



Home stand

After years performing on the road, local musician Mihali will play at THT on NYE. See Arts + Leisure.



Eagles are 3-0

The Mount Abe girls overcame a midgame slide and Montpelier on Tuesday. See Sports, Page 1B.



Dear Santa

Read a collection of adorable kids' letters to Kris Kringle inside on Pages 12A&13A.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Flooding returns, but effects not so terrible

Heavy rains net closed schools, roads

By VTDigger.org staff

VERMONT — Heavy rain and melting snow inundated much of Vermont on Monday, leading to swift-water rescues, evacuations, road closures and early school dismissals, including in Addison Central School District. As some rivers crested and others continued to rise Monday evening, state officials urged Vermonters to exercise caution and remain

vigilant.

At a press conference late Monday afternoon in Berlin, Gov. Phil Scott noted that the storm had come just months after floods devastated the state in July.

“As we continue the recovery from this summer’s flooding, I know this is the last thing Vermonters want to see right now — and especially during the holiday (See *Flooding*, Page 10A)

City OK’s \$1.75M for firefighting equipment

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — Vergennes residents on Tuesday backed a proposal to bond for up to \$1.75 million for the city’s fire department to spend on replacing a 21-year-old heavy rescue truck and a 25-year-old ladder truck. The vote tally was 90-64 in low turnout. Around 7.2% of registered voters participated.

The face value proposed for new vehicles on the ballot included \$1.125 million for a new heavy rescue truck and \$500,000 for a used ladder truck, plus \$125,000 for radios needed for both new trucks.

Fire Chief Dave DiBiase, during the runup to the vote, called both vehicles critical. He said the heavy (See *Equipment*, Page 19A)



Bright lights, big crowd

THE PREMIERE OF night skiing at the Middlebury Snowbowl in Hancock this past Friday was a big hit. About 1,000 skiers and boarders came to try out the new four-seater Sheehan Lift. Thankfully, it carried people up the mountain much faster than the three-seater it replaced. See more photos on Page 17A.

Independent photo/Steve James

Women help nonprofits with county giving circle

By MARIN HOWELL

ADDISON COUNTY — A giving circle made up of Addison County women has funneled nearly \$100,000 into area nonprofits during its first year.

The philanthropic initiative is called 100+ Women Who Care Addison County. Every three months, the group’s over 100 members contribute \$100 each and gather to vote on local organizations to receive the pooled donations.

Throughout the past year, and with a boost from additional grant funding, the group has contributed a total of \$97,200 to a dozen county nonprofits.

“It’s really wonderful that we’ve (See *100 women*, Page 8A)



Santa’s helpers

MOUNT ABE STUDENTS were in a festive mood on Tuesday night, and the Christmas spirit seems to have paid off as the Eagle girls’ basketball team gave them an early present with a win over visiting Montpelier.

Independent photo/Steve James

Middlebury selectboard to see one member leave

Fuentes-George to depart; Khan will run

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — The waning days of 2023 are forcing a number of incumbent municipal officials to weigh their re-election prospects before the Jan. 29 filing deadline to get onto the March 5 Town Meeting Day ballot.

And while candidates have a month left to decide, the two Middlebury selectboard members with expiring terms have made up their minds.

Lindsey Fuentes-George won’t seek another three years; Farhad Khan will.

Fuentes-George is rounding out her second three-year term on



FARHAD KHAN

the selectboard. She currently chairs the Middlebury Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Workgroup, and serves on the town’s Energy Committee and the Ilsley Library Renovation/Expansion Working Group.

After six years of service, Fuentes-George will move on from the board to open up an opportunity for someone else.

“I think it’s healthy for the board to rotate more often than it has, historically,” she said during a recent phone interview.

“I hope people can see it’s better for all of us if we have (candidate) choices and it’s better to have a (See *Selectboard*, Page 14A)



By the way

No, that wasn’t recording artist Sir Rod Stewart and his wife, model Penny Lancaster, hanging out at various locations in Addison County this past Thursday, Dec. 14. Veteran *Seven Days* arts reporter Dan Bolles first reported that Stewart — known for such pop hits as (See *By the way*, Page 18A)

Munschauer gives a piece of himself each holiday season

Former vet now a budding artist

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Until last year, Dr. Tom Munschauer was best known for skillfully wielding a scalpel and stethoscope in caring for Addison County residents’ beloved dogs, cats and other small animals.

But these days, you’re more likely to see Munschauer manipulating a paintbrush and palette. A well-earned retirement has allowed him to unleash artistic talents that for decades took a backseat to his veterinary duties at the Middlebury Animal Hospital.

And if you’re fortunate enough to be one of the 56 people on Munschauer’s Christmas card list, you’ve just received a small sampling of his creative oeuvre: A watercolor painting, around 4.5-by-

6.5 inches, depicting a wondrous winter scene. He’s been creating them each holiday for the past 42 years.

It’s tradition that began in 1981, with a depiction of a collection of fir trees on a snowy landscape.

“I only sent out around 15 that year,” Munschauer recalled. “I had just moved to New York City and didn’t really know anybody. I’d left friends scattered throughout the country — some here in Vermont, some back in Buffalo, where I grew up. I had no family in New York, so I conceived of it as a way of sending everyone a Christmas present, easily.”

“Easily” is probably an understatement. His paintings are a true gift of time, effort and beauty. (See *Munschauer*, Page 16A)



FOR THE PAST 42 years, Dr. Tom Munschauer has been creating personalized artwork for the folks on his Christmas list. Examples of that artwork will be part of an upcoming exhibit called “Thomas Munschauer: A New Path,” to open on Friday, Jan. 12, at Town Hall Theater’s Jackson Gallery.

Independent photo/Steve James

MAUSD addresses racism

Incident at BES sparks response

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — Over three dozen community members stood before the Mount Abraham Unified School Board on Tuesday, united in their plea for district officials to instate anti-racist education for teachers and staff and curriculum for students following a recent incident at Bristol Elementary School in which a student was called a racial slur.

“Our goals are twofold; we are expressing our intentions to begin this important work at Bristol Elementary School, and we are asking you to commit to administering this on a district level,” said Nakeeya Deas, a local educator and mother of the student the racial epithet was directed at. (See *MAUSD*, Page 15A)

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Bristol creates a special helper post for the police department

By MARIN HOWELL
BRISTOL — Like most law enforcement agencies, the Bristol Police Department responds to a variety of situations in which community members aren't breaking the law but are in need of help; officers calm neighborhood disputes or check in with individuals experiencing mental health issues.

The Bristol selectboard on Monday voted to create a new "Community Resource Specialist" position that will support town police in responding to the non-criminal calls it receives, including mental health calls, welfare checks and noise complaints, as well as performing other non-law enforcement responsibilities.

Bristol Police Chief Bruce Nason told the selectboard the new role will also help support the department in its community policing approach.

"Our focus is on promoting a safe and caring community. It's not about the number of tickets issued or arrests made," Nason said. "This position will assist us in our continued efforts in providing compassionate, empathetic and caring responses in our community."

According to the drafted job description, the community resource specialist would be tasked with "working with people in need of services that fall outside the scope of law enforcement, but whose needs have been established through contact with the Bristol Police Department." Specific responsibilities of the specialist would include:

- Responding to quality of life calls for service that are non-criminal in nature, including mental health calls, general non-violent citizen disputes and animal complaints.
- Providing various supportive interventions and activities.
- Working with others toward a

goal of reducing law enforcement response to non-emergency complaints.

Nason noted that the new position would allow officers to allocate more time to other duties. The department is currently seeking a fourth full-time officer and employs four part-time officers.

"It will allow officers to complete criminal investigations more timely. As this position will be assisting us, they can go to non-criminal in nature calls, which would free up the officer," Nason said.

The community resource specialist will be a town employee housed within the Bristol Police Department, working directly for the police chief. Due to its nature as a town position, the specialist will respond to calls inside and outside of the police district, which encompasses the village area and a little beyond.

MENTAL HEALTH CALLS

Part of the new position will involve working with community members in need of mental health-related help and conducting follow-ups with those individuals.

"Persistence with proactive responses to people in need of help will minimize the number of calls for service for those in crisis, which is what we do now, but having this position will alleviate the burden on us doing the follow-up because some of these follow-ups take time," Nason explained.

The chief noted the department would continue to send officers to

assist with mental health calls and follow-ups.

"We would not stop doing that as police officers because I think it's important that they know that we are there to assist them, it just gives us someone else that could assist in doing those follow-ups," he said. "Because of those follow-ups, we've had less times of people in crisis."

The department has experienced an uptick in calls requesting mental health help in recent years, a trend

that other police forces in the state have seen as well.

Law enforcement agencies throughout Vermont have begun creating new positions to respond to mental health-related calls and other requests for service. The Vermont State Police has hired mental health crisis specialists

to serve in each of its 10 barracks throughout the state.

"I think this is a great investment into our community, and I think others will follow suit," Nason told the board.

HOW MUCH IT WILL COST

The full-time position is expected to cost around \$80,000 a year with salary and benefits. Creating the role will also require an estimated \$36,150 in one-time expenses, such as a vehicle and other equipment.

The Bristol selectboard on Monday allocated up to \$120,000 of the town's American Rescue Plan Act funds to support the position during the first year. As a town employee, the community resource specialist would eventually be funded through the town's annual budget rather than by the police district.

Town officials hope to fill in the new position in the coming months.

"I feel that this is something that is probably going to be valuable for years to come, and if we can get it up and running, we'll be ahead of the curve," selectboard member John "Peeker" Heffernan said. "We're already ahead of the curve with our police chief doing the work, but he needs help."

"We would not stop (responding to mental health calls) as police officers because I think it's important that they know that we are there to assist them, it just gives us someone else that could assist in doing those follow-ups."

— Bristol Police Chief Bruce Nason



Story Time with Santa

SAINT NICHOLAS AND an elf assistant took a break from gathering Christmas gifts on Dec. 15 to read some holiday-themed stories at Bristol's Holley Hall. In the top photo, Santa displays storybook pages to 2-year-old Prewitt Jimerson-Smith, left, 4-year-old Harvey Morrison and 3-year-old Benjamin Schultiz. Below, Prewitt points to the title of a book for Santa. Right, Harvey relaxes as Santa starts another chapter of the book. Merry Christmas, Everybody!

Independent photos/Steve James



City plan change aids housing

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — The Vergennes City Council last week as expected approved a change in the city's municipal plan that should pave the way for a substantial number of new housing units in the city's northeastern quadrant — possibly more than 130.

After the second and final of two required public hearings, councilors on Dec. 12 made final the substitution of one word in one sentence describing the city's Northern Gateway zoning district.

That sentence in the city plan now reads: "Residential uses are prohibited at the ground level in buildings within 150 feet of the edge of the public right of way on Main Street/22A."

That clause in zoning regulations for the district, which runs roughly from the Vergennes Animal Hospital to the Ferrisburgh town line, previously read "within 300 feet" of Main Street.

Planners say the overall intent of clause is, even as amended, to encourage commercial and office uses along the city's central artery.

But the new language, when inserted by the planning commission into the Vergennes zoning by-laws and made official after more public hearings, will open up at least

two parcels for what officials said could be major new residential development.

One such parcel is a vacant 14.4-acre lot behind the Vergennes Police Station that one company, River's Edge Associates LLC, already intends to develop into housing.

River's Edge principal Peter Kahn told the *Independent* in October the company intends to build 130 units, mostly moderately priced "workforce housing," on the land once it's rezoned — which is now likely.

At the city council's Dec. 12 meeting, Planning Commission Chair Shannon Haggett said planners could complete that work and schedule the first required hearing as soon as next month.

At the council's November public hearing on the proposal, councilors altered the proposed language to "within 150 feet" from an original proposal from planners of "within 200 feet." They made that change, with no objection from Haggett, at the suggestion of Robert Feuerstein, co-owner of the Kennedy Brothers complex in the heart of the Northern Gateway district.

Feuerstein also owns the former Denecker Chevrolet property on the opposite side of the road from

Kennedy Brothers. Feuerstein said a change in the provision to 150 feet would allow him to add housing units on the back of that property.

Councilors in November agreed with Feuerstein and updated the warning for the Dec. 12 hearing to reflect the 150-foot setback. Haggett at that point said only one or two other properties would likely be affected by the change.

OTHER ACTIONS

In addition to welcoming new Councilor John Montgomery at their Dec. 12 meeting (see related story in this edition), the Vergennes City Council members also handled several personnel issues, including:

- Agreed with City Manager Ron Redmond's recommendation to accept Zoning Administrator Peter Garon's willingness to work past his announced retirement date of Dec. 31 until a suitable candidate can be found to replace him.

- Appointed Allison Rimmer and Al Harder-Hyde to the Community Engagement Committee that will work with city officials and Police Chief Jason Ouellette to enhance relations between the police force and the community at large.

- Appointed Cory Glover to the Vergennes Parks and Recreation Committee.

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New Lincoln superintendent ready for work ahead

By MARIN HOWELL

LINCOLN — When Amy Cole takes the reins of the Lincoln School District in January, it will be as much a homecoming as a fresh start for the new superintendent.

Despite spending the past five years living and working on Hawaii’s big island, Cole considers herself a New Englander at heart. She’s spent much of her life in the Northeast, including over two decades serving in various teaching and educational leadership positions in Vermont and New Hampshire.

“I think people are excited that I came from Hawaii, but the reality is I spent 18 years in Vermont,” Cole said during a recent interview. “I feel like I’m returning home.”

Cole is originally from the Boston area, where she spent her formative years and earned a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from Boston University. After college, Cole went on to earn a Master’s in Education from the University of New Hampshire, a Ph.D. in Integrated Studies in Education from McGill University, and a graduate certificate in School Law from the University of Connecticut.

Cole, now 57, began her career in education over 30 years ago as a middle school teacher in New Hampshire. She later ventured into education leadership roles, first at the Fall Mountain Regional School District in New Hampshire, north of Keene, and then in Vermont.

