middlebury transfer station to turn it into mulch; consider buying experiences — such as concert tickets or gift cards — instead of stuff; package presents in recyclable materials; and attempt to donate any unwanted item before throwing it away — the district website hosts a list of local donation options. If you have questions about holiday packaging or donation options, reach out to the district at 802-388-2333 or by email at acswnmd@acswnmd.org.

Age Well is seeking 100 new volunteers to provide regular

social interaction and assistance to Addison County seniors in their homes. Volunteers are needed for any of the following: providing friendly visits, grocery shopping, running errands, assisting with medical appointments, organizing, bill paying, providing respite to caregivers, delivering Meals on Wheels, doing minor home repairs, and more. Time commitment is based on availability — it can vary from one day a week to two days a month (Monday-Friday, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.). Please contact Age Well's Volunteer Department at 802-662-5249 or email volunteer@agewellvt.org to learn more and sign up to volunteer. Since 1974, Age Well has been part of Vermont's Area Agencies on Aging, coordinating services and care for older adults throughout Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, and Grand Isle counties. Age Well provides services and resources to older Vermonters (age 60+) such as Meals on Wheels, Community Meals, Restaurant

Ticket Programs, Special Events, Care and Service Coordination, and Health and Wellness opportunities like Tai Chi. All programs and services are free.

Bravo to the Middlebury Union Middle School community! The MUMS Counseling Office reports that a recently conducted schoolwide food drive netted more than 400 items that have been dropped off at the Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects headquarters in Middlebury. The school exceeded its goal of providing at least 389 food items — one for every student at MUMS.

U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, has launched his 14th annual State of the Union Essay Contest for Vermont students. Each year, the President of the United States delivers the "State of the Union" address to a joint session of Congress, which outlines priorities for the coming year. Sanders created the essay contest to encourage young people to weigh in with their priorities for the nation and become involved in the political process. Specifically, the contest is an opportunity for Vermont high school students to describe a major issue facing our country and propose what they would do to solve it. The 250–500-word essays can be on any issue of national importance. A volunteer panel of Vermont educators will judge the essays on the students' ability to articulate an issue and propose a solution, without regard to the students' political views. Following the contest, Sanders will enter the essays of the finalists into the Congressional Record — the official archive of the U.S. Congress. More than 5,700 students from high schools across Vermont have written essays during the past 13 years about important issues ranging from climate change to racial justice. The deadline for student essay submission is Jan. 9. More information can be found on Sanders' Senate website at sanders.senate.gov/stateoftheunion, or by calling 1-800- 339-9834.

Education

(Continued from Page 1A)
students are entitled to a public education, even when they are incarcerated or facing criminal charges.

Agency of Education spokesperson Lindsey Hedges said a student has a right to education that they can't be denied without due process. Vermont schools could follow a few different approaches to deal with students accused of crimes or who may pose a safety concern, she added.

STATE LAW

Those approaches include the guidance provided in state law and in Vermont State Board of Education rules on school discipline.

The law 16 V.S.A. § 1161a requires that the state's public and independent schools follow a plan for responding to student misbehavior. That plan must include "a description of behaviors on and off school grounds that constitute misconduct," and standard due process procedures for the suspension or expulsion of a student.

Another section of that state law (§1162) also provides guidance on the suspension or expulsion of students in response to misconduct and on when those actions can be taken.

For example, the law specifies that administrators may, in accordance with policies adopted by the school board and consistent with State Board of Education rules, suspend a student for up to 10 days or, with the school board's approval, expel a student for a specified amount of time if that student engages in certain misconduct. That can include misconduct "not on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated."

The law does not prevent administrators from removing a student who poses a "continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process of the school," subject to due process. Administrators are authorized and encouraged to provide alternative

education programs for students who are expelled or suspended in accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1162.

The Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices also provides guidance on school discipline. It outlines the due process schools should provide students who are facing disciplinary action.

Those procedures differ slightly based on whether the student is facing a short-term or long-term suspension. They include a notice of the charges against the student, a presentation of evidence and a decision in writing to the student's parent or guardian.

The manual also states that "when a student, because of his or her conduct or condition, is an immediate threat to himself or herself, others, property or educational environment, the school district may take whatever action is appropriate under the circumstances, including, but not limited to, immediate suspension pending a hearing as soon as possible thereafter."

Last week's *Independent* look at the issue included discussions with school officials about how, given the guidance provided in state law, school districts decide how to educate students who have been accused of crimes or who might pose safety concerns within the learning community.

Mount Abraham Unified School District Board Chair Krista Siringo told the *Independent* about a local school board's role in making those determinations and in responding to community members' concerns about how such situations are handled in the district.

"It's not the role of the school board to make decisions about how to educate individual students," she said. "Rather, the board sets and monitors policies that are put in place to ensure that these decisions are made in an equitable and just manner, that also considers legal requirements, privacy laws, and financial considerations."

"The school board does sometimes field complaints and concerns from community members, and sometimes those

concerns are related to challenging student behavior. The board recommends that community members connect directly with building principals and other administrators who are more directly involved in the day to day operations of our schools. The school board can also play a role in helping to ensure that community members are educated about the systems in place to support all students, and the processes used to make decisions about the education of students in our district."

RISK ASSESSMENT

Another approach available to schools navigating such situations is guidance on Behavioral Threat Assessment & Management, or BTAM, provided by the Vermont School Safety Center. BTAM is a systematic process intended to help identify, evaluate and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations in schools.

The main component of that process is creating a BTAM team to address behavior that raises concerns that a person or situation could "pose a threat of severe and significant targeted violence" to a school. These teams are made up of members with expertise in various disciplines, including counseling, school administration and special education.

BTAM teams receive reports of potential threats and screen those reports to determine whether to conduct a threat assessment. If so, the team gathers more information about the threat in question and evaluates that information to make their assessment.

The team's assessment evaluates whether the student poses a threat to themselves or others, how severe that threat is, and if some type of intervention or support is needed. The threat assessment is aimed at preventing harm, as well as ensuring the safety and well-being of the student in question and the learning community as a whole.

All Vermont schools will be required to have a trained BTAM team by July 1, 2025, as part of the new requirements regarding school safety outlined in Act 29.

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Artist

(Continued from Page 1A)
visual art pieces produced using algorithms like the ones Merrill creates.

While he’s only been making generative art for around five years, Merrill has been coding software and creating artwork separately for much longer.

Merrill, who’s 36, describes himself as a lifelong artist, taking after his mother and grandfather, who were both art teachers.

“I started doing origami and working with clay, and using my imagination to make things that way,” Merrill said of his early artistic aspirations.

He began branching into digital art in 2005 when he discovered Adobe Flash animations, an authoring and computer animation platform through which users could create and program animations.

“It was the coolest stuff ever, so I was making web games and that sort of thing,” Merrill recalled. “I did that professionally for a number of years.”

Creating those animations opened a door to the digital art world for Merrill, who began collaborating with other artists and creating abstract digital artwork.

CODES TO CREATE

Merrill’s formal introduction to generative art came in 2018, when he purchased a pen plotter. The computer-controlled machines use automated pens to draw lines onto a piece of paper, and Merrill found that some artists were programming plotters to produce artwork.

“That was very interesting to me because I had always done work for screens, and with a pen plotter you can make work that is seamlessly drawn on paper. You can make a very, very complicated drawing that might take a human being days to make,” Merrill said. “I thought that was the most interesting use of programming I’d ever heard of. I was enamored by it.”

At the time, Merrill was already somewhat of a seasoned programmer. In addition to his digital art endeavors, he’d spent over a decade of his professional life working as a web developer, building and maintaining sites for companies like Burton Snowboards and Orvis.

Despite his prior programming experience, Merrill decided to approach generative art as if he were new to the trade.

“I tried to forget everything I had learned professionally through programming and treat it like I was a novice, even though I had been programming for like 15 years at the time,” he said.

Merrill noted that there is a plethora of free educational material available to prospective programmers that he learned from. One of the resources he turned to was The Coding Train, a YouTube channel run by computer programmer Daniel Shiffman.

“(Shiffman) goes over different concepts that allow you to do creative coding. So how do you

take a box and divide it until you get interesting patterns, how do you scatter dots to make interesting shapes,” Merrill explained.

NON-FUNGIBLE TOKENS

Today, pen plotter art is one of two types of generative artwork that Merrill specializes in. He also creates generative art non-fungible tokens, known as NFTs, that are stored on the blockchain. To produce those pieces, Merrill develops an algorithm using a computer programming language like JavaScript, which is then unleashed to generate pieces of digital artwork that NFT collectors can purchase. Because the software program produces a different outcome every time, each NFT is different.

“I think (NFTs) are really interesting because you can unleash one of these algorithms on the blockchain that has infinite possibilities and turn it into 50, 500, 5,000 different unique artworks,” Merrill said.

Merrill said he puts out around two releases of new work each year, consisting of both NFTs and pen plotter drawings. His pieces typically sell for around \$1,000-\$2,000.

Since the algorithmic systems he develops can create an infinite amount of artwork, Merrill noted that part of his and other generative artists’ work is determining how much artwork gets produced.

“With these infinite systems, it’s very easy to make too much art, so another part of the art is figuring out the right size of the collection you want to release from any single system,” he said. “I’ve experimented with systems that are 450 pieces, up to 4,700 pieces.”

Another key part of Merrill’s work is deciding how to use the element of randomness that is inherent in the codes he creates to generate a unique piece of art.

“It’s kind of like the special sauce, you sprinkle a little random in and then maybe you reposition things or change colors. Random is always going to be different, so you can basically always get a new piece of art from that,” he explained. “The systems could be very similar, or every result could be radically different. It’s the role of the artist to curate how that system responds over time and creates subsequent artworks.”

ART IN TIMES SQUARE

Unlike many artists, Merrill doesn’t show his work in a gallery. Instead, his work is typically released and sold digitally.

Over the years, he has had opportunities to share his work in other ways, such as in December of 2021 when one of his pieces, titled “Liquid Galaxies,” was displayed on a billboard in Times Square.

“That was a computer simulation, kind of a galaxy. I made it and got the opportunity to present it there, which was quite an honor,” Merrill said.

This past August, Merrill flew to Los Angeles to present some of

his work at the 50th anniversary of Siggraph, an annual computer graphics conference. Then, last month the Bristol artist participated in a panel discussion on the role of digital and generative art within the contemporary art landscape, held in New York City in partnership with fine arts company Sotheby’s.

LOOKING AHEAD

Merrill noted that generative artwork is starting to gain recognition within larger art institutions like New York’s Museum of Modern Art and Sotheby’s.

“We’re seeing that artists can come out of the gate and define this movement and make a living off of it. That to me is really exciting,” he said.

Merrill is also excited to see where his work takes him in the months ahead. He left his former job as a web developer this past February to pursue generative art fulltime.

He said he’s looking forward to begin working with a larger pen plotter that will allow him to create art two or three times the size of what he’s currently producing, which is 18 by 24 inches.

Merrill said he also wants to explore newer territory with future algorithms, finding ways to move away from the abstract work he’s primarily produced thus far.

“I want to continue to produce new, generative algorithms, that’s going to be where my mind is at, but getting away from randomness and abstraction. Starting to humanize the type of art that I do and make it less about randomness, and more about relationships and data,” he said.



BRISTOL ARTIST JAMES Merrill uses codes to create digital artwork like the piece shown here. Merrill specializes in a newer artform known as generative art, a practice in which artwork is made in part or entirely using an autonomous system — in this case, that is a software program.
Independent photo/Marin Howell



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NEW LIGHTS WILL enable night skiing on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights from 4-9 p.m. this season on three runs off the Sheehan Lift as well as the expanded Discovery Center.
Independent photo/Angelo Lynn



A NEW SKYTRAC fixed-grip quad will greet skiers and riders this Saturday, Dec. 9, on the opening day of the season at the Middlebury Snowbowl. The new lift replaces the older Sheehan Lift, which was a Poma double, circa mid-1980s.
Independent photo/Angelo Lynn

Snowbowl to open with upgrades

Area to offer night skiing for first time

By ANGELO LYNN
HANCOCK-RIPTON — As the Middlebury Snowbowl prepares for opening day this Saturday, Dec. 9, loyal skiers and riders are excited to take advantage of several new amenities. Visitors will see a new quad

chairlift serving the former Sheehan double, an expanded Discovery Zone that doubles the previous area and connects the top of the Magic Carpet to the base of the Sheehan quad (without having to hike up); new lights for night skiing to illuminate three of the runs off the new Sheehan quad as well as the Discovery Zone; and more après ski activities on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights, when skiing will be extended from 4-9 p.m.

The idea of adding night skiing at the Snowbowl has been in the works for the past several years and was given the go-ahead a few years ago to coincide with the new Sheehan lift. “The idea was to increase skier and rider visits without having to increase the size of our parking lot, or lodge, or other facilities that are already full on busy days,” said Mike Hussey, who has been manager of the Snowbowl for the past six years. “But this is also an idea that we hope will rejuvenate the ski culture in town; to recreate that ski town persona that Middlebury was in the 1960s and 1970s when the town had state champion ski teams at the high school and a ski club that was one of the strongest in the state.”

When Middlebury Union High School stopped letting Tiger ski team members out of classes early for ski training, that program waned and other sports like ice hockey and Nordic skiing gained favor. But today, with a very strong Nordic program at the high school and with a strong alpine ski club at the Snow Bowl for younger skiers, the time seems ripe for a resurgence. “Today we have a strong younger ski club program, but once those skiers get to high school age and there is no team sport there, they go to hockey or something else,” Hussey said. “So, we’re hoping this will help revive the ski program in area schools ... And that will, in turn, encourage more families to get involved in the sport and all we have to offer at the Snowbowl.”

The process to rejuvenate a ski team at MUHS is to form a club team for two years and if there is adequate interest, it would gain varsity status in the third year. A club team has been formed this year at MUHS under the direction of John Nucedner.

NIGHT SKIING

Hussey also said night skiing should attract a whole new subset of skiers who weren’t previously able to take off from work or school to be on the mountain mid-week. “We anticipate that night skiing will be an amazing asset for the community,” Hussey said. He noted that while only a handful of Vermont ski areas offer night skiing, almost 80% of the ski areas in New York and other southern New England states offer night skiing — a feature that makes up the bulk of their business. Hussey said the Snowbowl would be looking at other industry leaders who are doing night skiing well. Of

“The new (Discovery Center beginners) trail will offer more than twice the length of the current trail, and will also allow beginners to ski to the base of the new Sheehan Lift.”
— Mike Hussey



SNOWMAKING AT THE nearby Rikert Nordic Center has allowed dedicated cross country skiers to get in some early season runs.
Independent photo/Angelo Lynn



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Skiing

(Continued from Page 14A)
après ski scene more attractive.
If projections hit their targets, the Snowbowl expects to draw a couple hundred people a night.

“We’ve gotten a pretty good response on our season and night passes so far,” Hussey said, “so community interest seems to be there.”

NEW LIFT, EXPANSION

The old Poma double Sheehan Lift, which was installed around 1984-85, has been replaced by a SkyTrac fixed-grip quad. While it could offer almost double the uphill capacity, Hussey said they will run it conservatively at first, spacing the chairs at a 17-second interval rather than the 12 seconds for the Poma lift, and running the new lift at less than full speed on most days, resulting in an increase of about 20% capacity.

For the most part, the tower locations, start point and ending point are roughly the same as the previous Poma double.

The other major expansion at the Snowbowl is adding a new trail at the Discovery Center, the beginner’s area, served by the Magic Carpet. This area will provide easier beginner terrain that’s about 7-8% grade instead of the current 12%.

“Our old slope is way steeper than it should be for someone just learning to ski,” Hussey said, adding it was also short. “The new trail will offer more than twice the length of the current trail, and will also allow beginners to ski to the base of the new Sheehan Lift rather than have to hike up from the bottom of the Magic Carpet.” From the top of the magic carpet, the new trail is shaped like a sideways “V” with the point at the base of the Sheehan lift, and the bottom leg going back to the base of the magic carpet.

The Discovery Center is free for beginning skiers and adults teaching small children. It will be lit at night for skiing on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 4-9 p.m., the same as the Sheehan Lift.

The three trails that will be lit for skiing off the Sheehan lift are Kelton (under the lift line), Cameron (race training trail) and Lang. Hussey said that lights on the slopes have to be off by 9 p.m., and lights in the parking area go off by 9:30 p.m., according to the area’s state permit, which was respectful of light pollution at night.

The lights are LED Dark Sky compliant, Hussey added, noting that the lights will be mounted on telephone poles along each of the trails.

ON SCHEDULE AND READY

With the significant lift construction and implementation of night lights going on over the summer and fall, the good news is that everything has proceeded pretty much on schedule.

“Given the summer weather we’ve had, we’re amazingly on schedule,” Hussey said, adding that the final lift inspection was completed in late November and the night lights are slated to be turned on in mid-December.

Like last year, the Snowbowl is slated to be closed on Mondays and Tuesdays, two days that have historically had lower visitation.

Other improvements at the ski area include carpet throughout the base lodge, and improvements to the snowmaking system that will make it more energy efficient and cost effective.

The ski area will continue to rent and lease skis through its ski shop on the mountain, as well as do tuning, and the ski school is working on new programs to encourage more skiers and riders to enjoy the sport and the ski area.

RIKERT NORDIC CENTER

Down Route 125 a couple of miles is the Rikert Nordic Center, which has already seen limited access over the past couple of weeks with the loop in the meadow and short hills down to the roads open for those truly dedicated to the sport. This week’s colder weather will allow snowmaking through the week until warmer weather this weekend moves in.

The Nordic center not only has a new grooming machine this winter, but has also expanded its retail space in the base lodge, and it created a separate area for people to sit and warm up while grabbing a bite to eat.

The skiing terrain will be expanded as quickly as possible, according to manager Robert Drake, depending on weather and snow-making conditions.

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Enrollment

(Continued from Page 1A)

we estimated future kindergarten cohort sizes based on the historical birth rates and kindergarten cohort size five years later,” she said. “Tim relied on computing ratios and weighted averages, whereas I used a forecast trending function that looked at 10 years of historical birth rate data and kindergarten enrollment data to predict the next future value, given a corresponding birth rate. As expected, the two methods created slightly different results. However, they weren’t that much different.”

Here are some highlights of Wilson’s and Williams’s findings:

- District enrollment (K-12) in 2004-2005 was 1,997. There are currently 1,599 students attending ACSD schools, a decline of 398 students or almost 20%.

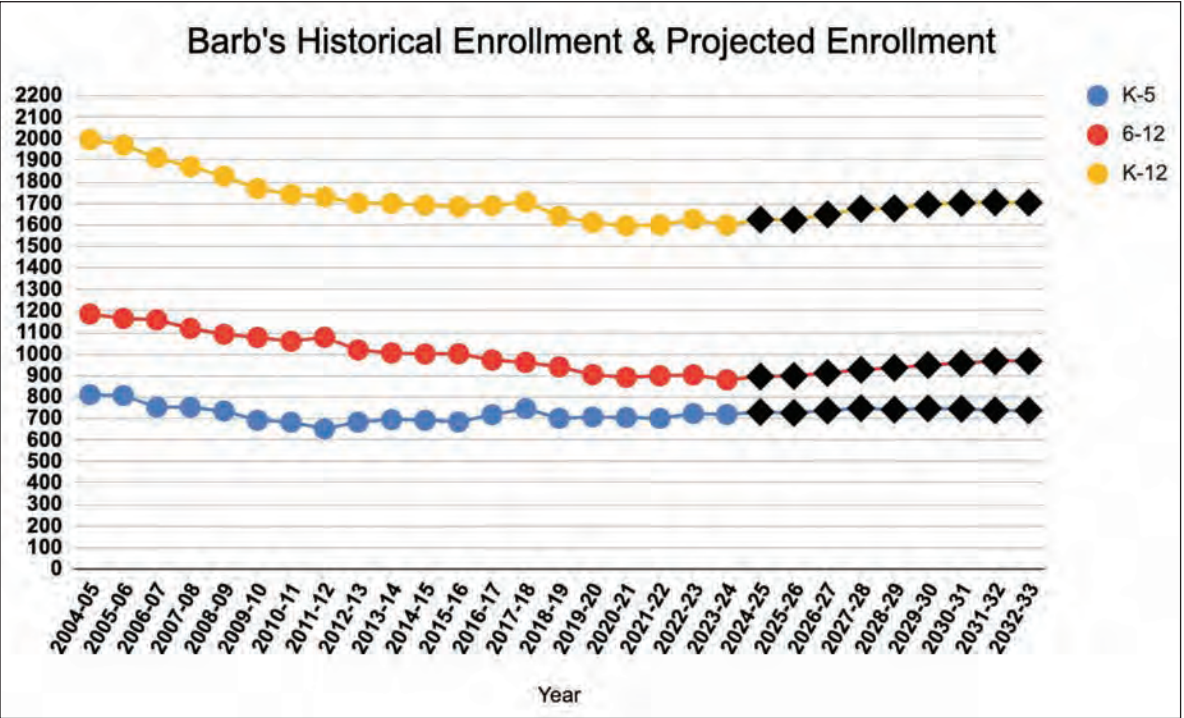
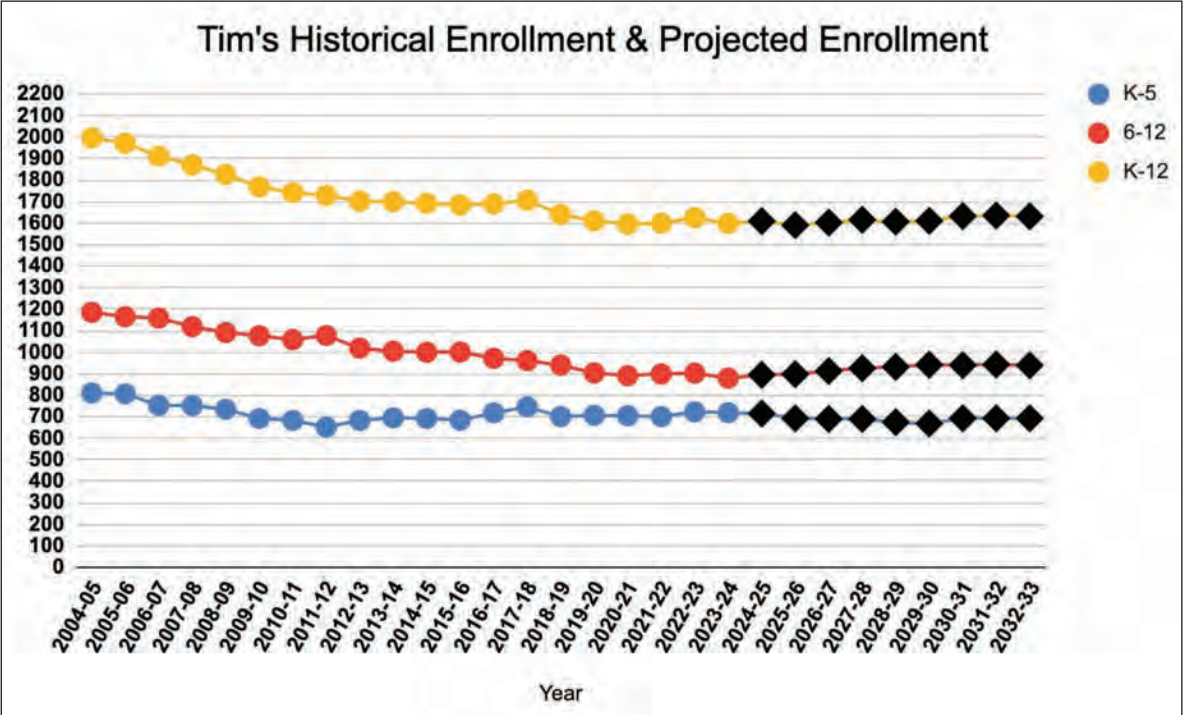
- Wilson offers the more upbeat of the two forecasts, with a prediction of 1,704 students for the 2032-2033 academic year, a gain of 105. Williams is suggesting 1,632 students by 2032-2033, a gain of 33 students.

Wilson’s chart has the more optimistic assessment on future enrollment in the lowest grades levels, with an average of around 120 children in grades K, 1, 2 and 3 for each year between 2024-2025 to 2032-2033.

Williams’s calculations indicate around 105 kindergartners each year between 2024-2025 to 2032-2033, with around 115 first-graders, 117 second-graders and 118 third-graders.

Here are the projections for each elementary school (please note that these elementary schools included 6th-graders in 2004, but now educate preK to grade 5):

- Bridport Central School: 98 grade-schoolers in 2004, current enrollment of 53, Wilson forecasts 54 by 2032 and Williams predicts 49.
- Cornwall: 72 grade-schoolers in 2004, current enrollment of 91, Wilson forecasts 84 by 2032, Williams predicts 93.



- Middlebury’s Mary Hogan School: 346 students in 2004, current enrollment of 360, Wilson forecasts 391 students in 2032, Williams predicts 351.
- Ripton Elementary School: 44 grade-schoolers in 2004, current enrollment of 36 students, Wilson forecasts 24 students in 2032, Williams forecasts 33. It should

also be noted that Ripton each year also receives a handful of tuitioned students from the Route 100 communities of Hancock and Granville.

- Salisbury Community School: 90 grade-schoolers in 2004, current enrollment of 55, Wilson and Williams both predict 61 students by 2032.

Shoreham Elementary School: 78 grade-schoolers in 2004, current enrollment of 75, Wilson forecasts 75 in 2032, Williams predicts 58 students then.

Weybridge Elementary School: 83 students in 2004, current enrollment 49, both Wilson and Williams forecast 48 students in 2032.

Neither Wilson’s nor Williams’s enrollment numbers reflect the prospect of major housing projects that could be built in the district by 2033. Summit Properties plans to build more than 210 housing units off Middlebury’s Seminary Street Extension, a project now being considered by the Middlebury Development Review Board. A portion of the units will be targeted at middle-income families.

Since 2003-2004, public preK-12 student enrollment in Vermont has declined from 93,512 to 80,692.

FUTURE BUILDING REPAIRS

Both Wilson and Williams were asked how their enrollment forecasts might affect any ACSD board discussions about the future

of the district’s nine school buildings. A recent study identified \$11.6 million in essential building code repairs and outlined more than \$100 million in fixes to make the district’s structures serviceable for the long term. ACSD board members have acknowledged the need for a major capital bond, but said more work needs to be done to determine which school buildings should remain central

to the district’s educational mission and therefore more worthy of taxpayers’ investment.

Past ACSD boards have taken a preliminary look at potential school consolidations, though none are currently on the district’s radar. The town of Ripton briefly left the ACSD out of concern that its small elementary school might be targeted for closure.

Williams said that since the projections are showing a leveling off of enrollment, the results don’t give a basis for arguing over the size of the current nine-school system.

“The projections simply show that we are likely not to see much change in student enrollment in future years,” Williams said. “I hope the projections are helpful with any future discussions about ACSD facilities. All of our facilities need attention; how best to meet those needs will be a topic of future discussions.”

Wilson, the Shoreham representative to the board, has been opposed to the notion of closing rural schools.

“The purpose of these projections are not intended to validate or invalidate further discussions on our school configurations, but instead my hope is that the projection data will be helpful for future discussions about our ACSD facilities,” she said.

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

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Marshall

(Continued from Page 1A)
Her salt-and-pepper hair is proudly coiffed atop a kind, gentle face that exudes a healthy glow and bears some well-earned furrows that belie a life of productivity and service to others.

Her one concession to Father Time is the walker she deftly steers around the small home she shares with three parakeets and a cat named Gracie.

Joyce loves to chat; just make sure to bring your voice up a few decibels.

She was born on Oct. 21, 1923, to Hazel and Wilbur Goodrich, on a small dairy farm off Shard Villa Road in West Salisbury.

It was an eventful year that saw, among other things, the creation of the Republic of Turkey, the opening of King Tut’s burial chamber in Egypt, the inaugural baseball game at the original Yankee Stadium, and Adolph Hitler’s failed attempt to overthrow the Bavarian government through the so-called “Beer Hall Putsch” in Munich.

Being part of a family farm meant pitching in with chores, and Joyce and her five siblings did their share. Two assignments stand out for Joyce — being placed in charge (with a brother) of milking the cows when dad fell ill for a week, and spending a summer operating a horse-drawn rake to gather hay across the farm fields.

She, her brothers and sisters attended a one-room schoolhouse in West Salisbury through the eighth grade, and then it was on to Middlebury High School (MHS).

These were the days before there were school buses, which created transportation challenges for many families — including the Goodrich clan. Joyce’s dad didn’t drive, and her mom did so infrequently. The former train service from West Salisbury to Middlebury solved the school transportation problem for a few of Joyce’s older siblings, but the family had to find a different solution so the younger children could attend MHS.

Ultimately, Wilbur and Hazel Goodrich rented a room from a Middlebury family for their younger children to stay weekdays during the academic year.

“My mother would cook up food over the weekend and she’d bring us out to our rooming place Sunday night, and then she’d pick us up Friday afternoon after school to take us home,” Joyce said.

This was an era (the late 1930s) during which cars were still somewhat of a luxury for those living in rural states. Unpaved roads were more the norm than the exception.

“We had a lot of kids in the neighborhood, and back then you could sled down the hills in the road because you weren’t afraid of cars,” Joyce recalled with a chuckle.

She enjoyed school, especially lessons on typing, shorthand and bookkeeping. These skills would come in handy for Joyce in her later involvement with two family businesses — Marshall Hardware and Marshall Alarms & Lock Service.

Both businesses bore the name of Joyce’s future husband — Cary Marshall, her high school sweetheart. Cary joined the U.S. Army (infantry) upon graduating from MHS. During a week of Army leave, Cary proposed to Joyce. She gleefully said “Yes!” but because Cary wasn’t yet 21 (he was 20), he had to get his parents’ consent before he could legally marry in Vermont.

To his immense relief, his dad consented. With time quickly lapsing on Cary’s Army leave, he and Joyce hurried over to the home of Middlebury’s Methodist minister. There, with the minister’s wife as a witness, the young duo exchanged vows that would lead to a 79-year marriage.

It’s a union that was almost tragically dissolved by world events. While Joyce held down the fort at home, Cary was shipped overseas to fight in World War II. He was seriously wounded during the Battle of the Bulge (Dec. 16, 1944 – Jan. 25, 1945), the last major German offensive on the Western Front. Cary, a Purple Heart recipient, spent a year healing from his wounds.

LARGE FAMILY
And heal he did. Cary

transitioned from the military to a job at Marshall’s Hardware, a business his dad had started in downtown Middlebury. Joyce helped out with bookkeeping and other administrative tasks when she wasn’t immersed in her second fulltime job: Tending to a group of children that would swell to seven.

Cary and Joyce would eventually take over hardware store, which they relocated to a spot off Seymour Street where the Fire & Ice Restaurant currently stands.

After the couple sold the store during the late-1960s, Cary decided to become a locksmith and alarm specialist. One of the Marshalls’ sons would take over the alarm business, but Cary remained a locksmith into his 80s. He passed away in 2019 at the age of 96.

Joyce’s last job was as a bookkeeper for the Addison Central Supervisory Union. She did that for 10 years.

While long-since retired, Joyce has remained active; her favorite pastime is playing Bingo. She’s a regular at the Middlebury Legion’s Wednesday Bingo nights, and she attends a monthly game hosted by the Shriners in Burlington.

She described her Bingo luck as

being “off and on,” but the prospect of winning isn’t the only draw for her.

“I see the same people week after week; they’re like family,” she said.

ACTIVE MIND, ACTIVE BODY

Joyce remains a voracious reader (she loves a good mystery story) and enjoys doing word puzzles.

While her advanced age prevents her from doing cartwheels, Joyce says, “I keep moving. You’ve got to keep moving and not just watch TV.”

Maintaining an active mind and body are part of a regimen that’s contributed to Joyce’s longevity.

She doesn’t smoke or drink alcohol. She eats in moderation and is a particular fan of Italian food.

Joyce doesn’t consume a lot of sweets but won’t refuse a slice of apple pie.

“Once in a while I get a hankering for chocolate,” she added mischievously.

Good genes are, of course, crucial to the prospect of living a long life, and Joyce has that covered. Her mom lived to be 100 and one of her sisters made it to 105.

She’d like to eclipse her sister’s family record.

“I’m not ready to die yet,” she said, beaming.

Daughter Jenne Morton looks upon her mom with admiration and awe.

“She’s helped all of us,” she said. “She has, at one point, taken so many kids in. I was a single



BEHIND JOYCE MARSHALL, who recently marked her 100th birthday, a family tree with many branches is adorned with photos of some of her seven children, 16 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren. Staying happy, active and friendly are key to living a long life, she believes.
Independent photo/John Flowers

parent going to school and she would watch my kids on weekends. Almost every one of my nieces and nephews has lived (at her house) at one point when they were struggling or needed a place. She’s always given of herself so much to her family.”

Around 90 people helped Joyce celebrate her landmark birthday at Middlebury American Legion Post 27. She was thrilled to see her six

living children — Beverlee, Dale, Jenne, Peg, Karen and Cary Jr. — together in one place again. Her daughter Judy succumbed to lung cancer in 2014 at age 56.

It’s a family tree with many branches. In addition to her children, Joyce has 16 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren. She keeps track of her living legacy through a family tree poster that

adorns her living room wall. Each branch includes a photo spread that’s periodically updated as new children are born.

“When we get together, we have five generations,” she said proudly.

Those fortunate enough to make 100 often require a lot of TLC to keep going.

Not Joyce. “Sometimes I wish she’d ask for more help,” Jenne said.

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Tree farms

(Continued from Page 1A)

2017 census, Vermont had 70 Christmas tree farms producing trees on 3,650 acres. The state's Christmas tree industry was valued at more than \$2.6 million.

Werner said the Middlebury farm will have less choose-and-cut trees available this year due to the tree loss. The team has been bringing trees from its plots in Lincoln to provide more pre-cut options.

In addition to trees, Werner Tree Farm also sells wreaths and other greenery as well as maple syrup and honey.

Werner said the farm's wreaths haven't been hurt by this year's

challenging weather.

"We are lucky to have access to a very large field of wild trees in Lincoln, and some of those trees were impacted, but it's a big enough field with a big enough variety that our wreaths haven't been impacted at all," she said. "We have plenty to work with, so that was a nice part of the season."

Werner said prices at the farm are largely the same as last year. All choose and cut trees are \$60, and pre-cut prices vary depending on the height of the tree.

When the *Independent* spoke with Werner this past Thursday, the Middlebury farm was enjoying a strong start to

"The cold frost we had in May did affect some of the new growth, so certain sides of the trees where it was coldest on that particular night damaged the new growth but not enough to impact anything."

— Tim Hescocck, Vermont Trade Winds Farm

the Christmas tree season.

"It's been a really nice opening. Everyone seems super cheerful and happy. People are getting beautiful trees right now out of the ground and off the rack," Werner said. "It seems like people are decorating earlier than they usually might."

Other county tree farms have also been busy this holiday season.

"We opened on Thanksgiving weekend and the sales were very brisk," said Doug Sinclair, who co-owns Sinclair Family Tree Farm in Ripton. "We sold more than 30% more trees than we have on any other opening weekend."

Sinclair Family Tree Farm grows its trees on 12 acres in Ripton. The farm offers pre-cut and choose-and-cut options for its trees and sells other greenery, such as garlands and wreaths.

Sinclair said the farm has also started offering maple products.

"We are selling maple syrup that we produce right here on the farm. We started that last year, but we're doing it more formally this year," he said.

Prices at the farm have risen slightly this year to account for inflation. Pre-cut and choose-and-cut trees vary in price depending on their height, with smaller, two-to four-foot trees ranging from \$16 to \$38 and trees larger than 10 feet marked at \$9 per foot.

HEALTHY CROP

Sinclair said the tree selection this year is similar to previous seasons and hasn't been affected by extreme weather this growing season.

"It was pretty much normal. The rain and cloudy weather and cool weather in July stunted the growth a little bit, but I think most people who come to look at trees won't notice," he said.

He noted that tree loss at the farm has also been consistent with previous years.

"We usually lose around 100 to 200 each year, and we were right around 150, so we had normal tree loss," Sinclair said.

Trees at other farms in the county have also fared well despite this year's challenging weather.

Vermont Trade Winds Farm co-owner Tim Hescocck said the



JILL BUTLER, LEFT, Heather Layn and Amanda Werner work on a wreath at Werner Tree Farm in Middlebury. While challenging weather this summer hurt the farm's tree crop, wreaths and other greenery at the farm were not affected.

Independent photo/Steve James

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farm's crop in Shoreham is similar to that of previous seasons.

"We didn't have too many issues with the rain. Our trees are on a bit higher ground and so they have better drainage," he said. "The cold frost we had in May did affect some of the new growth, so certain sides of the trees where it was coldest on that particular night damaged the new growth but not enough to impact anything."

The Shoreham farm grows its trees on around 15 acres, and sometimes buys trees from other Vermont producers to sell. Along with trees, the farm also offers wreaths, garlands and other greenery, and a variety of maple goodies.

"We have a really great little farm store that has all things maple. We have maple candy, maple cream, popcorn cotton candy, granola, marinades," Hescocck said.

The farm also has ski trails and an ice rink, which Hescocck is hopeful will be open to visitors this year if the weather cooperates.

Further south in the county, Emerald Acres in Orwell has around two-and-a-half acres full of balsam, Canaan and Fraser firs for tree shoppers to choose from.

Tree farmer John "Sully" Sullivan said this year's crop is looking "pretty darn good" and hasn't been hurt by this summer's rain.

"The rain was extremely heavy, but it prompted the growth of the tree, so I've had to keep the growth in check," he said.

The farm does not offer pre-cut trees, but Sullivan said he can help visitors cut down their tree of choice.

Prices at the farm have risen slightly this year, as Sullivan has implemented a fixed cost of \$55 per tree, tax included.

OPEN HOURS

Visitors can stop by Emerald Acres on the weekends, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Friday through Sunday, or by appointment. Sullivan said he hopes to stay open at least three weekends this month.