In the Green Mountain State, Cole spent eight years serving as executive director of curriculum, instruction and assessment for the Essex Westford Unified School District and in the Champlain Valley Union School District for five years.

“I became an administrator in large part because I felt we owed it to ourselves to talk more openly and transparently about student learning. I became a curriculum director because that’s what curriculum directors are passionate about,” Cole said.

For the past five years, Cole has served as the assistant head of school at the Hawai’i Preparatory Academy, a private K-12 school in Waimea.

From New Hampshire to Hawaii, Cole’s work in educational leadership has taken various shapes over the years.

“I’ve worked for a multi-town, single district with 11 schools and five towns, I’ve worked within a (supervisory union) situation, I’ve been through a merger,” she said. “Lincoln is another opportunity for me to be able to provide leadership in another context.”

Throughout the various positions she’s held, a passion for providing equitable access to education has remained a central tenet of Cole’s work as an educator, she said.

“I’m a first-generation college student. My parents instilled in me the value of education because it wasn’t something they were able to pursue themselves,” she said. “As I entered into the teaching profession as a teacher, I thought

that would be my contribution to education; to give to someone what was provided to me.”

DRAWN TO LINCOLN

It was that passion for providing students with an accessible education that drew Cole to apply for the top administrator position at the Lincoln School District, a learning community she felt was working toward a similar goal.

“Their motivations, as I understand them, were on behalf of maintaining their school and providing an education to their students. That really resonated with me,” Cole said. “I was looking at a school district, a school, a town that had made a very bold decision and was in need of support, and that felt meaningful to me.”

The Lincoln School District was just as eager to welcome

Cole. The Lincoln School Board at its Nov. 16 meeting unanimously approved Cole as the district’s next leader.

The new administrator is set to start on Jan. 1 at an annual salary of \$125,000. Cole will take over from Madelyn Crudo Burke, who has served as acting superintendent during the district’s first six months of operation.

CREATING A NEW DISTRICT

Cole acknowledged that much of the immediate work ahead for the learning community will center

around creating and maintaining a new school district.

“All of those services that they had received through (the MAUSD) — payroll, state reporting, food service, bus contracts, accounting — we need to build it from the ground up,” she said. “There’s been an extraordinary amount of work that’s been done to this point, and we face an extraordinary amount of work moving forward building a school district from the ground up.”

Sustaining new and older relationships will also be a major focus for Cole upon joining the district.

“In creating the district, it’s developing or maintaining partnerships with our neighboring districts, with the Agency of Education. It’s establishing, in many ways, new relationships because this is a new district,” Cole said.

Come January, Cole and other district officials will also be busy working to finalize an FY’25 spending plan to put out to Lincoln voters.

The new superintendent said she feels prepared to hit the ground running next month.

“I’m most recently working in a small independent school where everyone is trained as a 14-passenger bus driver. We’re all hands on deck when it’s necessary,” she said. “Small, rural schools tend to require that humility and ability to roll your sleeves up and get the work done, and I’m comfortable with that.”

Cole has spent the past week in Lincoln, visiting with district officials and members of the learning community. She’ll soon head back to Hawaii to finish preparing for her move to the



AMY COLE IS preparing to take over as the Lincoln School District’s new superintendent. The administrator said she’s looking forward to joining the learning community and tackling the work ahead. Photo courtesy of Amy Cole

Otter Creek Child Center earns town approval for major expansion project

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Development Review Board on Dec. 11 unanimously approved a major expansion plan for the Otter Creek Child Center (OCCC) at 150 Weybridge St., a project designed to create 77 new childcare slots (for a total of 139) and 28 related new jobs in our area by the spring/summer of 2025.

The project, dubbed the “Community Children’s Center Expansion Project,” calls for a new, 6,900-square-foot addition at the OCCC, along with renovations to the existing building and related site improvements.

Linda January, executive director of OCCC, hailed the DRB’s endorsement of the project, which will provide a much-needed childcare infusion into a county that is in dire need of more slots.

OCCC officials will now seek the required state permissions for the project, most notably an environmental review of the site.

Providing all permits are acquired, January anticipates site work later this winter that will include removal of a historic barn that’s not adaptable to the OCCC’s growth plans.

Then, in the spring, plans call for massive amounts of fill and gravel to be brought in to stabilize the ground for the new addition. An early fall of 2024 groundbreaking is expected for the project, January said. More details about the project can be found at ottercreekcc.org.

In the meantime, OCCC officials will continue to seek funding for the estimated \$10 million project. Organizers have already gathered more than half the amount, primarily through a \$4 million commitment from Middlebury College that includes a 2.5-acre Weybridge Street parcel just west of OCCC that’ll make the building addition possible.

Other funding sources include:

- A federal earmark of \$3,1050,351 that flows through

Let’s Grow Kids.

- A Vermont Community Recovery & Revitalization grant of \$500,000.
- \$350,000 through the Northern Borders Regional Commission.
- \$200,000 from the Let’s Grow Kids “Make Way for Kids” program.
- \$100,000 from the Hoehl Family Foundation, which will serve as seed money for OCCC’s capital project fund drive.

Plans call for the project to be completed in one fell swoop, as opposed to divided into phases that might allow on-site daycare to proceed during construction. But condensing the construction timeline is expected to save considerable funds. January said she’s pursuing temporary space in the downtown area that could host OCCC activities during construction, and she has some strong prospects.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE ADDY INDY!

Our office will be closed on Monday, December 25th and Monday, January 1st.

The advertising deadline for the December 28th edition will be Friday, December 22nd. The advertising deadline for the January 4th edition will be Friday, December 29th.

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Editorial

Yes, Virginia...

Editor’s note: An editorial about the credibility of Santa Claus appeared more than 100 years ago in The New York Sun. It was written by Francis Pharcellus Church, an assistant to the paper’s editor. A true Christmas classic, it has outlived its writer, the recipient, and the newspaper that gave it life. Its most famous phrases are often recalled and sometimes parodied. Here we reprint the famous letter and response, partly in the hopes that parents will take the time to read it aloud to children of appropriate ages (with any editing the reader might make for anachronistic language) and for all to reflect on the less commercial aspects of this holiday season.

We take pleasure in answering at once and thus prominently the communication below, expressing at the same time our great gratification that its faithful author is numbered among the friends of *The Sun*:

Dear Editor:
I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, “If you see it in The Sun, it’s so.” Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?

Virginia Hanlon
115 West 95th Street

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except what they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men’s or children’s, are little. In this great universe of ours mankind is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world around him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that’s no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby’s rattle and see what makes noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, not even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Merry Christmas
and happy holidays to all,
from all of us at
the Addison Independent.



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In the pink

A SETTING SUN casts a pink glow in the sky as a crescent moon rises last Friday, Dec. 15, ahead of a stunning fireworks display and launch of the Middlebury Snowbowl’s night skiing. Skiers and riders will be able to ski from 4 to 9 p.m. every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights throughout the ski season, weather permitting.

Independent photo/Steve James

Older workers are part of equation

A few weeks ago, I read a *New York Times* article that both intrigued and annoyed me: “Vermont May Be the Face of a Long-Term U.S. Labor Shortage.” In it, the authors predict that the aging of Vermont foreshadows the aging of the United States, and this phenomenon will lead to dire circumstances for our country’s workforce.

The authors reflect on ways that Vermont employers are trying to resolve the labor shortage by paying higher wages, training administrators to fill the nursing gap, and bringing in temporary workers, to name a few approaches. Such creative solutions are needed in these times; yet, the tone of the article was not positive. Additionally, the authors make assumptions, including:

- Folks “begin exiting the work force” at age 54
- An older workforce is the death knell of an industry
- Young people are leaving Vermont because of unspecified greener pastures
- Paying people more is somehow the last resort in order to attract or keep employees

In our youth-obsessive country, from the time we are born we are skidding inexorably toward obsolescence, like cars that lose their value from the moment they leave the dealership.

Despite legislation, such as the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), biased, age-related employment practices persist.

In “The State of Age Discrimination and Older Workers in the U.S. 50 Years After the Age

Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)”, Victoria Lipnic, then Acting Chair of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, stated,

“Today’s experienced workers are healthier, more educated, and working and living longer than previous generations. Age-diverse teams and workforces can improve employee engagement, performance, and productivity. Experienced workers have talent that our economy cannot afford to waste.”

Assumptions about what older people can or should do may discourage employers from envisioning how to maintain a multi-generational workforce of older and younger workers. Both groups need the income and the mental and emotional connections that work affords.

In the 21st century, we’re finally understanding (a bit) that parents need flexible hours, as do those caring for aging parents and other dependents. We understand that people with physical limitations need reasonable accommodations. It would be no more difficult to apply these principles to older workers who can, will, and do work.

As an over-54 person, I’ve not exited the work force. I have the privilege of not needing to work full time. However, I earn a much-needed income by teaching part-time. I also volunteer. Through these paid and unpaid positions, I learn a great deal, I am in contact with people of all ages and backgrounds, and my skills contribute to the organizations I’m affiliated with.

While I understand the concern about an aging

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

Ways of Seeing

By Ruth Farmer



Polishing some pearls of wisdom

My sainted mother, the original Jane Lindholm, had an aphorism for every occasion and loved to trot them out. She was a regular Ben Franklin, and I was a gold mine for this predilection, given my adolescent indifference to manual labor and disciplined effort.

It got so that I could anticipate which helpful maxim she would offer for my improvement: “I meant to bring in the trash cans, Mum, really, but I got busy. I know, I know, ‘The streets of hell are paved with good intentions.’”

If I put something off, I would get, “If it were done when ’tis done, then ’twere well / It were done quickly,” and then as a bonus I would get a brief summary of its source and an appreciation of Shakespeare in particular and MacBeth specifically, and perhaps a full rendition of a MacBeth soliloquy: “Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, life creeps on in this petty pace.”

In my own old age, I too have adopted this habit, to a much lesser degree to be sure. My aphorisms are much less learned than my mother’s and less intended to improve the listener.

Given my foibles and flaws, I ask, how am I qualified to proffer wisdom to others? My aphorisms are not inclined to the didactic; they run more to the whimsical and ironic.

But I do try to make a point.

Clippings

By Karl Lindholm



I hope instead for a smile or a nod of the head.

I have asked the *Independent* to do a special edition that includes all of the tentative words of wisdom, hundreds of them, the aphorisms, adages, and maxims, that I have gathered over the years. The Indy brain trust, alas, has demurred.

So, for you, dear readers, I will share, for your edification, in this very space, a few of my favorites:

On Friends: “Among those whom I like or admire, I can find no common denominator, but among those whom I love, I can: all of them make me laugh.”

— *W.H. Auden*

(See *Clippings*, Page 5A)

Letters
to the Editor

Patient grateful
to his community

I recently had full knee replacement surgery at Porter Medical Center in Middlebury. I have been putting it off for some time but the pain got the best of me. I have to say the staff and doctors at orthopedics, the nurses and staff at Porter were outstanding. Living in our community you get to know a lot of people. I also volunteer at Porter. I am recovering and have great movement in my leg. Everyone who was involved prior to and during surgery took very good care of me.

Also, home health with physical therapy, which I am continuing in Brandon, which brings me back stronger every day. The crew at Tri-Valley Transit, who brought me to and from my destinations, hats off to you. I would have been walking otherwise and that wouldn’t have worked.

For myself and my family we thank you very much. Also a special thanks to our friends and neighbors.

Norman Beerman
Salisbury

GOP’s top hope
unfit for office

There’s something we fail to grasp about our national Republican candidate.

There are no laws or penalties that apply, no moral, written, or commonsense rules. Women and girls are tools to be used, abused, and discarded. Taxes are what the foolish pay, like not dodging a draft. Hate-speech entertains. The truth is flexible, or irrelevant. Inject bleach: It cures. Mention charity and forget to contribute.

He can mock the afflicted, weaponize fear and dislike his friends, but there’s much about Hitler that pleases him. Hitler wrote a book, while in jail. Otherwise, reading and writing have no practical use.

As a morally bankrupt, self-anointed autocrat, he inspires the criminal in everyone. Shoot and embezzle at will. Sadism, misogyny, psychosis, psychopathic tendencies, paranoia and egomania are a remarkable mix of personality disorders for one person.

The pilot has not learned to land the plane. We board anyway. What could go wrong?

Alexander Lyall
Middlebury

Don’t move
the 6th-graders

It was encouraging to hear board members at a recent meeting of the Mt. Abraham Unified School District express skepticism of the proposal to move 6th grade students to the Mt. Abe Middle School/High School. There are a variety of possible middle school configurations, from our current 7th and 8th grades, to a grades 5 to 8 approach, to Champlain Valley’s middle school program running at their elementary schools, and no consensus on which middle school configuration is best for kids. Meanwhile, community emotions are still raw from the protracted district effort to close elementary schools despite the deep concerns of the community. Moving 6th grade out of our elementary schools sure looks like a partial closing, again without the consent of parents and taxpayers.

Rather than wasting time on a divisive distraction, our district should focus on the longstanding needs and priorities of our students, as described in the district’s ENDS Monitoring Report of October 2023: first, the huge achievement gap between the general student population and lower income students, and second, the achievement cliff facing all students as they enter high school. It will take laser-focused leadership to successfully address these problems.

Solving these problems will also require using our financial resources in the most cost-effective manner possible, not only to improve student

(See *Olson letter*, Page 5A)



WITH THE SAGE advice of a French novelist in mind, we present here a patch of sky the writer could see when looking east over the Green Mountains at 4 p.m. on Nov. 28.