Other farms will also remain open throughout December for those still in the market for a Christmas tree. Trade Winds Farm in Shoreham is open each day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and visitors can stop by Sinclair Farm Friday through Sunday each weekend through Christmas Eve.

Werner Tree Farm in Middlebury is also hoping to stay open until Christmas Eve, though Werner noted that the farm's selection may start to wane as the season progresses.

"My guess is that by the last week it'll be a pretty limited selection," she said. "We don't like closing early, so we'll do our absolute best to stay open right through Christmas Eve."

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PANTHER FRESHMAN DANTE Palumbo skates happily away from the Tufts goal, into which he has just deposited a game-tying score in Saturday's first period. Tufts, however, went on to win.

Independent photo/Steve James



PANTHER SENIOR GOALIE Jake Horoho covers up a rebound during Saturday's home game vs. Tufts. Middlebury center Jin Lee defends Jumbo forward Marcus Sang on the play.

Independent photo/Steve James

Panther men's hockey splits weekend NESCAC games

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury College men's hockey team split a pair of hard-fought games in Kenyon Arena this past weekend, claiming their home opener on Friday night by coming back to defeat Connecticut College before Tufts pulled away late on Saturday to prevail, 4-1.

The Panthers are 1-3-2, 1-2-1 in NESCAC play, heading into their final two first-semester games this weekend, both at home vs. league foes. Hamilton will visit at 7 p.m. on Friday and Amherst on Saturday at 3 p.m.

In the early going this winter the Panthers appear to be showing signs of bouncing back from a disappointing 5-18-1 season a year ago. Under first-year Interim Head Coach Jack Ceglarski, the Panthers have been competitive in every one of their outings except one, that a first-round loss to a ranked Norwich squad on Nov. 24. That game was played in Plattsburgh in the LayerEight Shootout.

Ceglarski said he was happy with the efforts by his young team — only five seniors skated on Saturday — against Conn College and Tufts.

"It was a good weekend, I thought.

On Friday obviously I think there were a little bit of nerves in the first period, but I thought we battled back," Ceglarski said. "That's a big thing for us, just staying with it and really battling."

The players' enthusiasm and work ethic has been a factor in their respectable play, he said, while there remains a learning curve with a combined 10 freshmen and sophomores playing major roles.

"The guys are having fun. That's a huge thing. It all starts in practice. We've got to have fun practices. That carries onto the ice in the games," Ceglarski said. "I think we're still a

young and immature team in a way, where we have to learn when it's not just fun, and we have to really dial in and get ready for games. I think that shows in how we start some games."

To iron out some of the remaining wrinkles the Panthers will have to strike the right balance of fun and focus, he said.

"Again, it starts in practice," Ceglarski said. "If you don't practice with high intensity it doesn't carry into the game."

If the program is to take a step forward this season, those seniors, notably senior goalie Jake Horoho, who Ceglarski said "keeps us in

games," should help with that element by providing leadership as well as production.

"Our senior class has been through a lot. They're good kids. They're good kids off the ice," he said. "We need to rely on them, and we need the younger kids to step up as well. It's not just the seniors. It's not just the freshmen. We need all four classes to buy in."

PANTHERS, 3-2

On Friday, the Panthers rallied from a 2-0 first-period deficit to win their home opener, 3-2, over Connecticut.

The Camels got on the scoreboard

just 34 seconds into the first period, when Kareem Alazem ripped a shot home from the right point after a Panther miscue.

Middlebury's best chance in the opening period came midway, but Camel goalie Sean Dynan knocked away a bid by Michael Fairfax. With 2:12 remaining in the period, Camel Rocco Testa-Basi hit a pipe.

Camel Cole Eichler made no such mistake 52 seconds later, picking up a turnover on his own blue line, skating in and lifting a shot into the top left corner.

The Panthers began to press in the

(See Hockey, Page 3B)

Score BOARD

COLLEGE SPORTS	
Men's Basketball	
12/2 Rochester vs Midd.....	72-58
12/3 Chicago vs Midd.....	88-64
12/6 Midd at Plattsburgh.....	Late
Women's Basketball	
12/1 Babson vs Midd.....	56-45
12/2 Midd vs Wheaton.....	79-56
12/6 Midd at Plattsburgh.....	Late
Women's Hockey	
12/1 Amherst vs Midd.....	4-0
12/2 Midd vs Amherst	0-0
Men's Hockey	
12/1 Midd vs Conn.....	3-2
12/2 Tufts vs Midd	4-1

Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS	
Girls' Hockey	
12/9 Stowe at MUHS.....	7 PM
12/13 MUHS at Rutland.....	4 PM
12/16 MUHS at Hartford.....	2 PM
Boys' Hockey	
12/9 MUHS at U-32.....	6:30 PM
12/16 Rutland at MUHS.....	7 PM
Boys' Basketball	
12/8 St. Albans at MUHS.....	7 PM
12/8 VUHS at Danville.....	7 PM
12/9 OV at MSJ.....	2:30 PM
12/11 VUHS at Colchester.....	7 PM
12/11 MUHS at Essex.....	7:30 PM
12/13 Northfield at VUHS.....	7 PM
12/13 OV at Mill River.....	7 PM
12/13 Mt Abe at Winooski	7:30 PM
12/15 Randolph at Mt Abe.....	7 PM
12/15 Stowe at VUHS.....	7 PM
12/16 OV at Hartford	2:30 PM
Girls' Basketball	
12/7 MUHS at West Rutland	6 PM
12/8 VUHS at Fairfax.....	7 PM
12/12 Stowe at VUHS.....	7 PM
12/12 MUHS at Montpelier	TBA
12/13 U-32 at Mt Abe.....	7 PM
12/14 Fair Haven at OV.....	7 PM
12/15 VUHS at Peoples.....	7 PM
12/16 BBA at Mt Abe	12:30 PM
Gymnastics	
12/13 CVU at MUHS.....	6 PM
Wrestling	
12/9.....	VUHS/OV & Mt Abe at NAC
12/16.....	St. J Tournament
COLLEGE SPORTS	
Men's Basketball	
12/8 Skidmore at Midd.....	7:30 PM
12/10 Midd at Stevens.....	1 PM
Women's Hockey	
12/9 UMass-Bost at Midd	7 PM
Men's Hockey	
12/8 Hamilton at Midd.....	7 PM
12/9 Amherst at Midd.....	3 PM



MIDDLEBURY GUARD SAM Stevens takes a bump as he attacks the paint against Rochester in Saturday's home game. Stevens returned from an injury to play 24 minutes in the game.

Independent photo/Steve James



PANTHER GUARD TRISTAN Joseph makes a move toward the Rochester lane during Saturday's game in Pepin Gymnasium.

Independent photo/Steve James



MIDDLEBURY FORWARD DAVID Brennan goes in for a layup early in the Panther home game vs. Rochester on Saturday. This accounted for 2 of Brennan's 10 points in the game.

Independent photo/Steve James

Men's hoop drops two home outings

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury College men's basketball team dropped a pair of home games to teams in the University Athletic Association conference this past weekend to fall to 2-6 with three games left in the Panthers' first-semester slate.

One of those as-yet-to-be-played outings was scheduled for Wednesday at Plattsburgh after deadline for this issue. The Panthers are also set to host Skidmore on Friday at 7:30 p.m. and visit Stevens at 1 p.m. on Sunday.

This past weekend's games were part of a NESCAC-UAA challenge tournament.

Saturday's game saw a back-and-forth battle between Rochester and Middlebury in which the visiting Yellowjackets

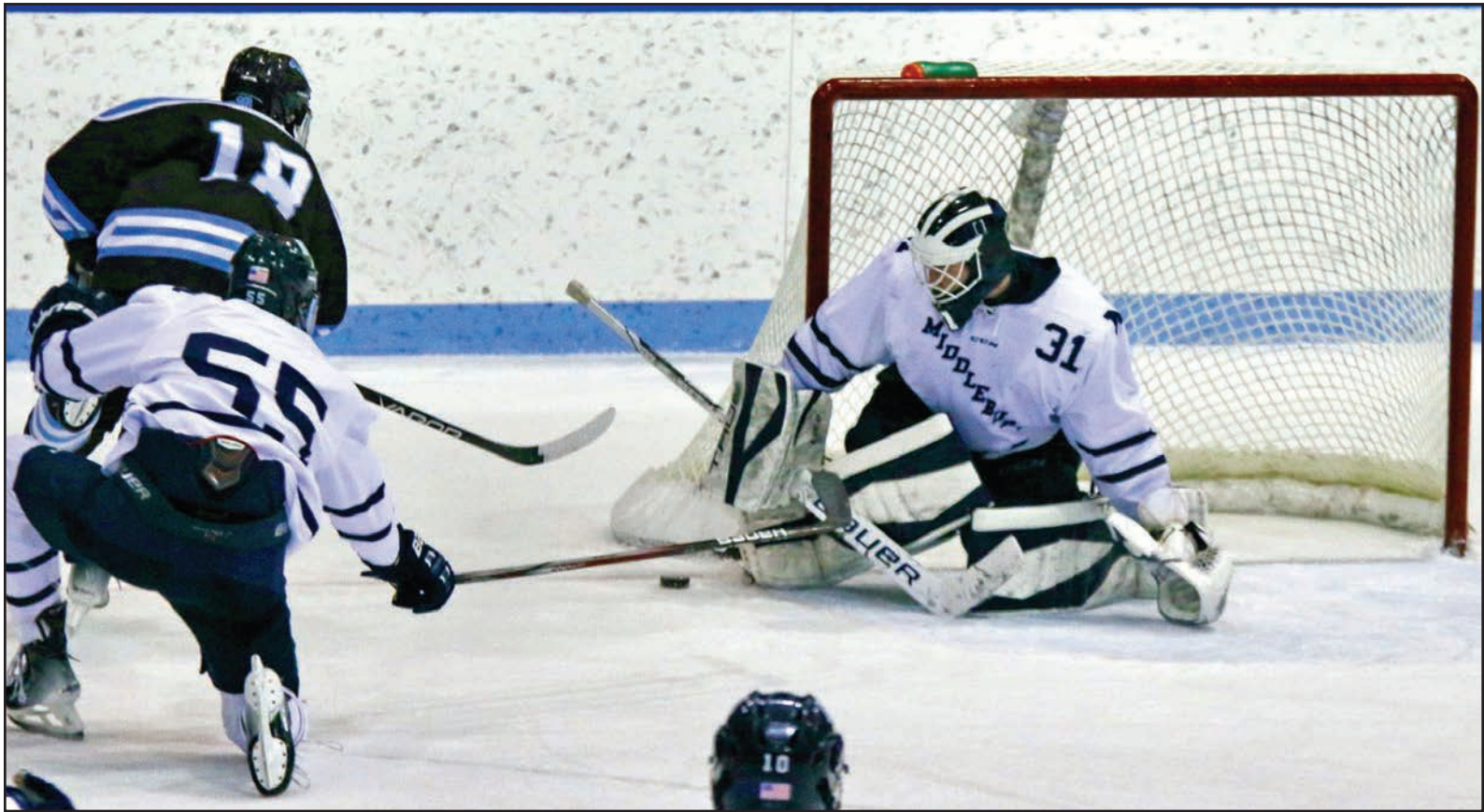
pulled away late for a 72-58 victory.

Rochester started fast to take a 22-12 lead, but the Panthers responded with a 14-0 run to go up by 26-22 after a low-scoring first half.

Middlebury still led by 46-42 with 8:22 remaining, but a 14-4 run put the Yellowjackets back on top. A Kuba Cwalina hoop cut the Rochester lead to 59-54 with less than three minutes to go, but Rochester closed with another run, this one 13-4, to nail down the win.

David Brennan and Cwalini each scored 10 to lead Middlebury. Noah Osher added nine points, and Charley Moore led with six rebounds. Sam Stevens returned from an injury and scored seven

(See Hoops, Page 4B)



MIDDLEBURY SENIOR GOALIE Jake Horoho holds the near post against Tufts forward Tyler Sedlak for one of his 29 saves during Saturday's game in Kenyon Arena.

Independent photo/Steve James

Hockey

(Continued from Page 1B)
second period. About six minutes in, Dynan got his right pad to deny a Bobby May shot that had deflected off a defender.

Middlebury broke through with two goals in the period's final 2:15 to tie the game. The first came when Revy Mack collected his own rebound on the doorstep and flipped in a backhander. With 0.3 seconds remaining Andrej Hromic, stationed between the circles, redirected home Jake Oblak's pass from the point. It was Hromic's third goal in four games.

The Camels attacked 3:30 into the third period, but Horoho saved back-to-back shots from Testa-Basi and Alazem.

Panther Nolan Moore just over a minute later muscled his way to the front of the net, but Dynan denied his wrist with the top of his glove.

The Panthers got the game-winner from Matt Myers at 12:01. Mack found Myers cutting between the circles, and Myers blasted a left-handed shot just inside the right post. Mack's goal and assist were his first career points.

Horoho finished with 24 saves, and Dynan made 20.

Ceglarski noted it was the second time this season the Panthers have bounced back from a two-goal deficit to take a 3-2 lead, although the first time it was at Bowdoin, and the Polar Bears countered to win in overtime, 4-3.

TUFTS, 4-1

On Saturday, Tufts (2-4-1, 2-2 NESCAC) defeated the Panthers by the somewhat misleading final of 4-1. The game was competitive most of the way, with the score 2-1 until the Jumbos tallied twice in the final 14:14, once on an empty net, to put the game away.

Tufts took a 1-0 lead 3:10 after the puck dropped, scoring on a power play after a probably ill-advised Panther roughing penalty. Harrison Bazianos one-timed a point-blank

shot into the lower right corner after taking Cole Dubicki's behind-the-net pass from the left side.

A minute later Jumbo goalie Peyton Durand did well to blocker away Panther defender John Burdett's slapper through traffic from the right point. Seven minutes in Horoho snatched Matt Resnick's bullet from the left circle.

The Panthers equalized with 8:24 left in the period on freshman Dante Palumbo's strong solo effort, his first career goal. Linemate Myers picked off a Jumbo pass at center ice and sent Palumbo into the left side of the Tufts zone. Palumbo zipped around the lone defender before deking Durand and sliding the puck inside the left post.

Both teams had one more golden chance in the first period. Shortly

after Palumbo scored, Horoho robbed Jacol Iida after the Jumbo found a loose puck in the crease, and Durand denied a Hromic backhander from the slot with about five minutes to go. The Panthers also smartly killed off a penalty.

The Jumbos came out strong in the second period. In the first minute Horoho stopped Iida on a partial breakaway as the Jumbo collided with the goalie in the crease. At 3:38 Tufts took the lead: Jack Mulvihill tipped in Dubicki's shot from the right point.

Ninety seconds later Resnick hit the left post with a backhander from the left side, and shortly after that Horoho robbed Mulvihill on a one-timer from the slot.

The Panthers gained some traction later in the period with the help of a

power play. The best chance came when Durand stopped a Moore blast from just inside the blue line, and rebound skittered along the goal line, but a defender cleared the puck away.

In the final period, the Panthers' best chance to knot the game came with 2:42 expired. Jin Lee and Hromic went in two on one, but Durand sprawled to thwart Hromic's one-time bid from close range.

The Jumbos made it to 3-1 at 14:14, when Resnick shoveled in the rebound of a Tyler Sedlak shot.

A Panther penalty with 3:28 remaining hurt their comeback chances, and Dubicki capped his strong game with an empty-netter after the penalty expired.

Horoho finished with 29 saves, and Durand made 23 for the Jumbos.



MIDDLEBURY JUNIOR MATT Myers circles in the offensive zone and looks to make a play during the Panther men's hockey team's Saturday home game vs Tufts.

Independent photo/Steve James

Women's hockey nets tie in two tries vs. Amherst

AMHERST, Mass. — The Middlebury College women's hockey team lost one game and settled for a tie in another in a two-game set at fellow NESCAC title contender Amherst this past weekend. The Panthers emerged with a 4-2-1 record, and the defending league champion Mammoth improved to 5-0-1.

The Panthers will wrap up first-semester play on Saturday at 7 p.m. in Kenyon Arena against UMass Boston.

On this past Friday, the Panthers outshot the host Mammoths, 31-26, including by 14-5 in the first period, but came up on the short end of the goal count with a 4-0 result.

The Panthers had a great chance 2:16 after the puck drop, but Amherst goalie Natalie Stott did well to kick away Delanie Goniwiecha's bid from the right dot.

Middlebury also nearly scored at 11:21 on a three-on-one break, but Stott sprawled to stop Raia Schluter.

The Mammoths took the lead with a shorthanded strike late in the first period, when Maeve Reynolds stole the puck in the offensive zone and converted a breakaway.

At 5:43 of the middle period, Panther Kate Flynn's shot from the high slot caused a scramble in front of the goalmouth, but Stott came up with the puck.

Amherst made it 2-0 with 8:10 gone in the period on a power play. A Panther defender blocked a shot, but the puck bounced to Jayna Park for the rebound score.

The Mammoths increased their lead just over two minutes later, when Park netted another rebound.

With just under five minutes remaining in the period Stott gloved a strong Britt Nawrocki wrister from left circle.

Amherst made it 4-0 with 3:21 gone in the final period, when Rylee Glennon one-timed in a pass

from behind the net.

With 5:22 left in the game, Panther Avery McNerny poked a loose puck into the goal after a scramble in front, but the officials disallowed the score.

Middlebury goalie Sophia Will made 22 saves, and Stott worked a 31-save shutout.

On Saturday, the Panthers again outshot the Mammoths, this time by 38-27, but settled for a 1-1 tie.

In a scoreless first period, Will denied Amherst's Natalie Fu on an early Mammoth power play, while Stott stopped McNerny on a two-on-one with Cat Appleyard as time wound down in the period, with Appleyard not quite able to control the rebound.

Early in the second period Stott padded away a Kylie Quinlan backhander on a rebound, but the Panthers struck 3:36 into the period. Flynn, on the doorstep, tucked the rebound of an Olivia McManus shot into the left side.

Amherst's Cara Mancini knotted the score with 1:30 remaining in the period by knocking in a cross-crease pass from Mary Thompson.

Will made two big saves early in the third period, stopping Marie-Eve Marleau from the left circle and Park on the rebound from straight on.

With 9:55 left, Flynn skated in on her own and fired toward the bottom left corner, but Stott sprawled to pad the bid wide.

With 5:30 Middlebury junior Jordan Hower batted down a loose puck inside the crease, but Stott blocked her shot and Nawrocki's point-blank rebound bid.

Fourteen seconds into overtime, Flynn found room behind the defense, but Stott kicked the shot aside. With 1:42 remaining, Stott (37 saves) got her blocker on a Nawrocki knuckling shot from the left. Will then, in the final minute, made four of her 26 saves to deny a late Amherst surge.

Reader Comments

Here's what one reader has to say about us!

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Annual Camel’s Hump Challenge race, a benefit event, scheduled for Feb. 3

HUNTINGTON — The Camel’s Hump Challenge planning committee, in conjunction with the Vermont Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, this week announced that the 37th annual cross country ski challenge will be held on Saturday, Feb. 3.