Photo by Karl Lindholm

Clippings

(Continued from Page 4A)

“You can’t stay in your corner of the Forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes.” — *A.A. Milne*

“My friends are my estate. Forgive me then the avarice to hoard them!” — *Emily Dickinson*

“Fan the sinking flame of hilarity with the wing of friendship; and pass the rosy wine.” — *Charles Dickens*

“Yes’m, old friends is always best, ‘less you can catch a new one that’s fit to make an old one out of.” — *Sarah Orne Jewett, Maine writer*

“It is one of the blessings of old friends that you can afford to be stupid with them.” — *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

“A man deserves a second chance, but keep an eye on him.” — *John Wayne*

On Writing: “You can’t just turn on creativity like a faucet. You have to be in the right mood. What mood is that? Last-minute panic.” — *Bill Watterson, “Calvin & Hobbes”*

“There’s nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and open a vein.” — *Red Smith*

“Do you want to do this thing? Sit down and do it!” — *Ann*

Patchett

“I didn’t have time to write a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead.” — *Mark Twain*

On Friends who are Writers: “It is not often that someone comes along who is a true friend and a good writer.” — *E.B. White*

On Friends who like Sports: “You can’t win all the time. There are guys out there better than you are.” — *Yogi Berra*

“Throw strikes. Home plate don’t move.” — *Satchel Paige*

On Aging: “As we grow old, the beauty steals inward.” — *Emerson*

“I ain’t the man I used to be, but who the hell is?” — *Dizzy Dean*

On Gender: “Here’s all you have to know about men and women: Women are crazy, men are stupid. And the main reason women are crazy is that men are stupid.” — *George Carlin*

On Perspective: “Don’t have to be ashamed of the car I drive; I’m just glad to be here, happy to be alive.” — *The Traveling Wilburys*

“Where there is love and inspiration, I don’t think you can go wrong.” — *Ella Fitzgerald*

“If you hit a wrong note, it’s the next note you play that determines whether it was good or bad.” —

Miles Davis

“If I knew the way, I would take you home.” — *Grateful Dead*

“I am still encouraged to go on. I wouldn’t know where else to go.” — *E.B. White*

“Just when I discovered the meaning of life, they changed it.” — *George Carlin*

“And how should we behave during this Apocalypse? We should be unusually kind to one another, certainly. But we should also stop being so serious. Jokes help a lot. And get a dog, if you don’t already have one.” — *Kurt Vonnegut*

Now, when I find myself tossing and turning at 3 a.m. (my affliction!), sometimes I just have to fall back on the advice of a Nobel Prize winner in Literature (Bob Dylan) who counseled “Don’t think twice, it’s all right!”

I defer too to Proust, here in my Vermont bower of bliss, who reminds me: “Always try to keep a patch of sky above your life.”

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

Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)

workforce, I see it as less dire than the authors of the *New York Times* article do. Instead of assuming that community members are no longer as useful because they have passed an age marker that some have determined is untenable, let’s figure out how to support older workers. For example, how about:

- Improving access to public transportation
- Offering flexible work

schedules

- Accommodating different physical abilities

- Supporting affordable housing
 - Retraining and upscaling skills
- Oh, and look! All those things would help younger workers as well.

As humans age, abilities diminish, either dramatically or just enough to annoy ourselves and others. Nevertheless, an older population still has skills that support local

and national economies. I applaud companies that are considering how to attract new workers, and how to retain seasoned workers. It would be great to read an article whose headline praises these employers’ acknowledgement of and preparation for a new normal in the workplace.

Ruth Farmer is a published essayist and poet. She is sole owner of Farmer Writing and Editing (www.ruthfarmer.com).

Letters to the Editor

Human rights must apply to everyone, not just some

The recent killing of three hostages by the Israeli military makes it even more clear that war has never been and will never be the answer.

Imagine the grief of these families, who will never see their loved ones again. Instead of being reunited and starting to heal from this terrible ordeal, they are now planning funerals.

The government of Israel is

showing how little they care about their own citizens. They say they want to destroy Hamas but their behavior indicates otherwise.

They want to destroy the Palestinian people and take away their land. People who study the Middle East know that oppression only leads to more violence and extremism. If we truly want safety and security for all people, we must honor human rights for

everyone.

Our tax dollars are funding this brutal bombardment of Gaza, which people all over the world are demonstrating against. Jewish people deserve to be safe and protected, wherever they live in the world. Palestinians deserve the same.

Joanna Colwell
Ripton

Rude behavior prevented full enjoyment of show

I’ve just returned from seeing “Nightfires” at the Town Hall Theater — an extraordinary show for which the cast expended many hours of planning and practice and were generous in sharing their talent and passion with our community. The musical and poetry selections, the costuming, the staging, and the music were all magical.

Unfortunately, I did not hear half of it because — as has also been the case the last several theatrical and opera performances I’ve attended at Town Hall Theater — the people sitting behind me chose to carry on a continual conversation throughout

the entire show. These people were not kids, but rather three adults in their sixties or seventies. Both I and the person sitting next to me turned around and gave them a glare several times, and I finally pointedly asked them to please stop talking. This resulted in obnoxious comments and an escalation of their talking.

I am dismayed by the utter sense of entitlement, the rudeness and lack of common courtesy by adults attending a live performance. For those who missed the memo in your childhood: Take off your hat in the theater; do not talk during the performance unless you are

experiencing an emergency; and do not kick the chair in front of you. If you want to talk through a show, stay home and watch your television screen where you can talk incessantly to your heart’s content.

Live theater and music is a gift and a blessing to *all* who are attending (and who paid good money for their seats) — not just by those selfish few who have decided that their running commentary is more important than the experience of the other members of the audience.

Cindy Hill
Middlebury

Faux Rod Stewart created a buzz in Vergennes

The buzz around Vergennes, Bristol and Middlebury last week was that *the* Rod Stewart was spending time in Addison County leading up to Christmas. I even heard that he skied at Middlebury Snowbowl, stayed at the Swift House and was visiting for three weeks. The news spread like wildfire with *Seven Days* writing a witty account of his leather jacket purchase at Your Turn and other occurrences at Sweet Charity and 3 Squares Cafe. By Sunday evening, however *Seven Days* retracted the story as it turns out a (semi)

look-alike with a thick British accent was in the area, along with his wife, who apparently looks like Rod’s partner. Imagine that!

What I *do* know is that we’re in the last lap of days leading up to Christmas. I, for one, am counting on Santa to come down the chimney — *and* I can count on the downtown shops of the Little City for gifts that will warm the heart and soul.

A wise former boss of mine once told me there’s no such thing as bad publicity. While I tended to disagree with him on

various levels of such, the buzz about Vergennes highlighted three of the long-standing shops in our downtown — Sweet Charity, Your Turn and 3 Squares — and sent a vibe of Vergennes as a cool, cool, cool place to be. Am I projecting? I think not.

Was Rod real? Was the leather jacket fake too? Could Elvis be coming this week — or has he left the building? Regardless, Happy Holidays to you and yours from Vergennes Partnership.

Julie Nelson Basol
Vergennes Partnership

Olson letter

(Continued from Page 4A)

outcomes, but also to offer some relief to beleaguered taxpayers. Fortunately, the district’s Levenson Report, issued in February 2021, offers a roadmap for significant cost savings of up to \$2.3 million (2021 dollars); for example, using school-based, experienced educators as instructional coaches, looking critically at the functions of central office middle managers, sharing elementary school staff more effectively, and empowering facility leadership to address student needs within broad District parameters.

The Levenson Report also points out that staff assigned to intervene with students who are under-achieving or exhibiting

troublesome behavior can be expanded without increased spending. Finally, Levenson Report analysis implies that even without a merger with the Vergennes district, on which the voters have spoken, collaborative sharing of central office and educational resources can improve student learning and save upwards of \$1.2 million in the Mt. Abe district alone. Perhaps some of these savings are more difficult, or less promising than described in the Levenson Report. But we won’t know until the school board

is given the opportunity to weigh in.

Please support the school board in its efforts to focus on the real priorities for improving student education, and to have a serious, in-depth examination at the board or committee level of the opportunities for savings identified in the Levenson Report. Contacting your town representatives now can make a difference, especially as next year’s budget is being prepared.

Herb Olson
Starksboro



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ADDISON
COUNTY

Obituaries

Patricia Mae Hornbeck, 85, of Cornwall

CORNWALL — Patricia Mae Hornbeck, age 85, passed peacefully on Dec. 13, 2023, at Porter Medical Center in Middlebury.

Patricia was born in Sudbury on June 21, 1938. She was the daughter of Charles and Marie (McIntyre) Hornbeck. She grew up in Sudbury, where she received her early education and graduated from Middlebury High School, class of 1956. She furthered her education at Becker College, where she earned her degree. She worked as a benefits administrator for the State of Vermont for 41 years. Following retirement, she ran the Community House in Middlebury for several years. She belonged to Middlebury American Legion Unit 27 Ladies Auxiliary. She enjoyed gardening. Surviving is her husband,



PATRICIA MAE HORNBECK

Norman Grenier of Cornwall, whom she married June 7, 2011 in Salisbury; one daughter, Kristin

Provost and her husband Teddy of Colchester; and two sisters, Janice MacIntyre and Mickey Hornbeck. She was predeceased by her parents and three brothers, Ronald, Edward and James Hornbeck; and her first husband, Richard Bullock.

A graveside committal service and burial will take place, at a later date in Farmingdale Veterans Cemetery in Middlebury. Following the service the family will receive friends, at Middlebury American Legion Post #27, for a time of remembrance.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made, in her memory to; Addison County Humane Society, 234 Boardman Street, Middlebury, VT 05753.

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

Wayne Paul Lauden, 77, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Wayne Lauden died on Dec. 7, 2023, surrounded by his family following a rapid advancement of Alzheimer's disease. The son of Elizabeth (Hoffacker) and Ernest Lauser, he was born in Philadelphia on July 30, 1946, and raised in Media, Pa.

A talented musician and inherently creative, Wayne was classically trained in trumpet at Temple University and devoted to the arts in all forms. He wrote countless tunes and songs (including a full-length opera), played eight instruments, and explored sound design, stagecraft, puppetry, and storytelling.

Holding true to his beliefs as a pacifist Quaker, Wayne became an anti-war campaigner, protester and organizer, blockading ports in canoes to disrupt arms shipments to conflict zones and trained civil-rights protesters in non-violent resistance. During the Vietnam War, Wayne walked 500 miles to personally return his draft card to the desk of the Secretary of Defense. He was imprisoned as a conscientious objector, and later was given presidential pardon by President Jimmy Carter.

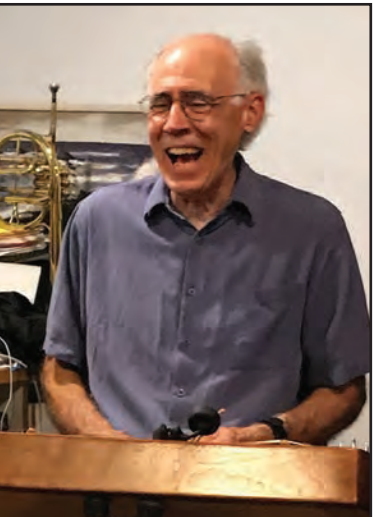
Wayne then settled to Windham County, Vt., where he was a performer, a first responder and paramedic, in addition to building two houses in Putney where he raised his family. His love for the outdoors inspired him to hand-build a cedar double kayak in which he navigated Vermont's



WAYNE PAUL LAUDEN

waterways by paddle and homemade sail.

Wayne retired to Bristol and quickly found his community of friends by hosting a weekly music jam. Despite the increasing difficulties of Alzheimer's disease, his unique combination of curiosity, musicality, warmth, and grace remained firmly intact. Many blessings unfolded: Wayne became an enthusiastic member of the Project Independence community, where his spirit and interests were nurtured, and his love of kayaking continued through the support of the NDAA Adaptive Kayaking program. Wayne received TLC in his final weeks at Addison Respite Care Home at Helen Porter. The family will be ever grateful for



the fine care provided by these organizations.

Wayne left the world a better (and more interesting) place than he found it, and he lived his final days as he had all others — with a song in his heart. Wayne is survived by the love of his life, Sue Hawkins; his sons, Jon and Jesse (Suzie Wyman); granddaughter, Anna; daughter-in-law, Stephanie; and many well-loved friends.

A celebration of Wayne's life will be held at Holley Hall in Bristol on Saturday, Jan. 6, at 1:30 p.m. Refreshments will follow, and musicians are invited to bring an instrument for a concurrent Wayne Fest jam session. Donations in Wayne's honor may be made to Project Independence at www.elderlyservices.org. ◇

Scott Richard Murray, 71, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Scott Richard Murray, a native of Middlebury, Vt., was born on Sept. 1, 1952, and passed away on Dec. 6, 2023, at age 71.

Scott was an avid fisherman, enjoying time on the river in Middlebury. In addition to his

love for the outdoors, his faith as a Christian was very important to him.

He is survived by his mother, Hazel Murray and brothers Mark (Patty) Murray and Richard Murray. He was preceded in death by his father, Kenneth Robert Murray and

brothers David Murray and Robert Murray. A graveside service will be held in the spring at Prospect Cemetery, East Middlebury.

Arrangements under the direction of Sanderson Funeral Home. Online condolences at: sandersonfuneralservice.com.◇

Aileen Brisson Pomainville, 93, of Shoreham

SHOREHAM — Aileen Brisson Pomainville, age 93, passed peacefully, surrounded by family,

on Dec. 12, 2023, at her home in Shoreham. Funeral arrangements are

private. Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon is in charge of arrangements.

Leon Thomas ‘Tom’ Wallace, 78, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Leon Thomas “Tom” Wallace, known for his warm smile and kind heart, passed away unexpectedly at his Bristol, Vt., home on Oct. 26, 2023. Born in Bristol on Dec. 27, 1944, Tom's presence left an unforgettable mark, spreading joy and love wherever he went.

Raised in St. Petersburg, Fla., Tom met and fell in love with his high school sweetheart, Claire Wallace. Educated at Boca Ciega High School and St. Pete Junior College, he cherished memories with his KT brothers and their numerous parties. After graduating from FSU, marrying Claire in 1967, and serving four years as a Naval Officer, the couple settled in St. Petersburg, raising their two daughters, Kelly Laliberte (Lance Laliberte) and Piper Westbrook. Tom founded DeFence Company in 1972, sold it in 1981, and returned to Bristol, Vt., building a life surrounded by family and friends.