The Camel’s Hump Challenge offers a rigorous wilderness ski touring experience where spirited backcountry Nordic skiers traverse around the perimeter of Camel’s Hump — the state’s third-highest peak (4,083 feet). Originated by the late Dr. Warren Beeken, the Challenge operates as a fundraiser to provide education programs and support groups for Vermonters affected by Alzheimer’s disease and other dementia. Registration opened on Friday, Dec. 1, and closed the same day as the limit was reached.

In this event’s 37-year history, the Camel’s Hump Challenge has grown from a small group of skiers to an event that hosts 90 skiers annually.

“Registration filled in record time this year, taking less than five hours to sell out. We’re grateful for the continuous

support of our community through this special event that embodies the spirit of winter in Vermont,” says Jenna Johnson, development manager and staff partner from the Alzheimer’s Association. This past February, the Challenge raised \$106,000. Race directors have the same goal in mind come February 2024.

Each year, the Champion Award is presented to an individual, team or group that has provided major contributions to the Challenge over the event’s history. The Camel’s Hump Challenge planning committee has announced that Catherine McIntyre of Richmond will be the recipient of the 2024 Champion Award. McIntyre has participated in the Camel’s Hump Challenge since 2018 and has collectively raised over \$11,000 throughout that time. Not only is McIntyre an active participant in the Challenge, but she also has been a dedicated volunteer for six years and plays an integral role in making the Challenge the incredible event that it is.

“The Challenge is one of those very special days that makes you appreciate all the good things in life,” McIntyre said in a press

release.

Like many participants of the Camel’s Hump Challenge, Alzheimer’s has had a significant impact on McIntyre and her family. As a participant fundraiser, she has assembled a team of women, Team Hatchet, each year to complete the Challenge together. “I feel grateful to live in Vermont, to have access to the Camel’s Hump backcountry area, for my involvement with the event’s planning committee, for my own health, and for the friendship and support of the people I ski with that day,” McIntyre said.

To learn more about the Camels Hump Challenge head online to tinyurl.com/NordicCamel.



A PARTICIPANT IN a past Camel’s Hump Challenge is having fun skiing deep in the woods. Organizers announce the date for the 37th running of the event, which takes participants on a single-track backcountry ski trail around the perimeter of Camel’s Hump.

Photo by Bobbi Locicero

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PANTHER GUARD JADEN Bobbett digs in on defense during the Middlebury men’s basketball home game vs. Rochester on Saturday. Independent photo/Steve James

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CHECK IT OUT!

Hoops

(Continued from Page 1B)
points in 24 minutes. Tomiwa Adetosoye led Rochester (3-3) with 21 points, and Matt Wiele scored 19. On Sunday, visiting UChicago (6-2) took a quick 22-9 lead that

the Maroons stretched to 46-21 by halftime on the way to an 88-64 victory over the Panthers. All five UChicago starters reached double figures, led by Thomas Kurowski with 20. For Middlebury, Cwalini came

off the bench for a career-high 13 points. Osher (11) and Stevens (10) also scored in double figures, and Evan Flaks added nine points. Brennan led with six boards and scored four.

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ReEnergized

community calendar

dec 7 THURSDAY

"What it feels like to have Alzheimer's" documentary and panel discussion in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 7, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Community Room, Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Come see the locally produced film, "What it feels like to have Alzheimer's," envisioned, written and co-produced by East Middlebury resident Pamela Smith. A panel discussion focusing on the making of the film and services available in Middlebury will follow the screening. Free and open to the public.

Advent noonday recital in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 7, 12:15 p.m., St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Main St. Robert Ludwig, St. Stephen's director of music, will play Advent and Christmas music for organ by J.S. Bach, Claude Balbastre, Alexandre Guilman, and Charles Ives. Free. All are welcome.

Midd Night Stroll in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 7, until 8 p.m., downtown. Middlebury's downtown stores will be open late with specials, pop-ups, tastings and more. The Cocoa Hut is back at Cannon Park, and be sure to check out the falls, which will be illuminated the entire month of December.

Pop-up artisan market in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 7, 5-8 p.m., National Bank of Middlebury, Main St. Middlebury Studio School is partnering with BMP to bring artisans to downtown Middlebury for the annual Midd Night Stroll. We are hosting a pop-up artisan market in the on Main Street. Come find a unique holiday gift.

Holiday trains in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 7, 5-8 p.m., Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. The Henry Sheldon Museum's model trains will be operating during the Midd Night Stroll from 5 to 8 p.m. with free admission to the museum and the store will be open for your holiday shopping. More info at www.henrysheldonmuseum.org or call 802-388-2117.

Make a citrus stamped tea towel in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 7, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Stop in at the library on your Midd Night Stroll and join in on an evening of crafting. These towels can be used like any kitchen towel. Everything you need to make a towel will be provided. Space is limited. Register at www.ilsleypubliclibrary.org/citrus-stamped-tea-towel or talk to Renee.

dec 8 FRIDAY

Moonlight Madness in Brandon. Friday, Dec. 8, 4-8 p.m., Brandon Town Hall, 1 Conant Sq. See Dec. 6 listing.

Holiday Market in Orwell. Friday, Dec. 8, 4-8 p.m., Farmer's Haven, 318 route 22A. Do some holiday shopping close to home.

Snowflake Stroll in Bristol. Friday, Dec. 8, 5-8 p.m., downtown. A scavenger hunt through the downtown, where snowflakes will be hidden in the Main Street businesses. After finding five snowflakes folks can turn in their tally form to be entered into a drawing for Bristol bucks.

Candy cane hunt and S.D Ireland holiday cement truck in Bristol. Friday, Dec. 8, 5:30 p.m., downtown. Bundle up and head to Bristol to help Santa find his lost candy canes. Santa will be arriving at the Town Green with his friends from SD Ireland at 6 p.m. Prizes awarded to kids who find 10 candy canes, special prize to the person who finds the golden candy cane. Free and open to the public.

dec 9 SATURDAY

Wildlife walk in Middlebury. Saturday, Dec. 9, 8-10 a.m., meet at Otter View Park parking area, Weybridge St. and Pulp Mill Bridge Rd. Join OCAS-MALT and help survey birds and other wildlife at Otter View Park and Hurd Grassland. Beginning birders are welcome. Come for all or part of the walk. For information, including the latest COVID constraints, call 802-388-6019 or 802-388-1007.

Ilsley expansion open house in Middlebury. Saturday, Dec. 9, 9 a.m.-noon. The current designs for the renovated and expanded library will be displayed on posters, and a member of the professional design team will be present to give overviews and answer any questions. A comment cards box will also be available to record any thoughts you wish to share.

Community toy swap in Lincoln. Saturday, Dec. 9, 10 a.m., Burnham Hall, 52 East River Rd. Save money and time, reduce your impact on the environment, decrease clutter in your home, and connect with members of the community this holiday season by joining us for a one-day toy swap in Lincoln. Open to everyone, regardless of need or ability to bring items to swap. Please read the details below about the kinds of items we can and cannot accept at <https://fb.me/e/4asUJzb2p> or call Elizabeth at 413-250-9334.

Prize Bingo in Leicester. Saturday, Dec. 9, 1 p.m., Leicester Senior Center, Leicester Four Corners. Final Bingo of the year. Refreshments served and all are welcome.

Christmas Cookie sale in Vergennes. Saturday, Dec. 9, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (or until cookies run out), Champlain Valley Christian Reformed Church, 73 Church St. A large selection of Dutch specialties, fancy homemade cookies, and treats for sale. Choose and package your favorites. They do the baking for you so you won't have to. More info contact Alisa at 802-458-7615.

Pokémon Pop-Up Museum at Middlebury College.

Saturday, Dec. 9., 1-4 p.m., McCardell Bicentennial Hall. Twenty student-designed exhibits will highlight the real-world inspiration behind our beloved mammal and bug-type Pokémon. Visitors can touch specimens, ask questions, and collect prizes through speaking with student experts on insects, mammals and more. Costumes are welcome — the student presenters will be dressed up too!

Bingo in Vergennes. Saturday, Dec. 9, 5 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 S. Maple St. Doors open at 5 p.m., Bingo starts at 6 p.m. A family-friendly event. All cash prizes, \$0/\$0 raffle. Refreshments sold. Sponsored by St. Peter's Cemetery Committee to benefit the ongoing efforts for cemetery improvements.

Takeout-only chicken and biscuit supper in Vergennes. Saturday, Dec. 9, 5-6 p.m., Vergennes United Methodist Church, Main Street, (across from the Vergennes Opera House). Menu includes chicken and gravy over biscuits, stuffing, vegetable, cranberry sauce and dessert. Adults \$12. Take out preorder only. Must place order by 8 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 7. To order call 802-877-3150.

Contra Dance in Cornwall. Saturday, Dec. 9, 7-9:30 p.m., Cornwall Town Hall, Route 30. Sally Newton will be calling with music by Red Dog Riley. Masks optional. \$5 to \$10 or pay what you can.

dec 10 SUNDAY

Breakfast Buffet in Vergennes. Sunday, Dec. 10, 8-10 a.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 S. Maple St. Omelets to order, scrambled eggs, French toast, bacon, sausage, fruit, plain and blueberry pancakes, maple syrup, sausage gravy on biscuits, corn bread, home fries, mini muffins, juice, milk and coffee. Adults \$12/ children 8-12 \$7/immediate family \$32 (maximum). Offered by Vergennes Knights of Columbus to support their community service programs.

Free family holiday crafts in Middlebury. Sunday, Dec. 10, 9:30-11 a.m., Middlebury Studio School, 63 Maple St. Suite 8A. Join Middlebury Studio School instructors for a morning of holiday themed crafts. Follow your creativity without making a mess at home. Free and open to everyone. Hot chocolate and other light refreshments provided.

Addison County Toy Swap in Ferrisburgh. Sunday, Dec. 10, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall, 3279 Route 7. Ferrisburgh Union Meeting Hall invites you to bring your clean, working, and gently used toys for ages 0-11 to the Ferrisburgh Town Hall and trade them for new-to-you items. Donations on Saturday, Dec. 9, noon-5 p.m. More detail at unionmeetinghall.org/programming-and-events. Questions? Email the unionmeetinghall@gmail.com.

Ornament making in Orwell. Sunday, Dec. 10, 11 a.m., Orwell Free Library, 473 Main St. Come make ornaments. This free event will have loads of winter themed art supplies to create ornaments for all frigid occasions. Gather up your friends and family and come to the for some hot chocolate induced crafting.

Annual Holiday Concert in Hinesburg. Sunday, Dec. 10, 2 and 4:30 p.m., St. Jude Catholic Church, 10759 Route 116. The Hinesburg Artist Series will present its annual holiday concert, featuring the South County Chorus and the Hinesburg Artist Series Orchestra. Featured guest artist is cellist Jiwon Lee. Free, but donations to Hinesburg Artist Series are welcome. The audience is also encouraged to bring something for the food shelf. More info at www.hinesburgartistsseries.org.

Live nativity in Bristol. Sunday, Dec. 10, 3-4 p.m., town green. Members of several local churches will stage a live Nativity depicting the setting of the birth of Jesus Christ. Guided tours every 5-10 minutes through the living diorama featuring tableaux populated with animals — real and fabricated — and parishioners from local churches playing angels, shepherds, innkeepers, Roman soldiers, wisemen and women, and, of course, Joseph, Mary and Baby Jesus.

Lessons and Carols in Middlebury. Sunday, Dec. 10, 4 and 7 p.m., Middlebury Chapel, Old Chapel Rd. The Middlebury College Department of Music and the Scott Center for Spiritual and Religious Life collaborate to present an annual Lessons and Carols for Advent and Christmas service at the Middlebury Chapel. A festive evening of songs and text for the campus and community. Free, but donations accepted for local charities.

Virtual Death Cafe of Addison County. Sunday, Dec. 10, 4:30-6 p.m., Zoom. Death Café is an international movement started in Europe. At a Death Café, people gather to eat cake, drink tea, and discuss death in a relaxed, open setting. A Death Café is a group directed discussion of death with no agenda, objective, or themes. It is a discussion group, rather than a grief support or counseling session. Learn More at www.DeathCafe.com. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/dec-death-cafe>. More info contact Louella Richer at lricher@portmedical.org.

dec 12 TUESDAY

Federal climate funding public input session. Tuesday, Dec. 12, 11:30 a.m., Zoom. Make your mark on Vermont's application for federal funding to boost our state's climate actions. The Climate Action Office invites you to learn about a one-time opportunity for Vermont to significantly advance our state's climate solutions. Raise your voice to influence how this funding could be used in your community and across the state.

Register at tinyurl.com/fed-climate-funding-vt.

Town Hall Theater groundbreaking ceremony in Middlebury. Tuesday, Dec. 12, 12:30 p.m. Merchants Row. Everyone is welcome to the top of Merchants Row for the historic ground-breaking for the THT addition.

Milk and Honey Quilters Guild holiday potluck in Middlebury. Tuesday, Dec. 12, 5:30 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Hall, 2 Duane Ct. Bring a dish to share, your own place setting and a wrapped, quilt-related item for participation in the Yankee gift exchange. Please bring a holiday or winter themed item you've made either recently or in years past for Show and Tell. This gathering is for members only.

dec 13 WEDNESDAY

Sheldon Museum member appreciation week in Middlebury. Wednesday, Dec. 13-Saturday, Dec. 16, Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. The museum is celebrating its many generous, supportive members with an additional 10% off applicable items purchased in the museum's store and one free raffle ticket for the holiday trees and wreaths raffle. Admission is free for members and the trains will be operating from 1-3:30 p.m. each day. More info at www.henrysheldonmuseum.org or 802-388-2117.

Cookies & Cocoa: Henry Sheldon Museum Annual Meeting in Middlebury. Wednesday, Dec. 13, 5-7 p.m., Little Seed Coffee Roasters, 24 Merchants Row. Members and not-yet members are encouraged to attend and meet new Executive Director Coco Moseley. Free and open to all. RSVP encouraged but not required. For more information visit henrysheldonmuseum.org or call 802-388-2117.

dec 14 THURSDAY

Advent noonday recital in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 14, 12:15 p.m., St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Main St. The Addison String Quartet will offer a program consisting of a Mozart Viola Quintet K. 174 and Corelli Concerto grosso in G minor "Fatto per la Notte di Natale." Emily Sunderman, Carol Harden and Carter Lee (violins), Joy Pile and Sam Liebhaber (violas), and Tom Dunne (cello). Free. All are welcome.

Midd Night Stroll in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 14, until 8 p.m., downtown. Middlebury's downtown stores will be open late with specials, pop-ups, tastings and more. The Cocoa Hut is back at Cannon Park, and be sure to check out the falls, which will be illuminated the entire month of December.

Holiday trains in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 14, 5-8 p.m., Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. The Henry Sheldon Museum's model trains will be operating during the Midd Night Stroll from 5 to 8 p.m. with free admission to the museum. More info: henrysheldonmuseum.org or 802-388-2117.

dec 15 FRIDAY

Story Time with Santa in Bristol. Friday, Dec. 15, noon-1 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. Come on down to Holley Hall for story time with Santa. The Jolly Elf will be reading holiday-themed stories.

Bridport Central School spaghetti dinner and basket raffle in Bridport. Friday, Dec. 15, 5 p.m., Bridport Central School, 3442 Route 22A. Help raise funds for an Artist in Residence program at the school. Menu includes spaghetti, salad, bread and dessert. Many raffle baskets to choose from. Dinner pricing is age 3 and under free/3-12 \$5/13 and up \$10.

Benefit concert and hymn sing for Charter House in Middlebury. Friday, Dec. 15, 7 p.m., United Methodist Church, N. Pleasant St. Join in the 13th annual concert and hymn sing to benefit the Housing and Feeding Programs of the Charter House Coalition. Secular as well as traditional Christmas music for all ages. Free but an offering will be taken to support Charter House. Reception in the fellowship hall following the concert. Questions? Contact Tom Colley at 802-388-9405.

dec 16 SATURDAY

Bixby's Fiber Arts Circle in Vergennes. Saturday, Dec. 16, noon-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Get cozy on the couches of the Community Room. Bring your own projects, or use the crochet hooks, knitting needles, and yarn provided by the library. Bring cookies to share (though not required!), which all can enjoy with tea while we craft. Show-and-tell portion. Feel free to bring your favorite projects for designated bragging time.

Lumen: Celebration of Fire and Light in Bristol. Saturday, Dec. 16, 4-7 p.m., downtown. Come to Bristol and experience fire performers, a lantern party, and fire pits on the Town Green. A Bristol Core event.

dec 17 SUNDAY

Trolley rides around Bristol. Sunday, Dec. 17, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. Take a holiday ride in a horse-drawn trolley. Register by calling Bristol Rec at 802-453-5885 starting on Monday, Dec.11, from 8 a.m.-noon. Free, but donations gratefully accepted for future rec programs.

Annual Messiah Sing in Middlebury. Sunday, Dec. 17, 2 p.m., Congregational Church of Middlebury, 2 Main St. Singers and players gather each December for a joyful sing-along of selections from Handel's Messiah. Join in and sing favorite choruses, or play in the orchestra. Open to all, with donations gratefully accepted at the door. More info contact Jeff at 802-382-7493.

dec 21 THURSDAY

Advent noonday recital in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 21, 12:15 p.m., St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Main St. A Community Carol Sing. Director of Music Robert Ludwig will lead a singalong of favorite sacred and secular songs of the season, including entertaining stories and histories of the carols. Free. All are welcome.

Holiday movie and party in Ferrisburgh. Thursday, Dec. 21, 5 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall, 3279 Route 7. Join the Friends of the Union Meeting Hall for a magical evening creatively designed for holiday fun for the whole family. Come in your PJ's, get your tickets and take a round trip ride on the Ferrisburgh Town Hall Express to the North Pole. Santa will be on site so you can visit and take pictures. Then grab some hot chocolate and cookies and watch a holiday family movie that will show you what it means to Believe. Free and open to the public.

College hosts Pokémon pop-up


MIDDLEBURY — The pubic is invited to come visit a “Pokémon Pop-Up Museum” in the Great Hall of the McCardell Bicentennial Hall at Middlebury College this Saturday, Dec. 9., 1-4 p.m.

Middlebury students are creating an immersive community outreach and engagement experience for Vermonsters of all ages who love learning about wildlife and the world of Pokémon. Twenty student-designed exhibits will highlight the real-world inspiration

behind our beloved mammal and bug-type Pokémon.

Visitors can touch specimens, ask questions, and collect prizes through speaking with student experts on insects, mammals and more. Costumes are welcome — the student presenters will be dressed up too!

This Pokémon-inspired event, sponsored by the college Biology Department and the Center for Community Engagement, is open to Vermonsters of all ages.



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www.midducc.org



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HAVING AN EVENT?

Email it to: calendar@addisonindependent.com



Cookies galore

STOCK UP ON Christmas cookies on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Champlain Valley Christian Reformed Church, 73 Church St. in Vergennes. They do the baking so you won't have to.



THT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Lisa Mitchell and Artistic Director Douglas Anderson with a model of the theater's new expansion, which will have stunning views of Otter Creek and downtown Middlebury.

Photo courtesy of Town Hall Theater

THT to break ground Tuesday

MIDDLEBURY — On a cold October day in 2007, a group of people holding shovels broke ground for the restoration of Middlebury’s historic Town Hall. “It was a real leap of faith,” says THT founder Douglas Anderson. “Would anybody come to our new theater? Would it be a success?” He needn’t have worried. Since its opening in 2008, over 500,000 people have come through its doors. THT now hosts over 160 events a year and is one of the busiest small-town theaters in the country. “We’re so successful that we simply can’t meet the demand,” says THT Executive Director Lisa Mitchell. “It was clear that if we’re going to be generationally sustainable and continue to serve the community in many different ways, we needed to find more space.” Town Hall Theater’s second big

dream begins on Tuesday, Dec. 12 at 12:30 p.m., when ground is broken on a new 7,000 square-foot expansion. The new wing will create three much-needed rooms: a rehearsal studio (which doubles as a room for parties and small performances), a scene shop, and a center for education for people of all ages. “Theaters everywhere have these rooms,” says Anderson. “They’re essential. It’s amazing that we’ve functioned for so long without them.” A fourth “room” will be a welcoming outdoor plaza, a place for performances, food trucks, and a cup of coffee on a summer day. “I’m telling everyone that the plaza is my favorite room,” says Mitchell. “It will be the perfect place for free events and receptions and just hanging out on a beautiful afternoon. I think this will be a real gathering place for the entire community.” THT has engaged Bread

Loaf Corporation to design and construct the building. Architect Jim Pulver has designed a modern building that uses traditional details and materials to fit into Middlebury’s historic townscape. “It’s a new building,” says Mitchell, “but it looks like it was always there.” The ground-breaking celebration will feature short speeches by people who have been essential in getting THT to this point. Anderson and Mitchell are quick to point out that there’s still work to be done. THT has raised 80% of the \$7.8-million price tag, and is launching the public phase of the capital campaign concurrent with the ground-breaking. “We still need everyone’s help to get this across the finish line,” says Anderson. Everyone is welcome to the top of Merchants Row for the historic ground-breaking celebration. Tuesday, Dec. 12. 12:30 p.m.

Lincoln

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

NEWS

LINCOLN — The library is offering their funky, fun holiday sales table again this year. Items for sale include homemade, home found and one-of-a-kind objects. Come in and look around as there is something for everyone. While you’re visiting the library, be sure to check out the general store photo collection that is still on display. Enjoy historical photos of the original store layout and the fire that changed the shape of the

establishment. It is meaningful to consider the role the store has played in our community during the past hundred years. On Wednesday, Dec. 20, the library will hold another open studio session from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Crafters will be making wrapping paper and decorating the paper using stencils, potato stamps and paint. The next senior meal will be held on Thursday, Dec. 21, at Burnham

Hall. A Christmas carol singalong will begin at 11:30 a.m. and lunch will be served at noon. The meal includes roast pork, mashed potatoes, carrots, rolls, applesauce and a sweet treat for dessert. Meal is by donation. Until next time ... You Are What You Believe Yourself To Be. Do Something That Makes Yourself Happy. Every Ending Is Really Just A New Beginning.

Ferrisburgh

Have a news tip?
Email Sally Kerschner at smwkersch@comcast.net

NEWS

FERRISBURGH — This holiday season and throughout the year, consider going for a long walk with family and friends at Rokeby’s trails. Rokeby Museum has now closed after a successful 2023 season and will reopen in May, 2024. However, the trails are always available. For a map visit www.rokeby.org and click on the Hiking Trials section. For more information on our town trail system, visit Ferrisburgh Trails Committee website at www.ferrisburghvt.org. All Aboard! Join the Friends of the Union Meeting Hall on Thursday, Dec. 21 at 5 p.m., for a magical evening creatively designed for holiday fun for the whole family. Come in your PJ’s, get your tickets and take a round trip ride on the Ferrisburgh Town Hall Express to the North Pole. Santa will be on site so you can visit and take pictures. Then grab some hot chocolate and cookies and watch a holiday family movie that will show you what it means to Believe. The movie begins at 6 p.m. This event is free and open to the public and will take place at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall located at 3279 Route 7 in Ferrisburgh. Movie nights are generously sponsored by Gilfeather’s Fine Provisions, Captain Drew of Master Class Angling and 2 Cowboys Sound Club. Questions? Email unionmeetinghall@gmail.com.

Join the Ferrisburgh Union Meeting Hall this December for the first annual Addison County Toy Swap. This Holiday season don’t go shopping, go swapping! Bring your clean, working, and gently used toys for ages 0-11 to the Ferrisburgh Town Hall and trade them for new-to-you items. Donations occur on Saturday, Dec. 9 from noon-5 p.m.. The swap occurs on Sunday, Dec. 10, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. For full details visit unionmeetinghall.org/programming-and-events and view the “Details and FAQ” PDF document. Questions? Email the unionmeetinghall@gmail.com. Each year the Friends of the Union Meeting Hall hosts a Thankful Display showcasing words of thanks from local school children and our community. This year the display will include a light display on the Ferrisburgh Town Green next to the Union Meeting Hall located at 41 Middlebrook Road in Ferrisburgh mid-December through early January. What are you most thankful for this year? Let us know by emailing us at unionmeetinghall@gmail.com and include your name and what message you’d like us to display. You can also send this information by mail to: Ashley LaFlam, c/o Friends of the Union Meeting Hall, PO Box 115, Ferrisburgh, VT 05456. Bixby’s Fiber Arts Circle will take place on Saturday, Dec. 16,

from noon-2 p.m. in the cozy couches of the Community Room. Feel free to bring your own projects, or use the crochet hooks, knitting needles, and yarn provided by the library. We welcome you to bring cookies to share (though not required!), which we can all enjoy with tea while we craft. This Fiber Arts Circle will feature a show-and-tell portion, to give you a chance to brag about the projects you are working on or old favorites. Feel free to bring your favorite projects for designated bragging time. The Ferrisburgh Grange will hold a “King Pede” card party on Saturday, Dec. 16. These get-togethers are held at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall and Community Center and will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a sandwich supper and then on to an evening of fun and games. King Pede is a game that involves “trick-taking” such as in Hearts and Spades or Pitch. This is a game of fun and skill so come prepared to use your strategic thinking! *Note: We are always interested in including a variety of Ferrisburgh-related event announcement in this column, so if you have events that would be of interest, contact Sally Kerschner at smwkersch@comcast.net. You are also able to access these columns and other information about Ferrisburgh news and events by viewing the Ferrisburgh Town Website at www.ferrisburghvt.org.*

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

Middlebury Union High School

Audrey Carpenter

Middlebury Union High School introduces Audrey Carpenter, our Student of the Week. She is the daughter of Jeff Carpenter and Corinna Noelke of Middlebury, and she has an older brother, Henry, who is a sophomore in college. The family has two cats, Chester and Artemis. When asked to reflect on her four years in high school, Audrey says, “It’s gone so fast!” She goes on to say that she is grateful for her teachers and their understanding of each student’s needs. She is especially thankful for Ms. Stannard and Mr. Livesay, her teachers in Global Studies and Mathematics, as she says, “They get it!” Audrey is a candidate for the full International Baccalaureate Diploma and opted to pursue it after seeing how much her brother enjoyed the challenge of the coursework. She admits that it has been, at times, challenging, but she values what she has learned about time management. Additionally, she believes the program has given her a broad perspective and will serve her well when she transitions to college next year. Audrey is active both in the school and local community. She is a member of the varsity girls’ soccer team and she captains the varsity girls’ tennis team. She and her friend Caroline Nicolai serve as co-presidents of the Student Council, and she enjoys the role as it involves a lot of interaction with students from across the grades. She was a Peer Leader and liked assisting the newly enrolling ninth-graders as they transitioned from middle to high school in the fall. In the winter she serves as a ski instructor to young children at the Snow Bowl. She is an active volunteer with the Middlebury Fire Department and became a cadet when she turned 16. She attends regular meetings, goes on calls (that do not interfere with school hours) and is able to assist with getting things for the firefighters from the truck. She is also certified in first aid. Audrey says being a member of the Middlebury Fire Department is a “family thing” as her brother is also a cadet and her dad has been involved for over 20 years. As Audrey looks ahead to life after high school, she is focused on finding a college with a strong sense of community where she can pursue a wide range of interests. She is considering numerous options and Audrey’s positive attitude and outlook will surely set the stage for a rewarding future. We wish her all the best.



Audrey Carpenter
MUHS

Vergennes Union High School

Calvin Gramling

Calvin Gramling is Vergennes Union High School’s Student of the Week. He is the son of Julie and Phil Gramling of Ferrisburgh, brother to Bess and Ian, and human to cats Maisie and Zuzu. Calvin says that despite the smaller size of VUHS, the school still has a wide range of opportunities to explore. While he really enjoys all of his classes, AP Psychology has really caught his interest. He credits teacher Mr. Thomas for sparking his passion for English. Calvin was chosen as a VUHS delegate to Boys State this past summer and found it a great way to both explore the workings of Vermont’s state government and make some great friends. He is the treasurer of the National Honor Society, a member of the German National Honor Society, and a student representative on the ANWSD School Board. When not in the classroom, Calvin participates in a variety of extracurriculars at VUHS. He plays drums for the Jazz Band and is a member of the Commodore singers. He has performed in the last three VUHS musicals and runs track and field. Last year he won the Division II 1,000 meters in the indoor track season and was a member of the champion Division II 4x800 relay team in outdoor track last spring. He is also a member of the Green Team and the Math Team at VUHS. He is busy outside of school in the Leos Club, the youth division of Vergennes Lions, which organizes events in the community and does community service. He is also a member of the Middlebury Wind Ensemble. This past summer he was a counselor for the Rotary Youth Leadership Conference. He liked it so much he became the student representative to the local Rotary club. When not involved in any of these numerous activities, Calvin likes to spend his time hiking. Whether solo, with friends, or with family it’s always nice to get out in nature. You can also find him snowboarding at the Middlebury Snowbowl, going to concerts, and camping. Reflecting on his high school years, Calvin says it’s important to try out a bit of everything. “High school gives a platform to explore things you might have never even heard about,” he says, “and you never know if a new experience might become a lifelong passion.” Calvin plans to attend a small liberal arts college and study either history or anthropology, working toward a career teaching high school Social Studies. We at VUHS know that good things are ahead for Calvin and wish him the best of luck.



Calvin Gramling
VUHS

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The winner will be chosen at the end of the school year.

Students of the Week are chosen by school teachers and administration

Best of luck to all Addison County students!

If you are interested in advertising in Student of the Week contact advertising@addisonindependent.com

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ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS in person meetings are available. For a list of local virtual meetings visit <http://bit.ly/district9aa>. For more information visit <https://aa.vt.org/> or call the 24 hour hotline at 802-802-AAVT (2288).

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Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted



Addison County Parent/Child Center

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Addison County Parent/Child Center

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Addison County Parent/Child Center

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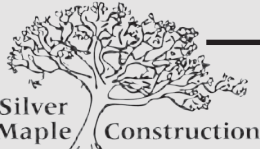
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- Access to a flexible spending account
- Single dental insurance plan funded by the school district with the option to purchase dependent coverage
- Long term disability plan with a 90-day elimination period, benefit pays 66 2/3% of salary, funded by the school district
- Life insurance valued at \$30,000, funded by the school district
- Paid leave

Other Benefits

- Retirement annuity match of up to 4.5% of salary after two years of service
- Employee Assistance Program

Apply by sending a letter of interest, resume, and three current reference letters, through Schoolspring.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. E.O.E.

Help Wanted

ads can be found on Pages 9B and 10B.

For Rent

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

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.

Help Wanted


PART TIME PERSONAL CARE assistant wanted for 75 year old man, in Addison. To work for 3 hours/ day, every other weekend, Saturday and Sunday. There is also a possibility of working one weekday every week for 3 hours. Help with light housekeeping, cooking, and chores. \$25/hour. Contact Ellen at: eresnik@rcn.com.

RESPITE CARE - BRANDON.

We are currently looking for an individual who would be willing to provide respite support/care in your own home occasionally- some daytime hours and overnights available. Flexible employer and excellent pay. The position is for a lovely elderly lady. Please call/text or email for more information. 802-398-5657 or respice2022@yahoo.com

For Rent

12' X 25' STORAGE SPACES in Brandon. Call 802-349-4212.



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.

ATTRACTIVE 1 BED-ROOM

home in the heart of Bristol Village. Well maintained, sunny, warm and cozy. January 1 - July 1, 2024. Partially furnished. No pets or smoking. Background and credit check by application. \$1,800/mo. includes all utilities, internet, snow removal. First month plus 1 month security, 6 month lease. Call 802-338-2362. No texts.

DRY, WINTER/SUMMER STORAGE SPACE

in Addison. Available storage space in my barn for summer/winter storage. The barn is structurally sound and weather-tight with electricity. No heat or running water. The barn is also available for lease. The entrance door measurements are 8' wide by 7' high. For more info: 802-363-3403 or rochon_m@yahoo.com.

HOUSE FOR RENT

in Vergennes. \$1,400 per month. Utilities not included. Call 518-546-7424.

MIDDLEBURY, OFF CAMPUS HOUSING

available. 802-388-4831, AJ Neri Property Rentals.

VERGENNES VALLEY VIEW APARTMENTS

is currently taking wait list applications. Occupants must be 62+ years of age. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply - Rent based on income. Equal Housing Opportunity. 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www.SummitPMG.com.

Wood Heat

DRY OR GREEN firewood for sale. Delivery available. 802-758-2007.

Att. Farmers

HORSE BLANKET WASH and repair. Accepting non-leather (for now) horsewear of all kinds for cleaning and repairing at my Weybridge location. Call or text Sue Miller at 802-377-5945 or email svdmiller@icloud.com with "horse" in the subject line for more information.

WHITNEY'S CUSTOM FARM WORK

Pond agitating, liquid manure hauling, drag line aerating. Call for price. 462-2755, John Whitney.

Wanted



OLD & USED GUNS WANTED

Rifles, Hand guns, Shot guns
Top prices paid.
P: 802-775-2859
C: 802-236-7213



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Call 388-4944



MARKET REPORT

ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT

Sales for 11/30/23 & 12/4/23

		COST		
BEEF	LBS.	/LB		\$
M. Hayward	1525	1.10		\$1677.50
A. Brisson	1800	1.05		\$1890.00
Vorsteveld	1765	1.02		\$1800.30
Cream Hill Stock	1400	1.00		\$1400.00
Westminster	1650	1.03		\$1653.15
Blue Spruce	1885	.98		\$1847.30

		COST		
CALVES	LBS.	/LB		\$
Barnes B&W	84	6.15		\$516.60
Savello	84	6.00		\$504.00
Correia	88	5.20		\$457.60
Monument Farms	97	3.00		\$291.00
A. Brisson	102	2.90		\$295.80

Total Beef - 243 Total Calves - 338

We value our faithful customers.
Sales at 3 pm - Mon. & Thurs.
call 1-802-388-2661

CITY OF VERGENNES WARNING

The legal voters of the City of Vergennes, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at Vergennes Fire Station, 50 Green Street, in the City of Vergennes on Tuesday, December 19, 2023, between the hours of nine o'clock (9:00) in the forenoon (a.m.), at which time the polls will open, and seven o'clock (7:00) in the afternoon (p.m.), at which time the polls will close, to vote by Australian ballot upon the following Article of business:

ARTICLE I

Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the City of Vergennes in an amount not to exceed One Million Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$1,750,000), subject to reduction from the receipt of available state and federal grants-in-aid, be issued for the purpose of financing the cost of a heavy rescue truck, a used ladder truck and replacing radio systems, the estimated cost of such improvements being One Million Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$1,750,000),?

The legal voters of the City of Vergennes are further notified that voter qualification, registration, and absentee voting relative to said special meeting shall be as provided in Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

The legal voters of the City of Vergennes are further notified that an informational meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Vergennes City Council, Vergennes Fire Station in the City of Vergennes at 5:45 pm, for the purpose of explaining the proposed article.

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY SELECTBOARD MEETING

ROOM 116 – LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM
TOWN OFFICES – 77 MAIN STREET
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2023 - 7:00 P.M.

Also available via Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87537658097>
By Phone: +1 646-558-8656 (not toll-free)
Webinar ID: 875 3765 8097

For those wishing to watch but not participate:
Selectboard meetings are livestreamed to MCTV's YouTube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/MCTVVermont>
and also broadcast live on Comcast Channel 1071

AGENDA

7:00	1. **Call to Order 2. *Approval of Agenda 3. *Approval of Consent Agenda 3.a. Approval of Minutes of the November 28, Regular Selectboard Meeting 3.b. Acceptance of Selectboard Subcommittee Meeting Minutes (if any) 3.c. Applications for Liquor Licenses, Outside Consumption Permits, and Entertainment Permits (if any) 3.d. Consent Agenda Placeholder 3.e. Town Manager's Report
7:10	4. **Citizen Comments (Opportunity to raise or address issues not otherwise included on this agenda)
7:20	5. **Agenda Placeholder 6. *Jason Covey, Chief of Police, Recommendation on Police Cruiser Bids
7:25	7. *Emmalee Cherington, Director of Public Works Planning, Request for Approval of Request for State Revolving Planning Advance Loan for Wastewater Treatment Facility Engineering & Design 8. **Presentation of First Draft of FY25 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025) Budget Proposal 8.a. Kathleen Ramsay, Town Manager, Review of Major Budget Drivers Based on First Draft Budget; Review of Budget Requests for Administration, Employee Benefits & Debt Service 8.b. Dana Hart, Director, Ilsley Public Library, Budget Request for Libraries 8.c. Jason Covey, Chief of Police, Budget Request for Police Department 8.d. David Shaw, Fire Chief, Budget Request for Fire Department 8.e. Bill Kernan, Director of Public Works Operations, Budget Request for Public Works 8.f. Scott Bourne, Parks & Recreation Superintendent, Budget Request for Parks & Recreation 8.g. Emmalee Cherington, Director of Public Works Planning, Overview of Capital Improvement Budget Request, as recommended by the Infrastructure Committee
8:15	9. *Consideration of Subscription for Smart Texting Technology to Communicate with Citizens
8:25	10. * Agenda Placeholder 11. *Agenda Placeholder 12. *Approval of Check Warrants 13. **Board Member Concerns 14. **Executive Session – Not Anticipated 15. **Action on Matters Discussed in Executive Session
8:40	16. *Adjourn

* Decision Item ** Possible Decision

Looking up for Geminid meteor shower

By MEGHAN MCCARTHY MCPHAUL

I’ve always loved the idea of watching the sky for shooting stars. But I’m much more likely to be up to watch the sunrise than I am to stay awake past midnight, when most meteor showers happen. Lucky for me, the upcoming Geminid meteor shower will provide an opportunity to wish upon a shooting star before my bedtime. Peaking from Dec. 13 to 14, this year’s Geminids coincide with the dark sky of a new moon, which should make for great viewing — assuming the night is clear, of course.

“Many meteor showers are best in the hours after midnight,” said meteorologist Mark Breen, director of the Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. “This particular meteor shower has the advantage of starting a little earlier, because the constellation Gemini, which is the radiant point of where these meteors come from, is already above the horizon by nine o’clock in the evening. That means that really any time after nine o’clock and through the rest of the night is a good time to look.”