A devoted family man, Tom was a loving father to his daughters and a cherished PopPop to his four grandchildren — Justice and Noble Westbrook, and Tatum and Reese Laliberte. He is also survived by his sister, Martha Chesley (Michael Chesley), and nieces, Amy Chesley-Davison (Floyd) and Mandy Chesley-Park (Travis) along with several great nieces and nephews. He was



LEON THOMAS “TOM” WALLACE

predeceased by his father, Albert D. Wallace; mother, Ruth Kilbourn Coates; and sister, Meg.

Tom's legacy goes beyond his family, reaching the Bristol community. In 1981, Tom and Claire acquired Corkins' Brothers Exxon, transforming it into a Mobil gas station and Bristol's first convenience store and deli, and in 1982 creating the iconic Village Creeme Stand with Claire. For 43 years, Tom operated the Creeme Stand, becoming a beloved figure in Bristol, offering employment to over 1,000 local teenagers while showing them a strong work ethic.

Retiring as a Commander after 20 years in the U.S. Navy, Tom demonstrated commitment, duty and patriotism. With Claire, he established Wallace Realty, helping families find homes

Mary Ruth (Williams) Levarn, 96, formerly of Lincoln

ST. ALBANS — Mary Ruth (Williams) Levarn, age 96, passed away unexpectedly on Dec. 1, 2023, at her home in St. Albans, Vt., in the presence of her daughter, Robin and Harland Howard.

Mary was born June 15, 1927, in South Starksboro, Vt., to Chester and Ruth (LaFayette) Williams. She attended Bristol High School.

On July 17, 1948, she married Howard C. Levarn of Monkton, Vt., in Lee, Mass.

She is survived by her brother, David Williams of Bristol, Vt.; daughters Robin C. Levarn of St. Albans, Vt., and Corinne Gadwah of East Corinth, Vt.; and son Charles D. Levarn of Lincoln, Vt. Also surviving are 13 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and special cousin Gerald Heffernan.

She was predeceased by her parents, husband (2005), brothers Ted, Allen and Robert, and sister Bertha Dolan. She was also predeceased by her children Gena Belleville, Charmaine Levarn, Mary Ann Gardner, Sheila Austin and Patty Levarn, and two grandchildren, Tye and Bobby.

Mary and Howard lived in



MARY RUTH (WILLIAMS) LEVARN

Massachusetts for seven years, then returned to Vermont, residing in South Starksboro for five years before buying a home in Lincoln, where they resided for years with their children.

Mary overcame many obstacles in her life, facing each with great courage. Her inner strength was remarkable. She had many talents, including playing piano by ear and painting portraits and still life scenes. She was also an extraordinary cook and enjoyed canning various food. She was

Michael Charles Laberge, 58, formerly of Middlebury

BONITA SPRINGS, Fla. — Michael Charles Laberge of Bonita Springs, Florida., (formerly of Middlebury, Vt.) passed away suddenly on November 22, 2023, following a short illness.

Michael was born in Burlington, Vt., on November 19, 1965, to Robert W. Laberge, Sr. and Laura Sherman Laberge (who both predeceased him). Michael grew up in New Haven, Vt., before moving to Middlebury in 1976. Michael quickly made many friends due to his sense of humor and memorable laugh. Michael was voted class president in his sophomore, junior, and senior classes at Middlebury Union High School. Michael also attended Boys State.

Michael was a natural athlete and would excel in any athletic activity he chose to pursue, most notably on the football field where he was dominant on offense and defense. Michael was voted co-captain of the football team his



MICHAEL CHARLES LABERGE

senior year at Middlebury. He was chosen to play in the annual Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl game, where he was also named co-captain of the Vermont team.

Michael went on to attend

for over three decades. Actively involved in the community, Tom served on the Bristol Chamber, was a past president of the Addison County Chamber of Commerce, and supported many local events, including the annual Out House Race and putting up the Village Christmas decorations for many years.

A loyal swimmer, Tom spent 42 years doing laps at the Mount Abraham pool, reflecting his dedication to a healthy lifestyle.

Tom had a love for hats, each one he wore carried a unique story, and a passion for old cars. Among his collection, his favorite was the 1967 GTO Pontiac, a car that held special significance as it was the one he and Claire got married in.

The Bristol community mourns the loss of Tom, a core staple of the town.

The Wallace Family will hold a Celebration of Life for Tom at their home on Saturday, May 18, 2024. An official announcement will be posted after the first of the year.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations in Tom's memory be made to the Bristol Fire Department and Bristol Rescue.

During this challenging time, the Wallace family expresses gratitude for the outpouring of love and support from the community, embodying the village spirit that Tom held dear throughout his life. ◇

especially proud of her piccalilli, which she served on Thanksgiving and Easter and other special occasions. She was an excellent quilter. She also enjoyed gardening and birding.

She was an avid reader of the *Addison Independent* weekly newspaper. Annually she went with family to the Maine Coast each summer. She looked forward each year to the Lafayette Reunion held the first Sunday of August. She loved getting together with the family.

Her smile was second to none and she always greeted others with enthusiasm (forever in our hearts). She will surely be missed by all who knew her.

A private graveside service will be held in the spring. Brown-McClay Funeral Home of Bristol, VT is in charge of the arrangements. To send online condolences to her family please visit www.brownmccclayfuneralhomes.com. In lieu of flowers please make contributions to the St. Jude's Children Hospital; 262 Danny Thomas Place, Memphis, Tennessee 38105. ◇

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**Obituary
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The *Addison Independent* does not charge to print a 100-word **Notice of Passing**. Families may opt for unedited **Paid Obituaries**, which are designated with “◇” at the end. Guidelines are published on our web site: www.addisonindependent.com/obits.

Chevy dealership gets a tuneup

Local comes home to make some deals

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — Cory Quenneville is living a dream, but slumber has been a challenge. It's part of the excitement of returning home to Addison County to take over the vehicle dealership at which he got his start. "It's still surreal," said Quenneville, 35, the new general manager of McGee Chevrolet Middlebury (formerly Mackey Chevrolet) at 510 Route 7 South. "Between being so excited and not sleeping, and then sleeping so well because I'm so tired — it's messed up my schedule." Not to worry, Quenneville will work through it — as he has a number of different jobs during his young life. He was born and raised in Leicester and is a 2006 graduate of Otter Valley Union High School. He got his first taste of hard work at the Quenneville Bros. Farm, a dairy operation in Whiting that the family owned until 2004. "I spent my summers there and have fond memories," he said of the farm, where he hayed and did a bunch of other chores. Farm work gave him an introduction to machinery, which fascinated him. "I fell in love with the equipment side of things, more than the cow side of things," he conceded. A passion for learning how things worked prompted a then 16-year-old Quenneville to take a job at the Hendy Brothers John Deere dealership at 1197 Route 7 in Middlebury (now United Ag & Turf). That, in turn, led to a partial scholarship to the University of New York College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill. There, he enrolled in the John Deere Tech Program and earned a degree in agricultural engineering in 2008. Degree in hand, Quenneville returned to Addison County to, as he

put it, "turn wrenches" for Hendy's for a short while, before moving to a job as service department manager at Yandow Sales & Service in North Ferrisburgh. He enjoyed the work and touted the Yandows as "a great family to work for," but he confessed, "the (daily commute) was killing me. At that point, when you're a young man, driving an hour one way is a long time." So his employment odyssey continued, leading to a stint as farm manager at Binding Site Vt. Inc. in Benson. It's a major sheep farm associated with a UK-based medical diagnostic company. But just when it appeared his career was taking an ag trajectory, Quenneville received a call from Scott Brace, a manager at what was then Denecker Chevrolet. "He said I should try my hand at selling cars," he recalled. It seemed like a natural fit for Quenneville, a gregarious man with a quick smile, a vise-like handshake and a gift for gab. So, he said goodbye to the Binding Site Vt. sheep and tuned up his sales pitch. Quenneville joined Denecker on Feb. 22, 2015. It proved to be a successful career switch, one that now seems destined to stick after a nomadic employment cycle of turning wrenches, troubleshooting ag equipment and herding sheep. "I sold cars for three or four years for Tom (Denecker) and climbed the ranks (to manager)," he said. That is, until the summer of 2020, when Denecker sold the dealership to the Mackey Auto Group of Saratoga Springs, N.Y. That's when Quenneville decided to try his hand at selling vehicles at a different venue. He landed at McGee Chrysler Dodge Jeep RAM of Springfield, Vt. "I was the general manager there for two years, and was then promoted to director of operations, overseeing two (McGee) Toyota stores, a Mazda store and another Chrysler Dodge Jeep RAM store in Brattleboro," he said.

Quenneville was happy being based out of Springfield. But being an Addison County boy, he yearned to return to his roots. You never know what can happen if you wish hard enough. BACK TO ADDISON CO. "I'd been ribbing Rob McGee to buy the Chevy store in Middlebury," said Quenneville. "I got the phone call around 90 days ago that my dream was coming true." And it was turbo-charged, as dreams go. Quenneville learned he'd not only be returning to his old stamping grounds as general manager, but was also granted an ownership stake in the Middlebury dealership. Robert McGee and his father started with a single Toyota dealership in Hanover, Mass. The company took off from there, growing to their current 19 stores throughout New England. While 19 dealerships could be deemed an empire, McGee has been able to keep the individual businesses in sync, with corporate managers in constant communication with one another, according to Quenneville. "Rob does a fantastic job of keeping in touch with all of us," he said. "All the owner-operators are on the phone all the time, in weekly meetings. We transfer inventory and really get along exceptionally well. We all support each other. The biggest fear of mine was going into 'corporate America.' That's not who I am, not how I was raised. But for the size of this group, it's not corporate America; it's as family as it comes." McGee Chevrolet Middlebury now counts 13 full- and part-time employees. It's a number Quenneville hopes to ramp up to 30, based on his sales targets. "I'm going to be discounting cars again. I have a volume-based mindset," he said. "I have huge plans." His overriding aim is to "bring the dealership back to being part of the community." To that end, he wants to make the dealership's name more visible in the county. Quenneville promised McGee will become a sponsor of Devil's Bowl Speedway, as well as of local



CORY QUENNEVILLE, A Leicester native, has returned to Addison County to head up McGee Chevrolet Middlebury (formerly Mackey Chevrolet) at 510 Route 7 South.

Independent photo/John Flowers

sports teams. "I have a little girl (Charleigh) who turns 4 in February and a 6-year-old boy (Maverick). I can't wait to see the local teams around here with 'McGee' on their back," he said. The Quennevilles are about cars and trucks right now, but they maintain a link to their agricultural past. Cory's wife Jessica is the driving force behind a small, family-owned beef operation called River's Edge Farm in the town of Chester, where the clan currently lives. Chester is roughly 60 miles from Middlebury, and we already know Cory isn't crazy about long commutes. So his motto right now is, "Coming home soon." He plans

to relocate his family to Addison County next spring. Asked to describe his business philosophy, Quenneville immediately replied "transparency." "I don't think that buying a car should be hard," he said. "I think in today's world, you should be able to see the price, understand the fees and not wonder what happened after a car deal. That's old-school practices." He wants people to know that they, and their pups, are welcome at the dealership even if they're not in the market for a car. "I look forward to bringing the dealership back to where people want to do business here, and more importantly to stop by for a cup of

coffee and say 'Hi,'" he said. "I love the people, the community and the relationships I've been able to build and maintain. It's a 'people' business for me." For information about McGee Chevrolet Middlebury vehicles and other business details, go to middleburychevrolet.com. Quenneville began his new job on Dec. 11, and he's still pinching himself. He recently posted the news on social media and was bowled over by the reaction. "The outcry from the community that they're excited I was coming home was so humbling and heartwarming," he said. "I can't really put words to it." Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



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MEMBERS OF 100+ Women Who Care Addison County gather in Bristol’s Holley Hall for the group’s April meeting. Participants of the giving circle contribute \$100 each quarter and then gather to vote on local nonprofits to receive the pooled donations.

Photos courtesy of Kirsten Pitts

100 women

(Continued from Page 1A)
been able to contribute to a lot of different organizations,” Kirsten Pitts, a co-founder of the initiative and member of the steering committee, told the *Independent*. “We’ve been able to fund safe spaces for after school for at-risk youths, we’ve bought food for the community, we’ve supported migrants in the area. It’s really wonderful to see how the money that our members have pooled has really impacted the community in a

positive way.”
The county giving circle is part of a larger movement. The first 100 Women Who Care meeting took place in 2006, when a Michigan resident rallied 100 women together to quickly and efficiently raise money for local charities. The giving circle model has been recreated throughout the country ever since.
HOW IT WORKS
Women who join the local effort donate \$100 quarterly and have the

opportunity to nominate an area charitable cause to receive the pooled gifts. The group also has a couple of scholarships available for local women who would like to participate in the giving circle but can’t contribute \$100, and those interested in getting involved are encouraged to reach out to the group’s steering committee.
The steering committee handles the members’ nominations. Nominated organizations must have been in operation for at least three years as of the date of nomination, must serve Addison County, and must be a 501(c)3

nonprofit.
Two weeks before the group’s quarterly meeting, the committee randomly selects three of the nominated organizations. Representatives of selected nonprofits then make short presentations at the group’s meeting, sharing how they would use the funds if selected.
Group members then vote on which nonprofit they’d like to donate their funds to. The organization that receives the most votes gets 70% of the pool. The two runners-up each receive 15%.
The local giving circle kicked



COUNTY RESIDENTS PORTER Knight (left), Kirsten Pitts, Melissa West and Judy Kowalczyk make up 100+ Women Who Care Addison County’s steering committee. The giving circle has funneled nearly \$100,000 into local nonprofits during its first year.

Photo courtesy of Kirsten Pitts

off in January, gathering over Zoom for its first meeting. The group’s three subsequent meetings have taken in place in person with a remote option and have attracted more than 100 women from throughout the county.
“It has exceeded our expectations,” Pitts said of the group’s first year. “We started hoping to get 100 women to participate and we ended the year with 169 women.”
Pitts said the giving circle’s inaugural year has gone smoothly, though it’s been a learning process. “With every organization there’s hiccups as far as computer glitches and people not understanding the cycle of how the giving works,” she said. “There’s a lot of questions that are being asked and answered along the way, and I think we’re getting better at it.”
Members’ pooled donations were bolstered this year by \$20,000 in grants from the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, which provides matching donations to charities chosen by 100 Women Who Care groups. Those funds have provided an additional \$5,000 to the area nonprofit that received the most votes from the group each quarter.
WHO GOT THE MONEY
Bristol’s Have a Heart Food Shelf received \$10,010 from the giving circle in January, as well as \$5,000 from the Schulze Foundation.

Allison Pouliot, treasurer of the food shelf, said that money has helped support ongoing operations. She noted the organization spends \$3,000-\$4,000 each month to purchase food for distribution and has seen an uptick in demand.
“We’ve had our highest months ever in November and December. We did our distribution for Christmas on (Dec. 15) and served 421 people, which is the most we’ve ever served in a single day,” Pouliot said. “We’re going to be trying to do a lot of fundraising, and that funding helps.”
The Teen Center in Middlebury has also used its giving circle grant to support ongoing programming. The center received \$11,060 from the giving circle and an additional \$5,000 in matching funds.
Executive Director Lindsey Fuentes-George noted the organization offers a variety of programs for local youth.
“As many know, The Teen Center, located at 77 Mary Hogan Drive, is open each school day for after school drop in, from 3-6 p.m. Teens in grades 7-12 can come by to grab some food, socialize with friends, play games, work on projects, and chat with our staff,” Fuentes-George wrote in an email to the *Independent*. “We also run a weekly peer support group for queer and questioning youth and a weekly D&D club. We have
(See Members, Page 11A)

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Vt. Attorney General sues Meta

By **SHAUN ROBINSON, VTDigger**

VERMONT — New details released Dec. 14 in the Vermont Attorney General’s lawsuit against Meta describe how the tech giant studied teenagers in Vermont as part of efforts to make its social media platform Instagram more addictive — and how top company leaders allegedly ignored repeated warnings that the popular app is harmful to young people.

The details come in a recently unsealed version of the lawsuit, which Attorney General Charity Clark’s office filed in Chittenden County Superior civil court in October. The suit alleges that Meta violated Vermont’s Consumer Protection Act by engaging in unfair and deceptive trade practices — namely, by lying to the public about the safety of Instagram despite knowing its adverse impacts on young people.

Instagram has detrimental impacts on young users’ mental health, the 114-page lawsuit asserts, and that usage correlates with social media addiction, sleep deprivation, poor self-image, feelings of loneliness and even the desire to self-harm.

Clark coordinated with more than 40 other attorneys general across the country who also sued Meta in state and federal court. Vermont is one of just a handful of states bringing its case before a local judge; Clark said Thursday that this is because she feels the state’s consumer protection law is particularly strong.

A Vermont superior court judge granted a motion by the Attorney General’s office to unseal the complaint, in its entirety, earlier this month.

The unredacted complaint cites internal Meta documents to suggest that the company made specific efforts to increase the time that Vermont teenagers spend on the platform.

Meta research showed that “at times,” Vermont had the highest percentage of teenagers using Instagram, per capita, of any U.S. state — about 80%, according to the Attorney General’s Office.

At the same time, a 2017 Meta analysis found that the amount of time Vermont teens spent on Instagram each day was — at that time — lower than in several other states. Looking at that data, the suit alleges, Meta researchers concluded that the company needed to build new features to keep teens engaged with the platform.

“In other words: Meta concluded that it needed to refine Instagram such that teens like those in Vermont, specifically, would spend more of their time on Instagram each day,” the attorney general’s complaint states.

Between July 2020 and June 2021, more than 41,500 Vermont teenagers used Instagram monthly, and nearly 30,000 used it daily, according to the complaint.

Clark was determined to make the full complaint public so that Vermonters could get the most complete picture possible of

Meta’s practices, she said in a Dec. 14 interview.

“This is just incredibly important to me personally,” she said. “I’m not just an attorney general. I’m a mom. I’m an aunt.”

Meta did not respond to a request for comment about the unredacted complaint. The company previously wrote in a statement responding to Vermont and other states’ litigation that it shares “the attorneys general’s commitment to providing teens with safe, positive experiences online,” but was “disappointed” in their approach.

BAD EXPERIENCES AND ENCOUNTERS

Newly unsealed portions of the complaint allege that there were repeated instances in which Meta researchers raised internal concerns about Instagram’s detrimental impacts on young

people — especially girls. But senior leaders, up to the highest levels of the company, took no action in response, the complaint alleges. In some cases, it states, those leaders instead seemed far more concerned with protecting the company’s image.

Some of these concerns were based on specific Instagram features that the company knew, from its own internal research, made the platform more

addictive and more harmful, Clark said. The lawsuit cites a feature that teases new content below what a user is already seeing, called “infinite scroll,” and another that plays videos as soon as they appear in a user’s feed, called “autoplay,” as two examples of this.

Researchers ran concerns as high up the chain as Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, arguing that the company needed to invest more resources into initiatives to make the platform safer and less addictive to teens, the lawsuit states, but Zuckerberg and others failed to act accordingly.

The unredacted complaint also includes more details that back up the state’s allegations that Meta deliberately deceived the public about how frequently teenage users were accessing harmful content.

Clark’s office cites data from a mid-2021 survey that Meta conducted of some 240,000 Instagram users, called a “Bad Experiences and Encounters Framework survey,” which measured users’ exposure to a wide array of harmful experiences and content.

Meta researchers found that, over the seven days prior to taking the survey, 28% of users witnessed bullying on Instagram, 25% witnessed discrimination, 16% viewed nudity they “did not want to see” and 7% saw images of self-harm, according to the complaint.

Among all age groups on the platform, teenagers reported having the highest rates of these “bad experiences,” according to the lawsuit.

But around the same time that data was collected — and in the years that have followed — Meta has publicly reported data showing far lower rates of interactions with that kind of content, which the

company simultaneously states it does not want young people to see.

For instance, while the survey found that 19% of 13- to 15-year-olds were exposed “to adult nudity and sexual activity” on the platform, the company stated in one of its 2021 quarterly reports that only between 0.02% and 0.03% of users that age were exposed to such content, according to the lawsuit.

INTERNAL CULTURE OF SECRECY

In another case, the suit describes an Instagram feature implemented in 2018 that tells users how much time they have been spending on the app — the “time spent” tool. Two years after the feature rolled out, the complaint alleges, Meta employees were raising concerns that the metrics the tool was showing to users were “materially incorrect.”

“It’s not just that Apple/Google have better data. Ours is wrong. Far worse. We’re sharing bad metrics externally,” Instagram’s director of engineering allegedly stated at the time, according to the complaint. “The reason this is relevant is we vouch for these numbers. Any day they’re out there is a legal liability.”

By mid-2020, an internal team at Meta recommended that the “time spent” tool be removed from the app, the lawsuit alleges, but company leadership pushed back, arguing that the tool was important because it created a public perception that Instagram was taking steps to curb addictive use of its platform.

“The regulatory and brand risk from removing our only addiction-related features outweighs ... the wins around user trust in the data,” one Meta employee said, according to the lawsuit.

Vermont’s lawsuit also alleges that Meta leaders deliberately hid research that showed how Instagram was harming young users from their own employees. That concern was heightened in August 2021 after company officials learned that the *Wall Street Journal* obtained leaked company research on the negative impacts that Instagram has on teenage girls, the lawsuit states. The Journal reported on its findings that fall.

After learning about the leaked slides, the suit alleges, Meta’s communications department began “sanitizing” some of its research findings in internal company communications. One manager instructed a research colleague to “make sure that any of our shareable deliverables or insights docs that you own on the mental well-being space are locked down,” according to the lawsuit.

Multiple researchers raised concerns internally about the practice, the suit states, with one writing in late 2021 that “this is a huge moral hazard, in my opinion.” Another Meta employee allegedly responded by saying, “(a)greed!”

“Meta’s internal culture of secrecy regarding Meta’s harms to Young People was and is designed to keep consumers — including Young Users and their parents and guardians — in the dark about the harms Instagram causes to Young People,” the suit states.

The Attorney General’s Office said Meta has until Jan. 19 to file a response to its complaint.

Climate matters

Perspectives on Change



GREG DENNIS

False solutions or a greener path for Vt.?

By **GREG DENNIS and LIZ STEEL**

This has been a brutal year for many Vermonters, with waves of extreme weather driven by climate change. In June the air was full of smoke from Canadian wildfires. Then came the summer floods, with many towns, businesses and families literally underwater. This month has brought more destructive flooding.

Farmers are struggling amid unfamiliar climate conditions. Many Vermonters are still awaiting help to restore homes and businesses.

This is not normal weather and these are not normal times. So where does Vermont go from here?

We are among the many Vermonters who see the possibility of a strong and resilient state adapting to climate change. A state that lives up to its “green” reputation and — in a just transition to clean energy — leaves no Vermonter behind as we substantially reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

But there’s a lot of work to be done before we get there. Starting with an accurate assessment of where we stand and who will control future decision-making.

Overriding repeated vetoes from Gov. Phil Scott, the legislature has on the surface made some progress: It approved a Global Warming Solutions Act and then a Climate Action Plan, with legal commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

There’s new movement toward divesting state funds out of fossil fuel companies. Also on the table are bills to protect ratepayers and promote geothermal networks and carbon sequestration.

But in reality, Vermont still relies on false climate solutions. The planet is in a climate emergency. We can’t afford to do business as usual.

Vermont should be a leader on climate resiliency, yet our state has New England’s second-highest greenhouse gas emissions per-capita. We are the worst in the region at reducing emissions over the past 15 years.

Why should Vermonters care? Because even our small state needs to do its part. And because the decisions being made now will affect how our homes, businesses and schools are heated, cooled and lit — and how clean and climate-friendly they will be.

A key shortcoming is that Vermont’s accounting on climate emissions is dishonest. That in turn has misled legislators and others into thinking the state is doing well at confronting the climate crisis.

Take the claim that we have clean electricity. Over 24% of it comes directly from Hydro-Quebec by way of Green Mountain Power. That number rises to 52% counting “renewable energy credits.”

But those credits rarely create new renewable energy. And among New England states, only Vermont counts large-scale hydroelectric as emission-free. The reality is that the flooding of vast Canadian forests (by hydro dams) continues to release carbon dioxide and methane gas.

Even legislation supported by many environmentalists — such as the Affordable

Heat Act — contains loopholes that were crafted by and benefit large corporations rather than average Vermonters.

After lobbying by Vermont Gas Systems, the act contains a big loophole: It incentivizes biofuels as “clean heat” even though these fuels (including “renewable” natural gas, or RNG) do essentially nothing to cut greenhouse gases.

It’s obvious that in the face of the climate emergency, many of the same old power structures and decision makers remain in place. When it comes to climate policies, our state continues to grant an overly large voice to self-interested corporations.

We’re concerned that the process of relying on false solutions is again being played out in Montpelier. For example, nearly half of a legislative working group established to find ways to improve the Renewable Energy Standard (RES) consisted of corporate and utility special interests.

It is gratifying, however, to see that the RES working group’s new report includes some steps to meet the climate emergency. Now the General Assembly and governor need to take bold steps in the coming legislative session.

We need a new energy standard because the existing RES contains strong elements of greenwashing. It currently provides a way for utilities to meet state standards — but not by building cleaner energy facilities such as wind, solar, batteries and geothermal. Instead, utilities can buy their way out, by purchasing “renewable energy credits” from already existing energy sources. One result: a loss of green jobs as our solar industry shrinks.

Another shortcoming is that the working group did not address the important issue of environmental justice for low-income people, indigenous Vermonters and people of color.

It’s also time for Vermont to be honest about what forms of energy are in fact renewable and low-emission. These terms should not be applied to biomass, hydrogen, “renewable” gas or Hydro-Quebec.

Will we get a better Renewable Energy Standard? That depends on whether or not Vermonters let their elected leaders know they want a standard that requires utilities to create more — and appropriately sited — green energy within Vermont and the region.

Unless we nurture even more participation to elevate the voices of ordinary citizens who want clean energy, it will be that much harder to create a better climate future for Vermont. One characterized by a sustainable economy that fosters green jobs with livable wages; protects ratepayers; promotes regional food systems; and preserves biological diversity.

Greg Dennis of Cornwall and Liz Steel, who lives in Greensboro, are active volunteers working on Vermont climate issues. This piece was adapted from a VTDigger opinion column.

MERRY MULCH

Turn your Christmas Tree into a pine mulch through Addison County Solid Waste Management District’s Merry Mulch Program!

Curbside Tree Pickup

Pick up is **EARLY** Saturday, January 6. We recommend putting trees out the night prior to pick up.

Vergennes

The **Vergennes Lions Club** will pick up trees on Saturday, January 6th.

Middlebury

The **Middlebury Rotary Club** will pick up trees on Saturday, January 6th.

Tree Drop-Off

If you missed tree collection or do not reside in Vergennes or Middlebury, fear not! Christmas tree drop-off at the District Transfer Station is free for the month of January during regular hours, Mon.-Fri., 7 AM to 3 PM and Sat., 8 AM to 1 PM.



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Flooding

(Continued from Page 1A)
season,” he said, speaking from the Agency of Transportation’s Dill Building.

The governor said he did not expect damage from the latest storm to rival this summer’s. “That being said, some of the places that were impacted in July are currently experiencing flooding once again,” he said. “So for them, this *is* July — and it’s a real gut punch.”