Although many people refer to these lights that streak across the sky as “shooting stars,” they’re not stars at all. Meteors are particles that have broken off from comets or asteroids orbiting the sun. While comets comprise mainly ice with bits of embedded rock — sometimes described as “dirty snowballs,” Breen said — asteroids are mainly rock. In between, there is a wide range of ice-to-rock composition, which is where the parent asteroid of the Geminid shower — 3200 Phaethon — falls.

Whether originating as comet or asteroid, these meteors remain in orbit after separating from their parent form. “Planets orbit the sun in close to a circular pattern, but for comets, it’s much more elliptical — zooming in very close to the sun, then zooming back out again,” Breen said. “The particles that break off the comet stay on that orbit all the time, and every time the Earth runs into those particles, we get a meteor shower.”

Scientists discovered and named 3200 Phaethon in 1983, and Breen describes the Geminids as an “increasing” meteor shower, meaning each year seems to reveal

a greater number of meteors. In the 1980s, he said, there were roughly 60 to 70 meteor sightings per hour during the Geminids’ peak. Now, that range is closer to 100 or more meteors per hour.

“It’s now become the most prolific meteor shower of the year,” Breen said, although he noted that August’s Perseid Meteor Shower is perhaps more popular, falling as it does during a warm season, with a higher likelihood of clear skies.

As with other meteor showers, the Geminids shower extends beyond its peak viewing dates. In this case, observant sky watchers may spot meteors streaking across the night sky from late November through around Christmastime, although they’ll be much less prevalent than during the sharp peak from Dec. 13 to 14.

Breen offers a few tips for finding meteors, regardless of the season or specific shower. First, dress for a temperature of 20 degrees cooler than your thermometer indicates, as sitting outside at nighttime in any season doesn’t generate much body heat. Second — and this tip is key to success — allow time for your eyes to adjust completely to the dark, which may take 15 minutes or more. That means no porchlights or headlamps or



Illustration by

looking at phone screens — even dimly lit ones can hinder your ability to see well in the dark. Third, find a spot with as expansive a sky view as possible, then sit back and look up. Although the Geminids meteor shower radiates from the Gemini constellation, Breen said it’s best to simply gaze upwards,

rather than searching for a specific point in the sky.

As much as I love snow in December, I’m hoping this year the sky will stay clear during the peak of the Geminids, so I can bundle up and sit outside, looking up, and counting shooting stars.

Meghan McCarthy McPhaul is

the associate editor of Northern Woodlands. *Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol. The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: www.nhcf.org.*

Bristol Police Log

BRISTOL — Animal complaints have kept Bristol police busy in recent weeks.

On Nov. 24, police responded to a report of a dog wandering freely on Mountain Street. Police located the canine and warned its owner.

On Nov. 25, police investigated an animal complaint on Rocky Dale Road, and the complainant is expected to follow up with police if concerns continue.

Between Nov. 19 and 25, Bristol police completed one foot patrol and one car patrol, conducted 13 traffic stops and checked security at Mount Abraham Union High School seven times, at Bristol Elementary School seven times and at local businesses six times.

Police also processed two fingerprint requests and verified one vehicle identification number.

In other recent activity, Bristol police:

- On Nov. 20, helped a disabled motorist on Main Street.
- On Nov. 22, enforced the winter parking ban on North Street.
- On Nov. 22, assisted someone in returning property to its owner on South Street.
- On Nov. 22, investigated a citizen dispute on Morgan Horse Lane in Bristol. An investigation is ongoing.
- On Nov. 25, completed a property check on Orchard Terrace.

City police come to the aid of area squads

VERGENNES — Vergennes police twice backed up other agencies in incidents between Nov. 27 and Dec. 3.

On Nov. 29 city police accompanied U.S. Marshals to a New Haven Road home to help arrest a resident on a warrant for failing to appear in federal court.

On Dec. 2 they backed up Vermont State Police at a Little Chicago Road residence, helping deal with an individual experiencing a mental health crisis who was also reported to be carrying a weapon. Police said other family members had left the home, and police calmed the man, who agreed to meet with the Counseling Service of Addison County.

Also during that week, Vergennes police took to cruisers to conduct seven patrols and one property watch, responded to two 911 hang-up calls and one false alarm, fingerprinted six job applicants, and:

- On Nov. 27 went to the state police’s New Haven barracks to evaluated a suspect for driving under the influence of drugs.
- On Nov. 28:
 - Met with the Vergennes Union Middle School principal to discuss concerns about a student.
 - Accepted a wallet found at the Jiffy Mart in North Ferrisburgh and notified its owner, who picked it up.
- On Nov. 29 served a temporary relief-from-abuse order to a Hillside Drive apartment resident that had been issued by a Chittenden County court.

Vergennes Police Log

- On Nov. 30:
 - Stood by until a truck and trailer moving a Pantan Road mobile home could be moved after it became stuck in mud and blocked traffic.
 - Accepted a license plate that was found on a Main Street sidewalk.
- On Dec. 1:
 - Checked in on a man after his partner told them he was despondent and had locked himself in a home and would not answer the phone. He had opened the door before they arrived, and police

spoke to him and concluded he was OK.

- Conducted a background check on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security.

On Dec. 2 oversaw an exchanged of information after a U-Haul truck struck the roof overhang of the Champlain Farms convenience store.

On Dec. 3 were told by the

dispatcher that a woman at a Main Street apartment had called to report spirits were flying around her apartment and had possessed her. Police said the individual has a history of making such calls and then not accepting aid, and asked that if a follow-up call for help was made to notify them. Police said no further call was forthcoming.

Public Notices

can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on **Pages 10B and 11B.**



Addison Northwest
SCHOOL DISTRICT

ADDISON NORTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
(Addison, Ferrisburgh, Pantan, Vergennes and Waltham)
CHILD FIND NOTICE

Addison Northwest School District is required by federal law to locate, identify and evaluate all children with disabilities. The process of locating, identifying and evaluating children with disabilities is known as child find.

Addison Northwest School District schools conduct PreK screening each spring, but parents may call to make an appointment to discuss their concerns at any time. As the school district of residence, ANWSD has the responsibility to identify and provide services to any child with special needs who may require special education and related services in order to access and benefit from public education.

If you have, or know of any ANWSD resident who has a child with a disability under the age of 21 or a child who attends a private school located in Addison, Ferrisburgh, Pantan, Vergennes or Waltham, Vermont, we would like to hear from you. Sometimes parents are unaware that special education services are available to their children.

Please contact the School Principal (Ferrisburgh Central School – 877-3463, Vergennes Union Elementary School – 877-3761, Vergennes Union High School – 877-2938) or the Director of Student Support Services, Peter Garrecht at 877-3332 or pgarrecht@anwsd.org.

Full Passport Service

Addison County Courthouse

The Addison County Clerk located in Frank Mahady Courthouse is available to accept passport applications and provide passport photos.

REGULAR HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday -

9am to 1pm

Wednesday - 8:45am to 4:00pm

Friday - Closed

APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED.

802-388-1966

addisoncountyclerk@gmail.com

STATE OF VERMONT
SUPERIOR COURT
ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION
CASE NO. 23-ENV-00106

IN RE: SHOREHAM WASTEWATER FACILITY
FINAL NPDES DISCHARGE PERMIT
NO. 3-1459 ISSUED AUGUST 25, 2023

NOTICE OF APPEAL

The Town of Shoreham (the "Town", by and through its attorneys, Carroll, Boe, Pell & Kite, P.C., hereby gives notice of its appeal to the Vermont Superior Court, Environmental Division from permit conditions as referenced in the Shoreham Wastewater Treatment Facility Final NPDES Discharge Permit (pp. 1-34) dated August 25, 2023 and issued by the Wastewater Program Manager, Watershed Management Division, on behalf of AN Secretary, Julia S. Moore. A copy of Permit No. 3-1459 is attached hereto.

The statutory provisions under which the Town claims party status is 10 V.S.A. §§ 8502(7) and 8504.

DATED this 25th day of September, 2023.

CARROLL, BOE, PELL & KITE, P.C.
BY: James F. Carroll, Esquire
64 Court Street
Middlebury, VT 05753
(802) 388-6711
Attorneys for Town of Shoreham

ERN: 1907

ANWSD BOARD MEETING NOTICES
FOR DECEMBER 2023

Friday, Dec 1	7:30 AM	Facilities Committee Meeting ANWSD Central Office
	8:00 AM	Facilities & Finance Committee Joint Meeting ANWSD Central Office
Monday, Dec 11	4:50 PM	Policy Committee Meeting VUMHS Library
	6:00 PM	ANWSD Board Meeting VUMHS Library
Wednesday, Dec 20	5:30 PM	Community Engagement Committee Meeting Zoom Only

TOWN OF LEICESTER
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Leicester Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at the Leicester Town Office at 6:00 p.m. to consider the following applications:

(31-23-DRB) Cory and Tammi Lumbr, 108 North End Point for 26' x 32' 2 car garage (setback waiver). Section 2.4.3(e) of the Leicester Unified Regulations. Parcel ID #212146, 108 North End Point, Lakeshore District 1, submitted by Cory and Tammi Lumbr. This application requests a boundary line setback of 15' 9". (The standard in L-1 is 25'.)

Applications are available for inspection at the Town Clerk's Office, 44 Schoolhouse Rd., Leicester, VT during regularly scheduled hours.

Participation in this proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.

Jeff McDonough
DRB Chairman

WARNING
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
VERGENNES-PANTON WATER DISTRICT, INC.
DECEMBER 12, 2023 * CORRECTED*

The legal voters of VERGENNES-PANTON WATER DISTRICT, INC. are hereby notified and warned to meet at the V.P.W.D. business office building on 63 School Street in the City of Vergennes in said District, on the 12th day of December, 2023 at 7:00 P.M. in person to transact the following business to wit:

ARTICLE I: To elect by ballot the following officers:

(a) a moderator
(b) a clerk
(c) a treasurer

ARTICLE II: To hear and act upon the reports from the officers of the VERGENNES-PANTON WATER DISTRICT, INC.

ARTICLE III: To have presented by the Board of Commissioners of the VERGENNES- PANTON WATER DISTRICT, INC. their estimate of expenses for the ensuring year and to appropriate such sum as it, the VERGENNES-PANTON WATER DISTRICT, INC. deems necessary for said expenses together with the amount required to pay the balance, if any, left unpaid expressing said sum in dollars in its vote.

ARTICLE IV: To establish salaries for the Commissioners and other elected officers of the Water District.

ARTICLE V: To see whether the voters of said Water District will authorize its Board to borrow money pending receipt of water rents, by issuance of its notes or orders payable not later than one(1) year to date.

ARTICLE VI: To transact any other business proper to come before said meeting.

Dated at Vergennes, Vermont, this 9th day of November, 2023
Maria L. Brown, Clerk
VERGENNES-PANTON WATER DISTRICT

Vt. State Police Log

ADDISON COUNTY — During a relatively quiet week, troopers at the Vermont State Police barracks in New Haven during the afternoon of Dec. 2 received a report of an assault that had occurred earlier in the day. Officers investigated and determined that Randy A. McEentee, 27, of New Haven, had been involved in a verbal argument

with a 74-year-old New Haven man. Police allege that McEentee pushed the older gentleman to the ground, causing minor injuries. On Dec. 4, state police found McEentee and issued him a citation for simple assault. This is the only report from the New Haven barracks this week.

Rutland woman cited after stop for violating conditions

Middlebury Police Log

Street business where two youths had allegedly tried to buy alcohol on Nov. 27.

- Arrested Tracey Martel, 44, of Middlebury on an active in-state arrest warrant on Nov. 27. Police said Martel was taken to the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility for lack of \$1,000 bail.
- In addition to conducting daily patrols of the Bakery Lane area to check on houseless people camping under the Cross Street Bridge, Middlebury police last week:
- Responded to a report of a cow loose on Route 7 South, near the intersection with East Main Street (Route 125) on Nov. 27.
- Assisted two people experiencing mental health crises on Nov. 27.
- Responded to a North Pleasant

- With help from state police, located a missing juvenile in the Rogers Road area on Nov. 28.
- Informed a person they had to leave the town gazebo for the evening on Nov. 29.
- Responded to a report of a loose cow on Route 7 South on Nov. 29.
- Responded to a report of a disorderly man in the Main Street area on Nov. 30.
- Helped a local man believed to have been a victim of a phone scam on Nov. 30.
- Assisted a Washington Street businessperson with an unwanted customer who had allegedly been swearing at employees on Nov. 30.
- Helped a person who was experiencing a mental health crisis in Catamount Park off Exchange Street on Nov. 30.
- Arrested Timothy Farr, 70, of Middlebury on an outstanding warrant in the Court Street area on Nov. 30.
- Responded to a two-vehicle accident with minor injuries at the intersection of East Main Street and Route 7 South on Nov. 30.
- Enforced the overnight winter parking ban downtown on Nov. 30 and again on Dec. 4.
- Assisted the Addison County Sheriff's Department with a traffic stop on Shard Villa Road on Dec. 1.
- Assisted a Court Street business owner in stopping a person from panhandling outside of their establishment on Dec. 1.
- Received a report on Dec. 1 about a Middlebury College student receiving threatening electronic messages.
- Stopped a person for driving erratically on North Pleasant Street on Dec. 1. Police said they wrote the driver several tickets, including one for not having a valid driver's license.
- Investigated a report of "suspicious activity" in the Main Street area on Dec. 1.

- Following their investigation of a "suspicious vehicle" report, cited Ben Webb, 40, of Middlebury for violation of his conditions of release, in the Maple Street area on Dec. 2.
- Investigated a complaint about loud music and a person partying at a Jayne Court residence at around 7:50 p.m. on Dec. 2. Police said it was quiet at the home when they arrived.
- Assisted Vermont State Police in locating a lost juvenile near the intersection of Route 7 North and River Road on Dec. 2.
- Collected donated toys on Dec. 2 from collection bins throughout town for this year's Middlebury PD holiday toy drive.
- Searched in vain for a possible drunken driver in the North Pleasant Street area during the morning of Dec. 2.
- Interceded in a family dispute at a Valley View Road residence on Dec. 3.
- Served a no-trespass order on a man who had allegedly become angry and threatening while in the Verizon store on Court Street on Dec. 3.
- Recovered a damaged, stolen vehicle from Whitehall, N.Y., that had been left on an Airport Road resident's lawn on Dec. 3.
- Responded to a report of a single gunshot in the Halladay Road area on Dec. 3. Police said they visited the area and found nothing amiss.
- Continued their investigation on Dec. 3 into the recent theft of a vehicle from the Lower Foote Street area.
- Responded to a South Pleasant Street residence on Dec. 3 on a report of "suspicious activity."
- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS on a report of an "agitated patient" on Middlebury College campus on Dec. 3.
- Responded to a noise complaint at a Cross Street residence on Dec. 3.

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Sunday 11AM-3PM

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sparrowartsupply.com
[@sparrowartsupply](https://sparrowartsupply.com)

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BETTER MIDDLEBURY PARTNERSHIP

2023 S'MORES BAR

The BMP's chocolate bar sale and raffle is back, featuring awesome local prizes including \$500 cash for a local shopping spree! \$10/bar, sold at local stores. See prize list at ExperienceMiddlebury.com

Thank you to IPJ Real Estate for sponsoring this fundraiser!

Middlebury Sweets

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ARTS & RECREATION

The Addison Independent

December 7, 2023



ANNA FUGARO

ART FROM A LIFETIME OF MEMORIES
ON VIEW AT THE ILSLEY LIBRARY

SEE STORY
PAGE 2

Local artist Anna Fugaro will exhibit her mixed media art at the Ilsley Public Library in Middlebury for the month of December.

INDEPENDENT PHOTO / STEVE JAMES

Life's memories feed Fugaro's mixed media

After the better part of seven decades, Anna Fugaro spends her days on the middle level of her 7,000-square-foot home on East Munger Street in Middlebury. There, she and her husband, Sigg, float among a thousand memories — maybe more — and Fugaro works on her art.

BY **ELSIE LYNN PARINI**

From floor to ceiling, their living space is filled with Fugaro's own artwork, as well as her mother's paintings and countless photos. There are collections of old pulleys, shells, rocks, furs and tchotchkes picked up during travels near and far. A large open area of tables is covered with Fugaro's works in progress.

"As you age, your mind expands," she told a visitor last week. "As I shrink physically into old age, I dwell on my youth, which gives me energy for today."

Fugaro recognizes that there's a limit to dwelling in the past. "The past is gone," she said. "You have to find a way to stay in the present."

Or perhaps do both?

A new exhibit of Fugaro's more recent mixed-media artwork just went up in the main lobby of the Ilsley Public Library and will hang there for the month of December. Twenty framed pieces and one holiday-themed diorama are on view, featuring Fugaro's exploration of her memories and revived emotions of the past. Many of the pieces hang in custom-made frames made by her husband.

"I am living through old emotions that start to bleed again — to become flesh again," Fugaro explained. "I dig out all these feelings and then create my art."

Lucky for Fugaro, her life so far has been full of adventure, which makes for a colorful and complex catalog of inspiration. It all began in Yonkers, N.Y., where she was born to her Italian father and Icelandic mother.

"My father was a World War II soldier stationed in Iceland and brought my mother back to Yonkers," Fugaro said. "My mother was an artist



See Middlebury artist Anna Fugaro's new exhibit on view this month at the Ilsley Public Library in Middlebury.

INDEPENDENT PHOTO / STEVE JAMES

and her side of the family was highly gifted, creatively... I had the experience of the wild Italians in Yonkers and the very intellectual Icelanders."

At the age of seven, Figaro's parents moved the family to Vermont (to the same large house on East Munger) and established a chicken farm.

"I was isolated as a child," Fugaro remembers, adding that school was never where she learned anything. "I entertained myself with my creativity."

"ART IS SUCCESSFUL IF IT HAS THE POWER TO MOVE YOU OUT OF YOUR CHAIR."

— Anna Fugaro

Married as a young 20-something, her first husband — a National Geographic photographer — was her ticket abroad. She spent three years traveling in Asia, two of which were spent in Kathmandu, Nepal.

"It was intense visual ecstasy there," Fugaro remembered. "In India, I remember sitting on the veranda overlooking the Ganges and smelling incense and burning bodies... It was the ultimate hippy adventure — we were surrounded by brave, original people."

Fugaro began exhibiting her own work in the U.S. and in Iceland, where she gained notable prestige, including selling works to the Queen of Denmark and former president of Iceland.

"Art is successful if it has the power to move you out of your chair," Fugaro stated for an exhibit in Reykjavik, Iceland. "It should take you out of your space and move you into its space. It should take you on a little adventure out of yourself."

Fugaro lived in Iceland for about 15 years, where she met her second husband Sigg, who renovated a "fantastic loft" with an "insane view" overlooking the coast. There they entertained "so many guests," and lived on a high-fashion street... but Fugaro said it became "intolerable." So they moved back to the Vermont home in 1988.

"I have this great contrast in my life between Iceland and Vermont, it created a very creative nature," Fugaro mused. "I'm very free with my art; it is very original."

These days, Fugaro sees herself at the epitome of her talent and craft.