For Addison County residents — particularly those in Middlebury (which saw more than two and a half inches of rain on Monday), Ripton, Salisbury and Cornwall — it seemed like a repeat not of July, but of the Aug. 3 and 4 flooding. Water was baled from basements, real estate was shored up against rising rivers and brooks in addition to flooding on newly created streams.

The town of Middlebury temporarily closed several roads due to rising waters:

- Shard Villa & 3 Mile Bridge Road, from Route 7 to Halladay Road.
- 3 Mile Bridge Rd on Shard Villa to the Middlebury/Salisbury town line.
- All of the Middlebury portion of Blake Roy Road on the southern edge of the town.
- Exchange Street from the Cabot/Agri-Mark plant to Mainelli Avenue.

Meanwhile, ACSD Director of Operations Matt Corrente issued an email to the school community at 1:33 p.m. stating, “in response to severe weather and flooding roads, we are closing schools early at 2 p.m. If you can pick up your child at school you may do so at any time, beginning now. If you have a child in preK-8th grade and your child rides the bus or walks home, we must speak to a parent before sending your child on the bus or letting them walk home. The buses will pick up elementary students at 2 p.m. and then go to the secondary schools. They will follow their normal routes home.”

IT WAS WORSE ELSEWHERE

As of 5 p.m., the storm had led to at least three rescue operations throughout the state, according to Public Safety Commissioner Jennifer Morrison. Three people were pulled from a house in Jamaica around 1 p.m. One person was rescued from a vehicle swept away by floodwaters in Waterbury. And one other rescue operation was taking place at that hour in an unspecified location, Morrison said during remarks at the governor’s

press conference.
No serious injuries or deaths have been reported.

Throughout the day, local officials scrambled to respond to a storm that, while widely anticipated, quickly grew more severe than expected. As the Mad River raged Monday morning, the nearby Moretown Elementary School flooded, prompting district officials to send students home early. Later that day, residents of Moretown village were told to evacuate.

The cities of Barre and Montpelier, both hit hard during July’s flooding, prepared for more — closing streets and parking lots and distributing sandbags to residents and business owners. Around the state, dozens of schools closed early. The American Red Cross opened an emergency shelter at the Barre Auditorium.

A DECEMBER STORM

By Monday night, as heavy rain moved out of the state, much of Vermont had received 2 to 2.5 inches, according to Jessica Neiles, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Burlington.

Among the towns that saw the greatest rainfall totals, according to preliminary local observation reports provided to the weather service, were Johnson (3.3 inches), Quechee (2.9 inches), Waitsfield (2.8 inches), Middlebury (2.6 inches) and Milton (2.5 inches).

The heavy rainfall was exacerbated by a number of factors, Neiles said: high temperatures, an abundance of fresh snow and frozen ground that could not absorb runoff. “Rainfall on top of snowpack is usually not a good thing,” she said.

The National Weather Service charted a record high temperature in Montpelier of 58 degrees Fahrenheit, Neiles said, besting the previous record of 46 degrees set in 1949.

Rivers throughout the state flooded Monday, but none ran as high as the Mad River. It crested in Moretown just above major flood stage at 13.02 feet around 7:45 p.m., according to the weather service. That was up from about 3.4 feet the day prior.

At least two other rivers reached moderate flood stage: the Winooski and the Lamoille.



GOVERNOR SCOTT

The Winooski crested in Montpelier at 16.15 feet around 6:30 p.m., according to the weather service. By comparison, the river reached 21.35 feet in July when much of the capital’s downtown was flooded. The Winooski crested in Waterbury at 7:30 p.m. but was still rising downstream in Essex as of 8:30 p.m.

The Lamoille River was also continuing to rise as of 8:30 p.m. and, in Johnson, was nearing major flood stage at 15.82 inches.

Neiles said that even as the rain subsided, the state faced more challenges Tuesday: some snowfall and, as temperatures drop, icy roads.

STATE RESPONSE

Asked at his press conference Monday afternoon whether the state had been caught off guard by the extent of the storm, Gov. Scott said emergency response officials were always prepared.

“But it hit me by surprise,” he said. “I knew there was going to be an increased, elevated amount of rain today — and the snow melt we knew was going to be a problem — but we didn’t expect this elevation to the amount of water that we’re seeing right now.”

The State Emergency Operations Center was activated Monday morning. Mike Cannon, the state’s urban search and rescue program coordinator, said at the governor’s press conference that five swift-water rescue teams were in the field, with another five on standby. The state’s 90-member urban search and rescue team, which includes two additional swift-water rescue teams, had also been deployed, Cannon said.

The Vermont National Guard had provided the state with high-water vehicles to assist with rescues, according to Morrison, the public safety commissioner.

Secretary of Transportation Joe Flynn said at the press conference that, as of 5 p.m., 15 state roads

were fully closed and 34 were partially closed. His office had heard from 10 municipalities experiencing problems with local roads.

Locally, as of Wednesday morning Route 73 from Hollow Road in Brandon to Willowbrook Road in Sudbury was closed to all traffic due to high water.

According to Flynn, Amtrak had suspended operations in Vermont, though he said he was not aware of any damage to rail lines. Cape Air also suspended flights to Rutland Southern Vermont Regional Airport, he said.

Secretary of Natural Resources Julie Moore said at the press conference that state water-control facilities along the Winooski River and its tributaries — including the Waterbury Dam, Wrightsville Dam and East Barre Dam — were experiencing high levels of water but had room for more.

Morrison urged Vermonters to act cautiously.

“Tonight our top priority will be keeping people safe and evacuating or rescuing those who are in danger,” she said on Monday. “Stay. Out. Of. Flood. Waters. The water is too cold, it’s filled with pollutants that are unhealthy, and the currents are unpredictable.”

Morrison also acknowledged that, “for many people this weather event is likely to cause anxiety, fear and some flashbacks to July’s devastating floods. I will admit to feeling a bit of these emotions myself.”

But, she said, “We are hopeful and there are indications that this weather event will not be as severe as July’s floods.”

Among the dozen or so districts that announced early dismissals were Harwood Unified Union School District, schools in Montpelier and Barre and in various parts of Windham, Caledonia, Lamoille, Orange and Windsor counties — as well as Addison Central School District.

The town of Middlebury reported one water main break, and three of its wastewater stations were overwhelmed at several points by the flooding, according to Emmalee Cherington, director of public works and planning. After the town closed several roads Monday, most had reopened by Tuesday afternoon except for some sections along the river.

“We are in good shape comparatively,” she said. “We are not aware of any major flood damages.”

Still, having two major floods in a year has been eye-opening for town officials. They were in the process of filing flood damage estimates to the Federal Emergency Management Agency from when the town was swamped in August, about a month after the state’s first deluge of the summer. Monday’s event “added frustration on top of that,” Cherington said.

Addison Independent reporter John Flowers contributed to this report.



THREE MEMBERS OF the Vergennes Union High School student group Full Send — Holland VanderWey, left, Claire Clark and Tryphene Miguel — organized a Dec. 14 community night at VUHS titled “How to Hold a Conversation: What’s Going on in Israel/Palestine?” It drew an engaged group of more than 30 participants.

Photo courtesy of Kimberly Hunt

VUHS group starts tough conversations

VERGENNES — The Vergennes Union Middle/High School student group Full Send led a community event on Thursday, Dec. 14, that brought together community members, parents, students and school staff for a discussion of the topic “How to Hold a Conversation: What’s Going on in Israel/ Palestine?”

More than 30 people gathered that night and mainly focused on how to sit in dialogue around this complex topic. The diverse group of participants who represented different countries, ages and backgrounds shared answers to questions such as: Where do you get your information/source about the

war? Why do you trust it? and Could you tell a story from your personal experience that would help other people better understand how you think about Israel and/or Palestine?

Students spent weeks considering how to design a safe space for dialogue, reading articles, interviewing professors and discussing ideas. In particular, they collaborated with Sarah Stroup, executive director of the Davis Collaborative in Conflict Transformation at Middlebury College. Many participants stayed late and kept talking after the official event was over, agreeing that it was a powerful experience.

How trees prepare for Vermont winters

By REBECCA PERKINS HANISSIAN

Of all life’s synergies, I appreciate most the one between my propensity for domestic procrastination and my love of moving through the outdoors — countless adventures are born of it. During a late November weekend, when faced with a day

spent winterizing our home, my husband and I instead packed up our children and headed for Mount Moosilauke. Ascending the Gorge Brook Trail, we moved quickly, our son pouncing on every puddle, delighting in the power of his 60 pounds to break through the creme brulée-layer of ice.

With this thin ice and a dusting of snow, the lower elevations had been warned of winter’s approach. The higher elevations, we soon discovered, were being blasted by its arrival — every surface, be it branch, rock, or summit sign — was coated in a substance equal parts snow and ice. The wind, roaring and sustained, stung our noses

and cheeks, the only bits of skin exposed.

Despite this harbinger of winter storms to come, it appeared the trees were simply standing around. But

looks can be deceiving. While I may have been procrastinating on winter preparations, the trees were busily, if subtly, bracing themselves for the snow, ice, wind, and frigid temperatures. They’ve been doing so for months, for millennia.

In handling heavy snow and ice loads — infamous for breaking branches and bending trunks — our northern tree species vary in strategy. The high-surface-area leaves that increase a deciduous tree’s photosynthetic capacity in the warmer months become load liabilities in the winter, offering ample parking for heavy snow and ice — and surfaces for catching the wind. For this and other reasons, these species drop their leaves in autumn. These hardwoods rely on branch architecture and strength to support the snow and ice that settle on them. Species such as maples, birches, and ash trees, all long-term residents of the northern forests, drop their leaves quickly in the fall. On the other hand, oaks and beeches — relative newcomers with tropical origins — often, and at their own expense, sport crinkly brown leaves well into winter.

Employing a different tactic, coniferous species, including spruce and fir, hold on to their low-surface-area needles year-round. Their flexible branches bend with the weight of snow — like Christmas tree boughs adorned with a too-heavy ornaments. But as the branches droop, the snow slides off, and the branches spring defiantly back to shape. Ice proves harder to shrug off and can cause branches

(See Outside, Page 14A)

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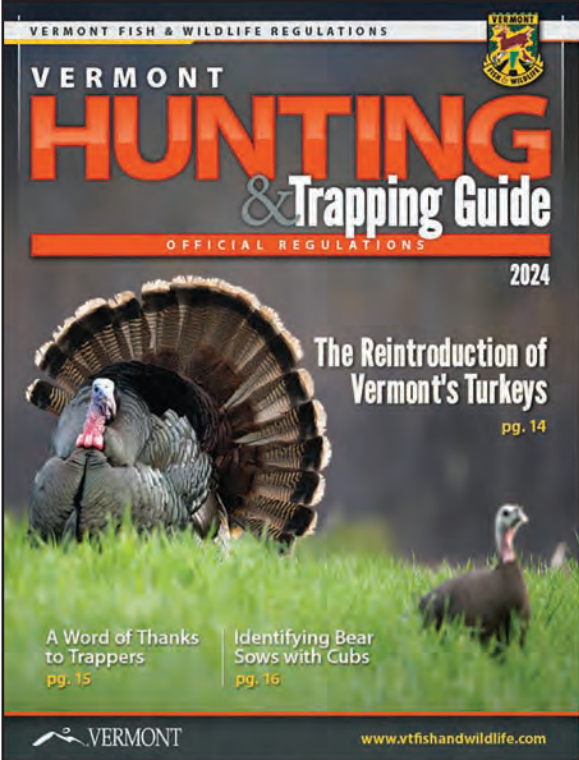
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OFFICIAL GUIDEBOOKS FROM Vermont Fish and Wildlife, along with 2024 hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses, are now available through its website.

Vt. hunters guide books available

MONTPELIER — Vermont 2024 hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses, as well as the 2024 lawbooks for these activities, are now available on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's website and wherever licenses are sold.

"License sales have helped pay for some of Vermont's greatest conservation successes," said Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Christopher Herrick, "from managing habitat for game species like the white-tailed deer and black

bear to restoring our populations of the bald eagle and common loon."

With ice fishing opening around the state as soon as cold temperatures arrive in January, Vermonters are encouraged to pick up their 2024 licenses at the earliest convenience. Existing five-year, permanent or lifetime licenses can be updated online on Jan. 1.

License buyers can also easily add a \$15 Habitat Stamp to their purchase to further support habitat conservation in Vermont.

"In addition to updating your license, it is helpful for hunters, trappers and anglers to pick up the current 2024 lawbooks," added Commissioner Herrick.

Printed copies of the 2024 Hunting & Trapping Lawbook and the 2024 Fishing Lawbook are available from license agents statewide. The department's website has links to online versions as well. Go to vtfishandwildlife.com.

Salisbury woman cited in family fight

ADDISON COUNTY — Vermont State Police came away from call about a family fight in Salisbury this past Friday evening with a 44-year-old woman in custody.

Troopers responded to a report of a fight on Dec. 15 at 5:49 p.m. They determined that Tammy Jackson of Salisbury had committed a crime, took her into custody on Dec. 16, transported her to the New Haven barracks and cited her for first-degree aggravated domestic assault.

Meanwhile on Dec. 16, troopers stopped a car on Route 7 in New Haven at about 9:45 p.m. after observing a motor vehicle violation. They ended up citing Daniel Fram, 45, of Lincoln with driving under the influence.

Separately, on Sunday, Dec. 17, at 10:48 a.m., Vermont State Police were dispatched after a report of a dispute at residence on Lincoln Road in Lincoln. At the scene, troopers identified Isaiah Webb, 43, of Brandon as the instigator of a disturbance at homes along Lincoln Road. Officers noted that Webb appeared to be impaired, and they found out that he had operated a motor vehicle on a

Vt. State Police Log

public highway. Troopers spoke with several residents in the area and were told that Webb had acted

in a disorderly manner causing unrest to the public.

State police arrested Webb, and cited him for aggravated disorderly conduct; grossly negligent driving; and refusing to be tested for driving under the influence of drugs, second offense.



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Members

(Continued from Page 8A)

Wi-Fi, computer access, a gaming system, lots of art supplies, and we encourage teens to use our kitchen. ALL teens are welcome."

Funds will also help support special programs hosted by the center.

"We also run special events such as our recent trip to Spare Time and our upcoming holiday party. We seek ways to help teens grow, with the goal of ensuring that they can transition into adulthood as their best selves," Fuentes-George wrote.

The giving circle's donations have also helped local organizations provide newer offerings.

The Addison Allies Network, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting the county's migrant community, was awarded \$11,130 by the giving circle in April and received an additional \$5,000 in matching funds.

Addison Allies Director Veronica Ciambra said the organization has largely used the funds to support migrants who've recently arrived in the county.

"When people arrive, they have the clothes on their backs, sometimes not suitable for the weather, and a small backpack of personal items," Ciambra told the *Independent*. "It takes a lot for people to get settled, especially if the job they find does not come with housing. So, we started providing funds for new arrivals to use while they find work and a place to live."

Donations have also been used to cover the costs of deliveries when the network can't find a volunteer to make the trip. The nonprofit delivers a variety of needed items to migrants in the community, including larger items like refrigerators, stoves and beds.

"It is really nice to have a little cushion so that we are not scrambling when we see a need," Ciambra said.

LOOKING AHEAD

Reflecting on the past year, Pitts said a highlight of participating in the giving circle has been meeting other members of the group.

"It is great to be surrounded by other women who care about their community and want to donate and are interested in networking and meeting each other," she said.

100+ Women Who Care Addison County is looking to welcome more local women to the giving circle. Pitts said the group hopes to grow to 200 members in the upcoming year.

Continuing to support organizations in Addison County is another goal for 2024.

"We would like to reach more nonprofits in the area," Pitts said. "Over the year we've had 95 nominations for our donations and that equates to 50 (different) nonprofits, so we'd like to continue with our breadth and depth and learning about the nonprofits that serve our area."



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I would like a lego set with more robots because I'm making a HUG machine. I also want a lego set with more robots because I'm making a HUG machine. I also want a lego set with more robots because I'm making a HUG machine.


Love,
-Eddie

Dear Santa, have a merry christmas
love Bea and cecce



Dear Santa I would like a replica of a difference engine. love Ada.

Dear Santa, for Chrismis I want a The allwase my mothor Dimemend and a Drone and Stuff with monster high thank You Vary much Love CC.



I would like a science kit.

Thank you,
Niles

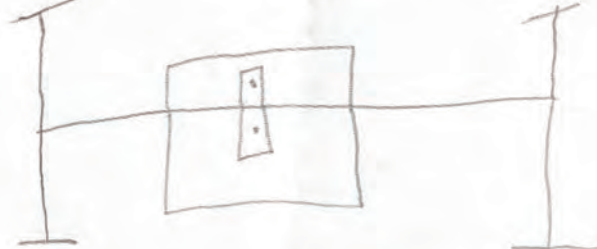
Dear Santa,
I have been a good girl this year. Can I please have a gymnastics bar and a mat for Christmas?.
Thanks, and Merry Christmas,
Caroline Deitrich


Dear Santa,
I would like a doll with blue eyes and brown hair and tan skin. It's a big doll, but not a baby. Like a preschooler.
Merry Christmas,


Anna

From charlie
hahme charlie

I want a Lego set
Stranor things







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thats for mom
+ dad + Legos Please



Muhalion

Dear Santa,

Merry christmas!



Rollie



Dear Santa,



quill

Dear Santa,
Magic Mixie (Please!)
Also, Barbie Dream House, Barbie Camper,
Snow Globe.
Merry Christmas.

Rose


Dear Santa,
May I please have a fire truck that actually
sprays water and a fork lift with a box? And
I need buttons to lift it up. I would also like a
dollhouse.
Thank you so much.
Lots of love,

Ham

Dear Santa,
Please bring me a racetrack with car that go
fast. Please bring Thea something sparkly
Love,

Anthony

~~I would like~~ I would like
~~a lego~~ a lego
star wars stormtrooper
and a coil of
rope for christmas
and give my dog
monty a chew toy
- JAMES
MAGUILO



Dear Santa,

I would
like a cky
BABY DOLL



Don't forget to sign your name!

Billie
BOWDISH

Dear Santa,

Big
TALKING
BLUEY
HARPER



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Outside

(Continued from Page 10A)
to break, bark to tear, and trunks to bend.

That flexibility serves coniferous trees well with regard to winter winds, too. Flexing with the wind dissipates the wind’s kinetic energy, thereby reducing force on individual branches and the tree as a whole. This streamlining proves more difficult for deciduous trees with stiff branches, even after they have dropped their large leaves.

Frosted and asymmetrical, the crowns of the exclusively coniferous trees near the summit called to mind white sails whipped taut, betraying the wind’s direction. But unlike sails adjusted to capture the wind’s energy, these crowns are aerodynamic, shaped by the prevailing wind to evade as much of its energy as possible.

To cope with freezing temperatures, coniferous and deciduous trees alike are triggered by longer nights and cooler temperatures to progress to a state of dormancy and maximum cold tolerance by mid-winter. Insulation by dead cells, which constitute 99



percent of a mature tree’s woody volume, and a number of seasonal cellular changes help to prevent live cells from freezing. According to researchers at Purdue University’s Department of Forestry and Natural Resources, these cellular changes include a transition to more pliable cell membranes that can withstand the sharp edges of ice crystals that form when the water between cells freezes. Within each cell, starch is converted to sugars, which will serve as antifreeze, lowering the cell’s freezing point. Lastly, as water leaves the cell through its more pliable membrane and as the content of the cell thickens and cools,

viscosity increases, preventing crystallization, which can shred cell membranes.

Eight miles and four hours after beginning our hike, my family returned to our car and then our home, which was exactly as we’d left it: unprepared for winter. Eventually, we did weather-strip the windows where the wind whistled through, shoring up our house’s membrane. But our late attention to winter’s arrival put us in the company of the procrastinating oak, shamed by the proactive ash.

Rebecca Perkins Hanissian is the editorial and outreach coordinator at the Center for Northern Woodlands Education. 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.

ADDISON COUNTY School Briefs

Trey Bosworth, a 2023 graduate of Middlebury Union High School, was a member of the 2023 NCAA Division III champion soccer team at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn. The Olies defeated Amherst 2-1 in overtime.

Justice Green of Starksboro was named to the Elmira College dean’s list for the fall 2023 term. The list recognizes full-time undergraduate students who were registered for at least 12 computable credit hours and who earned a term grade point average of 3.6 or higher.

Selectboard

(Continued from Page 1A)
diverse board where it feels like there’s someone for everyone on there.”

Diversity has been — and continues to be — a particularly important issue for Fuentes-George, who is white and married to Kemi Fuentes-George, who is Black. They have three children who attend Middlebury schools. The couple has been working to improve the racial climate and opportunities for people of color in the Middlebury area.

Lindsey Fuentes-George said she’ll continue to lead the DEI Workgroup — which, with the aid of consultants, is working on a final report for the selectboard that will outline ways to make people of color feel safer and more welcomed in the community. And she believes she’ll be able to give it the workgroup “more bandwidth than I currently have” once she retires from the board in March.

She promised to encourage and support selectboard candidates who she believes could add to the board’s diversity.

“I decided to run, in part, to encourage others to do so,” she wrote in a Dec. 11 letter to selectboard Chair Brian Carpenter confirming her decision to leave the board. “While we like to say that we each serve all residents of our town, our ability to do so equitably requires us to maintain diverse leadership, representative of the community we live in. It is my hope to see candidates with a wide range of experiences, backgrounds and perspectives run for my open seat. It is time to hear from some new voices.”

While she’ll stay busy as a mom, a member of the DEI panel and as executive director of Addison Central Teens (the Middlebury

teen center off Mary Hogan Drive), Fuentes-George will miss being part of the work the selectboard will take on during the next three years. That work will include shaping a major renovation/expansion plan for the Ilsley Public Library, while developing more housing for families seeking to settle in the county’s shire town. She hopes the town will continue to be proactive in protecting neighborhoods in East Middlebury and elsewhere that have proved susceptible to flooding during intense rainstorms that have become more abundant in recent years.

“We’re a town with a river running through the downtown,” she noted.

Fuentes-George is proud of the work the board and its subcommittees accomplished during her tenure. She specifically cited the Energy Committee and its gameplan to help municipal government reduce its carbon footprint.

What will she miss most about the selectboard? The ability to solve problems and make a difference at the grassroots level.

“You have a voice, regardless of what your background is or your political slant,” she said. “I think taking a seat at the table is such a powerful thing. My hope is that more people will choose to run going forward, or consider it, or listen in and see that while the world’s problems might seem too big for us, we can solve some things here to make our community better. And that’s what we all need.”

FARHAD KHAN IS RUNNING

The Independent will offer Khan and any other potential selectboard candidates a broader opportunity to share their board priorities following the Jan. 29 filing deadline. Khan did offer an email

expressing some initial thoughts about another three-year term.

“First and foremost, I would like to thank everyone who has supported me for the last seven years,” said Khan, the longtime owner of Middlebury’s One Dollar Market. “I had the privilege to work with some of the best colleagues on the selectboard. I am proud to be a part of the DEI initiative we took to make Middlebury a welcoming, inclusive and equitable place to live, work, and play.

“I also feel privileged to be on the Ilsley 100 team,” he said of the panel spearheading the Middlebury library makeover. “The team under the leadership of (Ilsley board member) Joe McVeigh and (library Director) Dana Hart has been working hard to explore the possible renovation and expansion of the current library, which is in dire need of an upgrade.”

Khan stressed he’s “also very keen on finding a solution to the housing crisis that we are facing. Which in turn has affected small businesses in recruiting/retaining much-needed help. I know it’s a little more complex than that. But we have to do our part in trying to see what can be done to address this.”

Monday, Jan. 29, is also the date by which petitions are due for those running for local school boards seats. There are four incumbents on the Addison Central School District board whose current terms will expire in March. They include current board Chair Barbara Wilson of Shoreham; Ellen Whelan-Wuest of Cornwall; and Mary Heather Noble and Lindsey Hescok, both of Middlebury.

The Independent will reach out to those incumbents during the next few weeks to ask about their re-election plans, and will offer all candidates a chance to express their ACSD board priorities after Jan. 29.

The ACSD board is made up of 13 members representing the district-member towns of Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge.

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

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- Nancy Foster, Heather Foster-Provencher, January Stearns, Dianna Berthiune, Liz Marino, Amy Young, John Snyder-White, and Brenda Jaring.

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MAUSD Board Chair clarifies situation

Editor's note: MAUSD Board Chair Krista Siringo offered these thoughts to clarify current happenings in the Bristol-area school district.

The Mount Abraham Unified School District wishes to thank the *Independent* and reporter Marin Howell for her continued coverage of MAUSD. I'm writing to bring you up to speed on a couple of district issues and to provide information about several noteworthy developments in our school system.

First, and in reference to the board meeting Howell attended just prior to Thanksgiving, the board is deeply committed to implementing as many of the recommendations of the Levenson report as possible, including the deployment of school-based instructional coaches; sharing elementary school staff; providing greater

support to principals to address local challenges; and exploring cost-saving collaboration with surrounding districts to improve administrative efficiency and provide expanded educational opportunities for our students. As noted in the November full board meeting discussions, any reconfiguration of 6th grade and the middle school is not a priority at this time, although we will be monitoring the approaches underway in Middlebury and Vergennes.

Second, the board was thrilled to learn that Mt. Abe was recently recognized for its efforts to support students and families through its Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program, which recognizes the importance of prioritizing social, emotional, and behavioral learning and well-being to achieve success. Our

school was recognized during the annual Vermont PBIS Leadership Forum earlier this year and highlighted in the 2022-23 BEST Annual Report, which can be found at www.pbisvermont.org.

And third, MAUSD has fully embraced an effective and research-based approach to closing equity gaps in our schools through the All Learners Network (ALN). While the focus is on math at present, the approach can also be applied to other academic areas. Currently we are in year two of the program, and the board sees this as a particularly promising way to move the needle for all students. The ALN presentation conducted at the Dec. 5 board meeting and can be seen online at tinyurl.com/MAUSDDec5.

Thanks again for your interest in MAUSD. Happy Holidays!
— Krista Siringo

MAUSD

(Continued from Page 1A)

"We are asking you to support an implementation of age-appropriate anti-racist curriculums district-wide. We are asking you to plan for and support, financially and otherwise, our teachers and students so that these efforts surpass any one of our current positions. These efforts should be done consistently, over time, so that they become a part of who we are and what we do at each school, each year."

Board members on Tuesday took time to reflect on the comments they heard, discuss next steps and invite community members to be a part of continued conversations about anti-racism work in the district, such as by submitting questions and additional feedback following Tuesday's discussion.

"We have this great opportunity where we've heard from community members and we want to set aside time for this body to have that conversation amongst ourselves, which we can only do in this space," MAUSD Board Chair Krista Siringo told those in attendance. "I recognize that that limits your participation in this moment. I hope that we will continue to have many more conversations where we can invite your participation in other ways. This is just one of many dialogues I hope we have."

COMMUNITY REQUESTS

The MAUSD board has previously heard from community members asking school officials to take immediate and extensive action in addressing racism throughout the district. This past April, around a dozen people urged the board to make those efforts after a Bristol Elementary School student was twice called a racial slur.

On Tuesday, Deas reflected on the recent incident involving her child both as a parent and an educator.

"As a parent, I speak from a place of sadness, frustration and even sometimes anger. As a parent, I also speak from a place of hope and determination. I grew up in this community. This community has accepted me, educated me, supported me, and ultimately felt like the place I wanted to come back to so that I could raise my own children. This community is our home," she told the board. "I really wasn't prepared for our children to be called the 'N' word at school. Yet, I should have been. I really wasn't prepared when a young boy in Monkton told our son that he couldn't play with him because he was 'too dark.' Yet, I should have been."