"I don't worry about what other people think anymore," she said. "I'm bored by everything except my art ... you find out all these funny things about yourself... I'm my own fan club."

We'll see about that.

"I didn't know about Anna's art before, but wow!" said Adult Services Librarian Renee Ursitti, as she walked over to her favorite piece, "Butterfly Hat." "It is just stunning. I could look at this forever and still see new and interesting things."

"Everyone sees something different," Fugaro said when asked what she wants viewers to take away from her artwork. "They see through their own eyes."

Editor's Note: The Ilsley Public Library is committed to exhibiting local artists work. Interested in learning more? Contact Renee Ursitti at renee.ursitti@ilsleypubliclibrary.org.

THE MONTH IN POETRY



Susan Jefts is a poet, editor, and writing mentor from the southern Adirondacks. Her poetry book, *Breathing Lessons*, was published this fall by Shanti Arts Publishers of Maine and can be found on the publisher's site, the usual online outlets, and in local bookstores. Her poems have been published in the anthologies *A Slant of Light*, *Quiet Diamonds*, *Birchsong*, *Poems in the Time of Covid*, and *Every Drop of Water*, and in the journals *BlueStone Review*, *Blue Line*, *Parnassus*, *Big City Lit*, *Zig Zag*, *The Literary Gazette*, and *Fired Up*, among others. She is currently taking new clients for editing their manuscripts and individual works, and offers workshops using poetry to explore our connections to the natural world. Her website is SusanJefts.com.

This poem leaves me with a sense of immersion in all of nature, in the great All, feeling both within and outside of your surroundings.

All of it made more interesting by the fact that the narrator is driving. Maybe something about the propulsion of being in a car brings it on; the rush and blending of so many images past your window. I think of Van Gogh's swirling images. I think of "these are but wild and whirling words" uttered by Shakespeare's Hamlet. Your reality changes for a moment and you're not sure just what world you are in, the earthly one or that realm beyond. Each particular thing so mysterious in my unknowing, writes the poem's narrator. But at the same time, you feel a familiarity with all of it, from the tiniest creature to the largest.

Maybe this is the point of such unexpected moments, and one of the powers of poetry, music and all art. To loosen our boundaries, immerse us inside it all, so we feel (rather than think) for a moment, the vast woven whole of which everything and every being is a vital part, and to which we are connected by the slightest of threads.

ABOUT CHARD DENIORD

Chard deNiord is the author of seven books of poetry, most recently *In My Unknowing* (University of Pittsburgh Press 2020) and *Interstate* (U. of Pittsburgh, 2015). He is also the author of two books of interviews with eminent American poets titled *Sad Friends*, *Drowned Lovers*, *Stapled Songs*, *Conversations and Reflections on 20th Century Poetry* (Marick Press, 2011) and *I Would Lie To You If I Could* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018). He co-founded the New England College MFA program in 2001 and the Ruth Stone Foundation in 2011. He served as poet laureate of Vermont from 2015 to 2019 and taught English and Creative Writing for 22 years at Providence College, where is now a Professor Emeritus. He lives in Westminster West, Vt. with his wife, the painter, Liz Hawkes deNiord.

TO DRIVE THE FIELDS OF HEAVEN

Oh taste and see.
Psalm 34, 8

IN MY UNKNOWING

I was driving through the fields of Heaven when I realized I was still on Earth, because Earth was all I had ever known of Heaven and no other place would do for living forever. I had grown beyond belief from seeing that everything I felt had sprung from lives I'd already lived, so that I could feel the way I did, which was so much I had no idea where to begin. The crawling? The slithering? The leaping? The flying? The dying? If you had been there with me in the passenger seat and asked me about the newt or flea or pachyderm, I would have told you everything I knew, which was a frightening amount, and not only that, but just how much I loved them all — those Heavenly beings: the serpent, the lion, the mosquito, the hawk, the antelope, the worm; and not only beings, but stones as well. Each particular thing so mysterious in my unknowing, I knew I was living forever. I knew the fields through which I was driving were the fields of Heaven in which I was tasting and seeing, seeing and tasting.

— By Chard deNiord



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Night Fires is back at Town Hall Theater

After a five year pause, this magical Winter Solstice dream play which first appeared on the scene 41 years ago will once again be burning brightly — at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. A cast of new performers and “old-timers” (some a steady part of Night Fires from the beginning, some who were in the show as kids, having now “come home” from sojourns elsewhere) conjures an entirely (as always) new story under the direction of Night Fires creator Marianne Lust.

were always about a returning of the light, a “return” brought about only by a journey first through a close and life-giving darkness. This year’s play conjures the story of a contemporary young person living in what might be called a time of “sterile darkness” who suddenly finds herself in a mysterious dark wood where she’s welcomed by Druid-like folk from another time. In the fruitful darkness of their realm she journeys into the light of a complicated and interesting new day, bringing with her from that mythical realm a new “light.”

SEE FIRES ON PAGE 11

Traditional winter solstice rituals



Theatre Group LTD will present Night Fires at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury, on Dec. 15 & 16, at 7:30 p.m., and Dec. 17, at 4 p.m. Generous ticket \$32, Ticket A \$27, Ticket B \$22, Ticket C \$17.

The 18th Broadway Direct takes the Vergennes stage

Broadway Direct returns to the Vergennes Opera House for the 18th year with a spectacular line up of performers on Friday, Dec. 8, at 7:30 p.m.

group of talented friends to bring another powerhouse show to the Little City.

“Every Broadway Direct is different and special,” said Walsh. “This year it is even more so with all of the proceeds going towards our All Access Project, making the opera house accessible to everyone. This is so very near and dear to all of us.”

Bill Carmichael Walsh, Broadway veteran and founder of Broadway Direct (and VOH board member), has once again pulled together a

SEE DIRECT ON PAGE 11

ART ON EXHIBIT

EDGEWATER AT THE FALLS

1 Mill Street, Middlebury

Visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-458-0098 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com for more info.

"Home for the Holidays." A group exhibition of small works by Vermont artists including Victoria Blewer/Joe Bolger/Jane Davies/William Hays/Woody Jackson/Sara Katz and guest artist Carrie Ade. On view Dec. 7 - Jan. 9, 2024.

EDGEWATER ON THE GREEN

6 Merchants Row, Middlebury

Visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-989-7419 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com for more info.

"Reflections" will feature the work of the 23 artists selected from a group of emerging artists throughout the U.S. who submitted entries in both 2-D and 3-D. This is an exciting opportunity for Edgewater's audience to be introduced to the perspectives of a new generation of artists. The show will feature each artist's interpretation of the theme in paint, photography, clay, wood and mixed media. Jurors: John and Gillain Ross. On view Dec. 1-31, with an opening reception, Thursday, Dec. 7, from 5-6:30 p.m.

JACKSON GALLERY

68 S Pleasant St, Middlebury

Visit townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery or call 802-382-9222 for more info.

"Learning Together," is an exhibition of MSS student and instructor work, showcasing the breadth of artistic mediums taught at the school to people of all ages and abilities as well as the joy of the creative process. On view Nov. 10-Dec. 22.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

72 Porter Field Rd, Middlebury

For more info visit middlebury.edu/museum/exhibitions.

"Tossed: Art from Discarded, Found and Re-purposed Materials." "Tossed" brings together — both from Middlebury's collection and from other private and public collections — nearly 20 works that make use of discarded materials. On view through Dec. 10.

NORTHERN DAUGHTERS GALLERY

221 Main Street, Vergennes

Visit northerndaughters.com or call 802-877-2173

"Last Call." This is the final exhibition at Northern Daughters, and will feature the work of Anne Cady, Bonnie Baird, Maria Flores Galindo, Chelsea Granger, Julia Jensen, Rose Umerlik, Hannah Sessions, Pamela Smith, Carla Weeks, and Hannah Secord Wade. On view Nov. 4-Dec. 31. The gallery will close at the end of December 2023. A closing party will be held on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 5-8 p.m.

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 15



ARIES: March 21/April 20. Take it easy this week, Aries. You may need to coast for a little bit rather than racing that car around every turn. Enjoy all the simple things you can do and cherish the memories.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Taurus, if you cannot be yourself with your friends, then with whom? Let down your defenses and do what you want this week, especially if you are celebrating at a social event. No one will be judging.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. Gemini, devote some time to planning your vision of the future, rather than just focusing on the work in front of you. It is wise to be planning months ahead to set yourself up for success.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Others may tell you to get your head out of the clouds, Cancer, but you can leave it right there. It pays to dream a little because you never know when great ideas will come to you.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. Put your emotions first, Leo. Rather than thinking with your head, you need to think with your heart. You have to trust your gut and make decisions based on intuition right now.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, empathy will come very easily to you this week, when you can easily put yourself in someone else's shoes and know just what they are feeling. Continue to support your friends.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Motivations may be running low right now regarding improving your health, Libra. You can start thinking of strategies to put into effect for New Year's resolutions.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Try to keep your feet firmly planted on the ground this week, Scorpio. Various distractions are trying to knock you off course, but you don't have time for that now.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. You need to put family first right now, Sagittarius. Every other thing that is in your orbit should take a back seat to familial obligations and the needs of loved ones.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Capricorn, a conversation with a neighbor or colleague can begin on a casual note and then grow into something much more profound. Always keep your eyes open to possibilities.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/Feb. 18. There are more ways to increase your income without having to resort to backbreaking work, Aquarius. Look around to explore the possibilities that might be out there.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. Pisces, rather than trying to fit in this week, march to the beat of your own drummer. You'll soon find a squad who thinks similarly to you. Then you can enjoy longlasting friendship.

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FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

DEC. 8 — Sammy Davis Jr., singer, actor (d)
DEC. 9 — Dame Judi Dench, actor (89)
DEC. 10 — Ada Lovelace, mathematician (d)
DEC. 11 — Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, novelist (d)

DEC. 12 — Edvard Munch, painter (d)
DEC. 13 — Diego Rivera, painter (d)
DEC. 14 — Tycho Brahe, astronomer (d)

CALENDAR

DEC. 7-15
2023



THURSDAY, DEC. 7

ART OPENING IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, Dec. 7, 5-6:30 p.m., Edgewater Gallery on the Green, 6 Merchants Row. Opening for "Reflections," a juried show of work by emerging artists. Free and open to all.

HOLIDAY TRAINS IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, Dec. 7, 5-8 p.m., Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. The Henry Sheldon Museum's model trains will be operating during the Midd Night Stroll from 5 to 8 p.m. with free admission to the museum and the store will be open for your holiday shopping. More info at henrysheldonmuseum.org or call 802-388-2117.

MAKE A CITRUS STAMPED TEA TOWEL IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Dec. 7, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Stop in at the library on your Midd Night Stroll and join in on an evening of crafting. These towels can be used like any kitchen towel. Everything you need to make a towel will be provided. Space is limited. Register at ilsleypubliclibrary.org/citrus-stamped-tea-towel or talk to Renee.

"A CHRISTMAS CAROL" IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Join Middlebury Acting Company for a new holiday tradition in Middlebury as it brings to you its imaginative and theatrical version

of this classic tale. Starring Jordan Gullikson again as Scrooge with a talented ensemble of newcomers and previous cast members and new updates. In the spirit of the transformed Scrooge, we offer this holiday show on a pay-as-you-can basis. Tickets \$30/\$20/\$15/\$10/\$5 in advance available at townhalltheater.org or make a donation of your choice at the door.

JAZZ SHOWCASE AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE. "CANCELED" Dec. 7, 7:30 p.m., Lower Lobby, Mahaney Arts Center.

FRIDAY, DEC. 8

HOLIDAY GIFT WORKSHOP: HANDMADE SOAPS IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Dec. 8, 4-6 p.m., Middlebury Studio School, 63 Maple St., Suite 8A. Come to Middlebury Studio School in the Marble Works to make a special gift while you're guided through the melt and pour process of making glycerin soap. Add fragrance, dried flowers and color to customize your soap and explore the process of making a variety of shapes using molds. Register at middleburystudioschool.org All levels/Ages 10+.

CANDY CANE HUNT AND S.D. IRELAND HOLIDAY CEMENT TRUCK IN BRISTOL. Friday, Dec. 8, 5:30 p.m., downtown. Bundle up and head to Bristol to help Santa find his lost candy canes. Santa will be arriving at the Town

Green with his friends from SD Ireland at 6 p.m. Prizes awarded to kids who find 10 candy canes, special prize to the person who finds the golden candy cane. Free and open to the public.

"A CHRISTMAS CAROL" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Dec. 8, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Dec. 7 listing.

MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY WIND ENSEMBLE IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. The 40 musicians of the Middlebury Community Wind Ensemble celebrate many local connections in their winter concerts, including "Ilseley's March" to salute the centennial of Middlebury's Ilseley Library, "Madlyn's March" written by Vermont composer Ken Bagley, soprano Gwen Delgadillo singing two Gershwin favorites, and works by Debussy and Grofé that have been transcribed by two Midd Winders, Jack Clay and Jerome Shedd. Free.

BROADWAY DIRECT IN VERGENNES. Friday, Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m., Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. A holiday favorite produced by creator and Broadway Professional Bill Carmichael (Walsh). He brings his performing friends together for another powerhouse show to the Little City, featuring singers/actors directly from the Broadway stage, and some local student talent as well. Tickets \$20

adults/\$10 students, available at vergennesoperahouse.org.

"KRAMPUSNACHT: STORIES OF LIGHT AND DARK FOR THE WINTER SOLSTICE" IN ROCHESTER. Friday, Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m., 185 Brandon Mountain Rd. Performed in an outdoor amphitheater, Krampusnacht is an eclectic mix of original material and seasonal traditions from around the world presided over by Krampus himself, the dark companion of St. Nicholas who punishes naughty children in European folklore. Bald Mountain's most popular event of the year, this show celebrates the dual nature of the season — reflecting on both the longest night of the year as well as the hope of brighter days to come. Rain, Snow or Clear. Tickets are \$15, available at baldmountaintickets.ludus.com. Streaming available through TheaterEngine.com. More info at baldmountaintheater.org.

SATURDAY, DEC. 9

WILDLIFE WALK IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Dec. 9, 8-10 a.m., meet at Otter View Park parking area, Weybridge St. and Pulp Mill Bridge Rd. Join OCAS-MALT and help survey birds and other wildlife at Otter View Park and Hurd Grassland. Beginning birders are welcome. Come for all or part of the walk. For information, including the latest COVID constraints, call 802-388-6019 or 802-388-1007.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

MCTV SCHEDULE Channels 1071 & 1091		MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY TELEVISION: P.O. Box 785, Middlebury, Vt. 05753		Please see the MCTV website, www.middleburycommunitytv.org, for changes in the schedule; MCTV events, classes and news; and to view many programs online. Submit listings to the above address, or call 388-3062.	
MCTV Channel 1071 Friday, December 8 Through the Night: Public Affairs 7:30 a.m. Congregational Church 9 a.m. Gov. Scott 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 3 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Church 5:30 p.m. Racial Disparities Advisory Panel Saturday, December 9 Through the Night: Public Affairs 7:30 a.m. Dr. John Campbell, Public Affairs 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 5:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Vermont Economy 8:30 p.m. Energy Week 9:30 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 10:30 p.m. Press Conferences Sunday, December 10 Through the Night: Public Affairs 4:30 a.m. Dr. John Campbell 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 9:30 a.m. Press Conferences 11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 12:30 p.m. Public Affairs 3 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour		4 p.m. Congregational Church 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Press Conf, - 350 Vermont 7:50 p.m. Gov. Scott 9 p.m. Bill McKibben Event in Jericho Monday, December 11 Through the Night: Public Affairs 5 a.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4:30 p.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10 p.m. Bill McKibben in Jericho Tuesday, December 12 Through the Night: Public Affairs 5:30 a.m. Bill McKibben in Jericho 6:30 a.m. Montpelier Happy Hour, Public Affairs 9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 3:40 p.m. Press Conf. - 350 Vermont 4 p.m. Congregational Service 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs Wednesday, December 13 Through the Night: Public Affairs 7:10 a.m. Press Conf. - 350 Vermont 7:30 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 2:30 p.m. Green Mountain Care Board	6 p.m. Gov. Scott 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs Thursday, December 14 Through the Night: Public Affairs 5 a.m. Selectboard 8 a.m. Congregational Service 12 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 8:30 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10 p.m. Dr. John Campbell Channel 1091 Friday, December 8 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 a.m. Poets & Authors 9:30 a.m. Food & Cooking Programs 1 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 5 p.m. PechaKucha Night 6:30 p.m. Moccasin Tracks 8:30 p.m. Tip Top Couture Fall Fashion Show 9:30 p.m. All Brains Belong 10:30 p.m. The Parkinson Pantomime Project Saturday, December 9 5 a.m. Music in the Morning 7 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 8 a.m. Moccasin Tracks 8:30 a.m. Dorothy Canfield Fisher Revisited	10 a.m. Monteverdi Music School Fall Faculty Concert 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 4:30 p.m. All Brains Belong 5:30 p.m. Hitchcock & The Art Of Suspense 7:06 p.m. PechaKucha Night 8:30 p.m. Moccasin Tracks 9:00 p.m. The Harvard Computers: Hidden Figures In Astronomy Sunday, December 10 6 a.m. Harvard Computers 6:57 a.m. Monteverdi Fall Concert 8:50 a.m. Parkinsons Pantomime 10 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 3 p.m. Tip Top Couture 6 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 7 p.m. Moccasin Tracks 7:30 p.m. Monteverdi Fall Concert 9:30 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 10:30 p.m. Poets and Authors Monday, December 11 5 a.m. Music in the Morning 7 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 7:45 a.m. Moccasin Tracks 10 a.m. Yoga 11 a.m. Food & Cooking Programs 12 p.m. School Board Meetings 4 p.m. Parkinsons Pantomime 8 p.m. All Brains Belong	9 p.m. Poets and Authors Tuesday, December 12 5 a.m. Music in the Morning 7 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 8 a.m. Moccasin Tracks 10 a.m. Yoga 11 a.m. Food & Cooking Programs 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s, State Board of Education 8 p.m. All Brains Belong 9 p.m. Poets and Authors Wednesday, December 13 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. At The Ilsley 12 p.m. Monteverdi Fall Concert 6 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 10 p.m. Poets and Authors Thursday, December 14 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga 6:30 a.m. Food & Cooking Programs 7:30 a.m. Poets and Authors 12 p.m. Tip Top Couture 1 p.m. Monteverdi Fall Concert 3 p.m. All Brains Belong 4 p.m. Yoga 5 p.m. School Board Meetings 11 p.m. State Board of Education

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN HUNTINGTON. Saturday, Dec. 9, Audubon Nature Center, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. Lovely 3-mile walk on the trails maintained by Vermont Audubon. Walk along the Huntington River, through forests, meadows, and around a well-established beaver pond. Hiking time around 2 hours with opportunities to learn a bit about birds. Contact Jennifer Kluever at 907-793-0622 for meeting time details. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

"A CHRISTMAS CAROL" IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Dec. 9, 2 and 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Dec. 7 listing.

CLOSING PARTY IN VERGENNES. Saturday, Dec. 9, 5-8 p.m., Northern Daughters Gallery, 221 Main St. Come view "Last Call" NoDa's final exhibit and help them celebrate seven years of wonderful art and community. With the owners moving on to other endeavors, this final show will feature the work of Anne Cady, Bonnie Baird, Maria Flores Galindo, Chelsea Granger, Julia Jensen, Rose Umerlik, Hannah Sessions, Pamela Smith, Carla Weeks and Hannah Secord Wade.

CONTRA DANCE IN CORNWALL. Saturday, Dec. 9, 7-9:30 p.m., Cornwall Town Hall, Route 30. Sally Newton will be calling, with music by Red Dog Riley. Masks optional. \$5 to \$10 or pay what you can.

DECEMBER VOCAL CONCERT IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. Middlebury College voice students of Carol Christensen and Susanne Peck cap off a semester of study with a lively evening of songs and arias. Watch the livestream of the performance at youtube.com/@robisonhall. Free.

"KRAMPUSNACHT: STORIES OF LIGHT AND DARK FOR THE WINTER SOLSTICE" IN ROCHESTER. Saturday, Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m., 185 Brandon Mountain Rd. See Dec. 8 listing.

SUNDAY, DEC. 10

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE OR SNOWSHOE IN ELIZABETHTOWN, N.Y. Sunday, Dec. 10, Knob Lock. Moderate hike up Knob Lock, near Hurricane Mtn. There is a regular track up this mountain, no trails. Mileage is about 3 miles round trip with about 1,500 feet elevation gain. Required gear will be dependent on conditions. Contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926 for details. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

FREE FAMILY HOLIDAY CRAFTS IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Dec. 10, 9:30-11 a.m., Middlebury Studio School, 63 Maple St, Suite 8A. Join Middlebury Studio School instructors for a morning of holiday themed crafts. Follow your creativity without making a mess at home. Free and open to

everyone. Hot chocolate and other light refreshments provided.

ORNAMENT MAKING IN ORWELL. Sunday, Dec. 10, 11 a.m., Orwell Free Library, 473 Main St. Come make ornaments. This free event will have loads of winter themed art supplies to create ornaments for all frigid occasions. Gather up your friends and family and come to the for some hot chocolate induced crafting.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY CONCERT IN HINESBURG. Sunday, Dec. 10, 2 and 4:30 p.m., St. Jude Catholic Church, 10759 Route 116. The Hinesburg Artist Series will present its annual holiday concert, featuring the South County Chorus and the Hinesburg Artist Series Orchestra. Featured guest artist is cellist Jiwon Lee. Free, but donations to Hinesburg Artist Series are welcome. The audience is also encouraged to bring something for the food shelf. More info at hinesburgartistseries.org.

BRANDON FESTIVAL SINGERS CHRISTMAS CONCERT IN BRANDON. Sunday, Dec. 10, 3 p.m., Brandon Congregational Church, 1 Carver St. The singers, under the direction of Gene Childers, come from several area towns and have been rehearsing since October. The program features a wide variety of musical styles including original pieces, instrumentals and soloists. A free will offering will be received, a portion of which will benefit the Brandon Free Public Library Renovation Fund.

LESSONS AND CAROLS IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Dec. 10, 4 and 7 p.m., Middlebury Chapel, Old Chapel Rd. The Middlebury College Department of Music and the Scott Center for Spiritual and Religious Life collaborate to present an annual Lessons and Carols for Advent and Christmas service at the Middlebury Chapel. A festive evening of songs and text for the campus and community. Free, but donations accepted for local charities.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 13

SHELDON MUSEUM MEMBER APPRECIATION WEEK IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Dec. 13-Saturday, Dec. 16, Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. The museum is celebrating its many generous, supportive members with an additional 10% off applicable items purchased in the museum's store and one free raffle ticket for the holiday trees and wreaths raffle. Admission is free for members

and the trains will be operating from 1-3:30 p.m. each day. More info at henrysheldonmuseum.org or 802-388-2117.

COOKIES & COCOA: HENRY SHELDON MUSEUM ANNUAL MEETING IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Dec. 13, 5-7 p.m., Little Seed Coffee Roasters, 24 Merchants Row. Members and not-yet members are encouraged to attend and meet new Executive Director Coco Moseley. Free and open to all. RSVP encouraged but not required. For more information visit henrysheldonmuseum.org or call 802-388-2117.

"REAR WINDOW" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. The MCCFC Hitchcock Series continues with one of the director's most well-known films. Come watch then dive deep into the discussion.

WINTER PERFORMANCE SALON IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Dec. 13, 6 p.m., St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Main St. Come to the Middlebury Community Music Center's winter salon. Performance Salons give students from a variety of studios a chance to perform pieces they have been studying for family and friends in an intimate and supportive setting. Even if you or your child isn't performing, we encourage you to come and listen for inspiration and to connect with our musical community. Free and open to the public.

THURSDAY, DEC. 14

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN CHARLOTTE. Thursday, Dec. 14, Charlotte Wildlife Refuge. Easy 3.1-mile hike through woodlands and farms. The 290-acre property includes 2.25 miles of gravel trails winding through fields with beautiful views of Lake Champlain and the Adirondacks. Elevation gain is about 200 feet. Pets are not allowed on this hike. Contact trip leader Ken Corey at kencorey53@gmail.com for questions and to register. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

HOLIDAY TRAINS IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Dec. 14, 5-8 p.m., Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. The Henry Sheldon Museum's model trains will be operating during the Midd Night Stroll from 5 to 8 p.m. with free admission to the museum. More info: henrysheldonmuseum.org or 802-388-2117.

FRIDAY, DEC. 15

STORY TIME WITH SANTA IN BRISTOL. Friday, Dec. 15, noon-1 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. Come on down to Holley Hall for story time with Santa. The Jolly Elf will be reading holiday-themed stories.

"ADRIAN: THE ALTERNATIVE PANTO" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Dec. 15, 7 p.m., Addison Repertory Theatre, Hannaford Career Center, 51 Charles Ave. ART presents an English-style panto this holiday season. Panto, a holiday tradition in the UK, takes a well-known fairy tale, adds in a good deal of parody, song and dance, and a number of Monty Python-esque elements for a family-friendly and laugh-filled evening. Tickets \$15, includes dessert buffet. More info at addisonrepertorytheater@gmail.com or 802-382-1012.

BENEFIT CONCERT AND HYMN SING FOR CHARTER HOUSE IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Dec. 15, 7 p.m., United Methodist Church, North. Pleasant St. Join in the 13th annual concert and hymn sing to benefit the Housing and Feeding Programs of the Charter House Coalition. Secular as well as traditional Christmas music for all ages. Free but an offering will be taken to support Charter House. Reception in the fellowship hall following the concert. Questions? Contact Tom Colley at 802-388-9405.

NIGHT FIRES IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Dec. 15, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. A Winter Solstice Celebration of our time. Rooted in ancient traditions, an "opera" with poetry and dance, a pageant rich in color, image and spirit. Tickets \$27/\$22/\$17 available at townhalltheater.org.

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ACROSS

1. Spiritual leaders
7. Salt
13. Fortified wine
14. Edible mollusk
16. It begins with them
17. A way to compare
19. Governmentt lawyer
20. Back parts
22. 8th month (abbr.)
23. Very willing
25. __ ex machina
26. Satisfies
28. Quebec river
29. A doctrine
30. Popular pickup truck
31. Dekagram
33. Naturally occurring solid material

34. Company officer
36. Villains
38. Cricket frogs
40. German founder of psychology
41. Endured
43. A female domestic
44. A "place" to avoid
45. Cigarette (slang)
47. Canadian politician Josephine
48. French ballet/ acting dynasty
51. Employee stock ownership plan
53. Belonging to the bottom
55. Sound
56. Yankees' slugger Judge
58. Dickens character

59. More wise
60. Flash memory card
61. Exposing human vice or folly to ridicule
64. Atomic #79
65. Longtime Braves pitcher Julio
67. Humor
69. Shawl
70. Preliminary assessment of patients

DOWN

1. Animal disease
2. Commercial
3. Craft supply
4. Storage units
5. Investment vehicle
6. Colorado Heisman winner
7. In a way, sank

	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			
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	9				3			
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			6	3			2	
	8			4				1
1						8		5
			5		7			9
	7		2					

Sudoku

Each Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 grid that has been subdivided into nine smaller grids of 3x3 squares. To solve the puzzle each row, column and box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9. Puzzles come in three grades: easy, medium and difficult.

Level: Medium

8. Post-birth brain damage (abbr.)
9. Lay about
10. Intestinal
11. The opposite of yes
12. Caused to be loved
13. Messianic in Islamic eschatology
15. Showing since conviction
18. Not safe
21. The number above the line in a fraction
24. Yard invader
26. Pouch
27. Swedish krona
30. Start anew
32. While white or yellow flower
35. Fourteen
37. Graphical user interface
38. Up-to-date on the news
39. Campaigns
42. Touch softly
43. "Boardwalk Empire" actress Gretchen
46. Violent seizure of property
47. One who supports the Pope
49. Anxiety
50. Body fluid
52. Phony person
54. Title of respect
55. Chilean city
57. City in central Japan
59. Silk garment
62. Draw from
63. Automobile
66. Man
68. Legal bigwig (abbr.)

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 13.

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DIRECT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

This year's show brings some returning performers and some new faces to the VOH stage. Joining Bill on stage will be Mark Aldrich, Jennifer Evans, and returning favorite, Kathryn Markey who will once again reprise her role as the beloved "Debbie Claus."

New this year is the inclusion of newly minted NYC actor/singers Caitlin Walsh and Landan Berlof.

And, as in years past, local high school talent, VUHS senior Matilda Seylor and Rory Hendee, will join the professionals on stage.

This year's program is a wonderful mixture of Broadway Classic medleys from "My Fair Lady," "Brigadoon," and "Fiddler on the Roof." There will also be songs from "HadesTown," "Chicago," "Parade," and the "Secret Garden."

To top off the evening, be prepared to recognize songs written by The Beatles, Carol King, and Randy Newman.

The entire ensemble will be accompanied by the talented Scott Nicholas.

Tickets may be purchased online at VergennesOperaHouse.org or at the door. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students 18 and younger. Doors and cash bar open at 6:30 p.m., and the show starts at 7:30 p.m. General seating.

For more information contact the Vergennes Opera House via email at info@vergennesoperahouse.org, call 802-877-6737 or visit VergennesOperaHouse.org.

FIRES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Poems by such magnificent poets as Naomi Shihab Nye, William Stafford, Jane Hirshfield, Lucille Clifton, Rumi, Hafez and Coleman Barks help weave part of the magical web, accompanied by contemporary folk and blues music, as well as traditional songs from Italy, Estonia, Norway, the former Yugoslavia and our own country.

Tiered ticket pricing available, and can be purchased by calling the box office Monday through Friday from 12-5 p.m., by calling 802-382-9222 or by visiting townhalltheater.org.

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Jade

Jade is an affectionate young feline who we estimate to be 1-2 years old. She is a chow-hound and mealtime is her favorite time of day! Jade was a mom of 2 kittens who have been adopted and she is now ready to be welcomed into her own home! She has not gotten along with the cats at the shelter and we are unsure how she is with dogs.

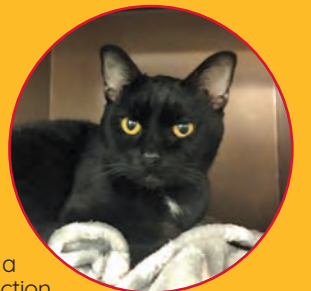


Julie

Julie is estimated to be 3 years old and is shy and reserved. She is very sweet and loves to perch in high places. She does well with other cats. Julie dances on her tippy-toes and spins in circles for chicken and wet food!

Mallard

Mallard is playful and sweet. We estimate him to be about 3 years old. He has spent most of his time in a foster home but has recently returned to the shelter. Mallard has lived with other cats. He currently has a condition called Pillow Paw which is a softening of the paw pads due to infection. He is on an antibiotic and will need to continue treatment until he is better.



Brandy

Brandy is an active 40-pound brindle pit bull mix. She is 3 years old and likes to spend time with people. She is crate-trained and knows commands like sit and come! Brandy does not like being bothered when eating food or having a puzzle toy. Going for walks and playing fetch is at the top of Brandy's most loved list of things to do! She can live with respectful older children and is motivated to learn new tricks for treats. Brandy did not get along with the other animals in her previous home and would do best being the only pet in her new home. Snuggly with her people and likes to bury herself in blankets.

Finley

Finley is a 3-year-old, 41-pound pit bull/beagle mix. He is a happy, goofy bundle of joy who loves being with people. Finley gets along with children and cats. He has lived with another dog but was guarding food around him and should be the only dog in the household. Finley is great at playing fetch and knows quite a few basic commands.



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*This week's property is managed by IPJ Real Estate.
More info at middvermontrealestate.com.*



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7	5	9	6	3	1	4	2	8
3	8	6	9	4	2	7	5	1
1	4	2	3	9	6	8	7	5
6	3	8	5	1	7	2	4	9
9	7	5	2	8	4	1	6	3

R	A	B	B	I	S	S	A	L	I	N	E
M	A	D	E	I	R	A	A	B	A	L	O
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E	S	O	P		B	A	S	A	L	T	O
A	A	R	O	N	P	I	P	S	A	G	E
S	D		S	A	T	I	R	I	C	A	L
T	E	H	E	R	A	N		S	A	R	C
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EXHIBITS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

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"Water," is a juried

photo exhibit that captures the experience of water: beautiful, wondrous, fearsome, or all of these. Juror Laura Moya selected approximately 35 images for exhibition in the Middlebury gallery, and 40 more for the online gallery. On view Dec. 1-22.

SHELDON MUSEUM

1 Park Street, Middlebury
For more info visit henrysheldonmuseum.org

"From Homespun to Couture: Fashion in Historic Middlebury," curated by Eva Garcelon-Hart, features local advertisements, newspapers, fashion magazines, photographs, trade cards, catalogs, and all manner of documentation from the Henry Sheldon Museum's archives, revealing what Middlebury residents wore, bought, and sold during the 19th and early 20th centuries. On view through Jan. 13, 2024.

"Stellar Stitching: 19th Century Vermont Samplers." Features textiles as a learning tool through needlework samplers made exclusively by young girls in the 19th-century depicting alphabets, numerals and decorative elements. On view May 13-Jan. 13, 2024.

SPARROW ART SUPPLY

52 Main Street, Middlebury
Visit sparrowartsupply.com or call 802-989-7225
for more info.

"Home Is Where the Art Is," an artisan market for holiday giving featuring creations by over 50 local artisans. On view from Nov. 17-Jan. 13.

Get in the holiday spirit in
Hinesburg, Sunday, Dec. 10

The Hinesburg Artist Series will present its annual holiday concert on Sunday, Dec. 10, with performances at 2 and 4:30 p.m., at St. Jude Catholic Church in Hinesburg. The concert will feature the South County Chorus and the Hinesburg Artist Series Orchestra under the direction of Rufus C. Patrick. The featured guest artist will be cellist Jiwon Lee.

"We will have holiday favorites and other inspiring selections," said HAS Music Director Patrick. "Sharing this great music performed by our talented musicians is such a joyful experience."

This is a wonderful tradition dating back over 25 years that will also include a sing-along and maybe the appearance of a special guest. The concert is free, but donations to HAS are welcome and the audience is also encouraged to bring something for the food shelf. Visit hinesburgartistseries.org for more information.



UPCOMING MUSIC

Middlebury Messiah Sing returns on Dec. 17

Come join friends and neighbors for our annual Messiah Sing, a joyous afternoon of community music-making at the Congregational Church of Middlebury, slated for Sunday, Dec. 17, from 2-3:30 p.m.

Singers, instrumentalists and all who enjoy music are warmly welcomed to sing or play along — or simply to come to watch and listen — as we hear soloist from the local community, and together we all sing many of the choruses from The Messiah, composed by George Frederic Handel in 1742. Jeff Rehbach leads the sing-along of this famous work for choir and orchestra, that attracts hundreds of singers and players from throughout the region and from across the state.

Middlebury's first Messiah Sing took place in

December 1984. Nearly every year since then, on a Sunday afternoon just before Christmas, singers and orchestra players arrive at the historic Congregational Church, as the Messiah Sing has grown into a community holiday celebration.

This year's reading continues the tradition of featuring soloists drawn from choirs in Middlebury and throughout Vermont, with Jessica Allen, Erin Grainger, Adam Hall, Joe McVeigh, Sam Trudel, Leila McVeigh, and Wendy Taylor. Solo numbers will be accompanied by a string quartet from our nearby towns and villages, including David Gusakov, Emily Sunderman, Bill Pierson, and Dieuwke Davydov. Jeff Buettner, Middlebury College's director of choral activities, and Ronnie Romano, Middlebury Community Chorus conductor, will

add harpsichord and organ accompaniment.

Chorus music and orchestra parts (for strings and oboe/flute) are provided, as we read many of the finest choruses from this beloved oratorio, including the "Hallelujah" chorus. If you have your own copy of the Messiah, please bring it along. If you plan to play in the orchestra, please bring a music stand and arrive 15 minutes early.

The Congregational Church of Middlebury and the Middlebury Community Music Center, as well as members of the Community Chorus, help make our annual Messiah Sing possible. Donations are welcome (\$10 individual / \$25 family) at the door. For more information, contact jeff.rehbach@gmail.com or 802-382-7493.



PHOTO / JAMES P. BLAIR



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**during the
Mid Night Strolls
on 12/7 and 12/14
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**RING IN NEW YEAR'S EVE
AT TOWN HALL THEATER**
FAMILY-FRIENDLY SHOW FEATURES
TWIDDLE CO-FOUNDER
MIHALI

**Sunday, December 31st at 7 p.m.
At Town Hall Theater**

On Sunday, December 31, Town Hall Theater invites audiences of all ages to ring in the New Year with Mihali. The Grammy-nominated, Vermont-based solo singer, songwriter, guitarist, artist, and Twiddle co-founder follows reggae's evolutionary ebb and flow. Exuding a balanced mix of rich influences, Mihali's music entwines reggae spirit, fluid soundscape architecture, and invigorating mantras meant to be chanted aloud in a packed venue.

"For the second year in a row, THT presents a New Year's Eve fit for the whole family – this year featuring reggae and rock legend Mihali. We'll ring in 2024 early with a countdown somewhere between 9:30 and 10pm – otherwise known as Ripton midnight," quipped THT Executive Director Lisa Mitchell.

Adult tickets: \$40 includes champagne toast. Kids under 12: \$20. Tickets available online at www.townhalltheater.org or by calling 802.382.9222. Cash bar available throughout the show. Mexico in Vermont will be onsite with an array of food to purchase.



Don't Miss These Upcoming Events

MACo Presents A Christmas Carol December 1-2 & 7-9 at 7pm December 2, 3 & 9 at 2pm	Theatre Group Ltd. Presents Night Fires December 15-16 at 7:30pm December 17 at 4:00pm	THT Presents Winter Solstice Celebration December 21 at 4:00pm	Met Opera HD Presents Florencia en el Amazonas December 20 at 11:00am	MNFF Selects Presents Immediate Family December 21 at 7:00pm	THT Presents Kat & Brett Holiday Show December 22 at 7:00pm
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