Deas noted that community members' request for action was not solely in response to the incident at Bristol Elementary.

"This type of language, exclusion, and bigotry is happening to others as well, in all of our schools," she said. "This request of the school board is about recognizing that we have an obligation to teach the children of our community a better way, a way that provides a seat at the table for each and every one of us. What we must know is that when it happens to anyone, it happens to everyone."

Deas also provided her perspective as an educator, stating that teaching anti-racist curriculum aligns with the district's transferable goals and learning targets.

"Our ENDS policy lays the foundation for this work. We state

that we are committed to equity in outcomes for each student so that a student's achievement of the ENDS is not limited or predetermined by characteristics such as race and ethnicity," Deas said. "In reading our ENDS policy, it seems perfectly clear what we need to do. While we appreciate best intentions, best intentions simply won't do. We are asking for your commitment to provide the resources for our district and community so that we can truly shift to a culture that is a reflection of this policy."

Elissa Cobb, a Bristol resident and member of the school district's Community Engagement Committee, thanked the board for their efforts to address racism within the district and encouraged officials to continue that work. "Having half an hour dedicated on your agenda to talk about how to build an anti-racist culture within our school system is huge. We've been wanting this for a long time, and we are sincerely and completely grateful for this beginning," she said. "Our hope is that this becomes part of many meetings to come, until someday trying to become anti-racist is actually how we are every day as humans being."

Cobb noted that around three years ago, a handful of residents began approaching the Community Engagement Committee with a plea to end racism in the district. Community members on Tuesday acknowledged the time that has passed since then by standing in three minutes of silence at the meeting.

"One minute for each year that we've been waiting for what's happening tonight on your agenda," Cobb explained.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Following community members' comments, board members split into small groups to reflect on what they'd heard. Upon reconvening, the board discussed those initial reactions.

"I think around the table and within the room there's not a whole lot of disagreement about how important and attractive this kind of issue is," MAUSD board member Brad Johnson said. "I feel somewhat empowered, in some respects, that so many people from the community showed up here tonight to express their interest in the issue and their passion in doing something about it because at the

end of the day, without this kind of community support, I'm not sure the board has a whole lot of power to end racism in the district."

Board members on Tuesday appeared to identify a couple of next steps, notably learning more about the district's current efforts to address racism and how those compare with best practices.

"I would need to get my head more into what it is that we're currently doing, compare that to what people suggest is the best practice on that front, and see what the difference in resources and personnel might be to try to move things in one direction or another before I could speak to where we can raise this or what level to put it at in our list of priorities," MAUSD board member Steve Rooney said.

MAUSD board member Mike Dash suggested also identifying measurable goals for the anti-racism work in the district.

"We as a board are not in a position where we dictate curriculum or details about how this is going to be implemented. We really come in to set goals and ends and monitor them and assess whether they're being met," Dash said. "When I think about collaboration, I think thinking about ways that we as a board and we as a board with the community at large can set more defined goals, really be specific about what our steppingstones might look like toward achieving an anti-racist education and toward providing the resources that our educators and students need to move along that path."


District officials on Tuesday noted the importance of collaborating with the community on future anti-racism efforts and of inviting a variety of voices to participate in upcoming conversations.

"I think it's important that we get the right people at the table for conversation. I would say in this room there is 100% agreement that this a problem we need to be better about," MAUSD Business Manager Floyd Davidson told the board. "I would say that in our school community, we have a model in front of us with students embracing an LGBTQ-world with far more acceptance, and I would say that if we brought our students into this, that would do far more than any of the adults in this room will do."

Merry Christmas

*And there were in the same country
shepherds abiding in the field,
keeping watch over their flock by
night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord
came upon them, and the glory of the
Lord shone round about them: and
they were sore afraid. And the angel
said unto them, Fear not: for, behold,
I bring you good tidings of great joy,
which shall be to all people. For
unto you is born this day in the city
of David a Saviour, which is Christ
the Lord.*

— Luke 2:8-11




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Munschauer

(Continued from Page 1A)
And as Munschauer has added to his circle of friends, his Christmas card list has gotten longer and longer.
Ironically, the artist left himself off the list for the first several years.
“I never kept any for myself and never really thought about it,” he said. “I had always sent one to my grandmother and when she passed, the ones I had sent to her — around 10 years’ worth — came back to me, and I thought, ‘Maybe I should be saving these myself.’”
It was in 1986 that Munschauer left the urban sprawl and cacophony of New York City for the green hills and serenity of Addison County, Vermont. He had already enjoyed a generous appetizer of the Green Mountain State as a University of Vermont student and was ready to settle in for the main course.
Upon his arrival, Munschauer began working for the late Dr. Art Greiner at Middlebury Animal Hospital, which he acquired from Greiner two years later.

Combining a gentle countenance, kind demeanor and skilled hands, Munschauer developed a loyal clientele of furry patients and their friends during a 36-year run that concluded with his retirement in March of last year. Middlebury Animal Hospital continues to flourish with a cast of four veterinarians and a dedicated support staff.
Now fast approaching his 71st birthday, Munschauer continues to enjoy the physical dexterity and mental acuity of someone much younger. During this interview he bounded up onto a couch to retrieve some his artwork from his studio wall and conjured dates and anecdotes from his past with remarkable facility.
One could easily imagine him back in a clinic hoisting an ailing Pomeranian onto an exam table.
So can he.
“Believe it or not, I’m still transitioning into retirement,” he smiled. “Not having a purpose is difficult.”

He’ll soon correct that, vowing to become a more active volunteer for nonprofit causes in 2024. In the meantime, he’s been keeping his hands busy creating artwork.
Munschauer has always been a fan of the arts; his longtime support of Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater and other local bastions of creativity has been well known. But perhaps less known has been the good doctor’s virtuosity as a painter. He began harnessing his artistic talent in high school and tried to nurture it during his lengthy career as a veterinarian.
“I’m mostly self-taught,” he acknowledged, though he took a few art classes during and after his college years.
His favorite medium has been watercolors, though he began delving into oil painting just a year ago.
“Watercolor was attractive to me because you don’t need as much stuff and space (to create artwork),” he explained. “I think for an amateur painter, it’s often where you get started.”
His paintings reveal his talent,

with some of his landscapes offering an almost photographic realism.
In fact, they’re so good that he’s been asked to exhibit some of his paintings at THT’s Jackson Gallery. The show, dubbed, “Thomas Munschauer, A New Path,” will open on Friday, Jan. 12, and run through mid-February.
Among the collection will be 13 examples of his Christmas card paintings.
Most of Munschauer’s designs come from his imagination. Some are Addison County scenes or landmarks he encounters during his travels. Others are inspired by photographs.
“Because they’re all hand-painted and individually done, the subject has to be relatively simple and easily reproduced over and over, with reasonable consistency,” he said.
Not surprisingly, the Christmas cards are generally winter scenes, such as a group of cows huddling for warmth in a snow-swept pasture, or a frosty full moon rising above a tree-strewn hill. Munschauer is drawn to landscapes, which he often complements with buildings, animals



“I go to their houses and see them framed. So I know there’s a piece of me in people’s homes, and that gives me pleasure.”
— Tom Munschauer



THIS IS THE 42nd annual Christmas card that Tom Munschauer has created to send to family and friends. The Middlebury artist is self-taught and recreates each card as many as 60 times so that everyone gets an original piece.

Independent photos/Steve James

and, sometimes, people.
During this interview he happened to be scrutinizing his 2013 Christmas painting, a small herd of cattle that can often be seen in a field off Route 74 in Cornwall.
This year’s Christmas offering features a moon over a mountain scene, with a man and his dog standing in the foreground. Munschauer was able to play with shadowing behind man and dog, one of his favorite techniques.
With 60 paintings to make (he paints a few extra, just in case) during a compressed time period, Munschauer has devised ways to economize on brushstrokes and his time commitment.
Sometimes he’ll fashion and use a block print to reproduce an element from his original design — perhaps a cow image — in the remaining versions of the painting. He’ll then hand paint the landscape, sky and other features of the artwork. Sixty times.
“Before, I would usually lightly sketch out (the design) in pencil, first,” he said. “That was time consuming and tedious.”
Not that the occasional use of a block print has removed all the tedium. Due to the watercolor drying process, he doesn’t complete one painting before going to the next one.
“I might paint 60 skies, then 60 sets of trees, then 60 skiers,” he chuckled. “But I listen to podcasts or music while painting. I don’t create them all in one sitting.”
A major painting project takes discipline and the ability to adhere to a deadline. And for Munschauer, that means ensuring all the paintings are in the mail at least 10 days before Christmas. He used to start the process the day after Thanksgiving. Retirement has given him the luxury of a Halloween launch and completion by Thanksgiving.
He knows his paintings are appreciated by those who receive them.
“I go to their houses and see them framed,” Munschauer said. “So I know there’s a piece of me in people’s homes, and that gives me pleasure.”
So how much longer will he be painting for the holidays?
“Every year I say, ‘I’m never doing this again,’ but I will probably keep doing it until I can’t do it anymore,” Munschauer said.
Ellie Friml is manager of the Jackson Gallery. She’s been impressed by Munschauer’s many contributions to the community and is excited to see his recent foray into oil painting.
“Now in his retirement, Tom is making time to create larger format paintings,” she noted. “He is exploring a variety of imagery and techniques and has built a collection of works to share. I am looking forward to introducing Tom’s work to the community through an exhibit at The Jackson Gallery.”

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A crowd of about 1,000 people gathered to celebrate the introduction of night skiing at the Middlebury Snowbowl this past Friday. After a 20-minute, over-the-top fireworks display that culminated with a burst of lights illuminating the three trails under the new four-person Sheehan lift, the lift jumped to life at 5 p.m. on the nose. The first four skiers, bottom left, said it all with the sign: "Lights. Lifts. Action."

And action there was. Skiers jammed the trails, the Neon Ramblers band (formed by members of The Grift and others) stoked the scene inside the main lodge encouraging a lively dancing scene, the cafeteria and bar had a steady stream of customers and the line to jump on the Sheehan snaked all the way to the snowmaking pond. The trails were amply lit as shown at the top of the Lang, at right, and top of Cameron, below.

Snowbowl Operations Manager Mike Hussey, top right, said he was ecstatic over the turnout, and pleased to see a good demographic mix of skiers and riders. Night lights at the Snowbowl has been on Hussey's wish list for the past half dozen years, he said, adding, "It's great to see it have such a successful launch!"

Independent photos/Steve James and Angelo Lynn





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By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)
“Reason to Believe” and “Maggie May” — had been spotted that day in Vergennes, allegedly grabbing a bite at 3 Squares Café and making purchases at Your Turn Resale Shoppe and Sweet Charity. On Friday, he was said to have attended the opening party at the Middlebury College

Snow Bowl in Hancock, and word was that he was staying at the Middlebury Inn, or maybe it was the Swift House. Along the way, he reportedly chatted with fans and posed for selfies. But, as Bolles reported in a mea culpa over the weekend, it turns out the spike-haired Brit causing a stir in our area wasn’t the “Tonight’s

The Night” crooner after all. But the faux rocker sure didn’t mind people assuming that he was.

Area residents will soon be able to enjoy a vibrant public plaza and performance space in front of downtown Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater at 68 South Pleasant St. It’s part of a \$7.5 million THT expansion plan, the centerpiece of which will be a 7,000-square-foot, three-story addition to be built onto the southwest end of the performing arts center. There’s an effort underway to help pay for the “outdoor plaza” portion of the project through a recently launched crowdfunding campaign. If the campaign, sponsored by the Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development’s Better Places program, reaches its \$20,000 goal by Jan. 12, the THT Plaza will receive a matching grant of \$40,000 from the state. Go to tinyurl.com/mtay8x87 if you’d

like to donate. As of Tuesday, the campaign had raised \$11,790 toward the \$20,000 goal.

If your thing is sustainability, there is good news for supporters of the Addison County Relocalization Network (ACORN) and its efforts to “provide sustainable sources of food, water, energy, employment and capital while promoting conservation and a healthy environment.” Sarah Kaeck, ACORN board member and founder of Bee’s Wrap, has offered to match the nonprofit’s 2023 fundraising appeal up to \$10,000. So from now until the end of the year, every dollar donated to support ACORN will be doubled, up to \$10,000. To take advantage of the opportunity to make twice as much of a difference, prospective donors are asked to check out tinyurl.com/3sppt379.

With additional snow expected during the coming weeks, the U.S. Forest Service is looking forward to a successful snowmobile season and wants to encourage all riders to put safety first out on the trails this winter. Green Mountain National Forest officials remind snowmobile enthusiasts to heed all gates and signs and to stay off roads and trails that are closed. Forest Service employees and several snowmobile clubs throughout Vermont have been working to clear trees and other debris from trails, but users should continue to be extra careful early in the season, as some trees might be weak due to snow accumulation, and downed tree hazards are likely. Weather permitting, snowmobile use is allowed on designated trails within the GMNF for four months, from Dec. 16 to April 15. The maximum speed is 35 miles per hour on state and federal land. The Forest Service is also warning of the dangers associated with riding, hiking and skiing on frozen water. Pack a flashlight, cell phone, food and extra warm clothing in case of an emergency while on a trail. Visit vtvast.org/trails.html for more details.

If your home was affected by flooding this past summer, you might be eligible for

Efficiency Vermont’s flood recovery rebates. Income-eligible homeowners and renters, plus rental property owners and businesses, can get more money back when replacing flood-damaged items with energy-efficient options. For example, homeowners and renters can get a total of \$10,000 back on home heating and cooling systems, including ducted and ductless heat pumps, central wood pellet systems, wood/pellet stoves, and qualifying Energy Star-certified boilers and furnaces. Businesses can get up to \$5,000 back on qualifying heat-pump water heaters, and \$9,500 is available for qualifying weatherization projects. Get more details at efficiencyvermont.com/bizflood.

Average gasoline prices in Vermont have fallen 6.4 cents per gallon during the past week to \$3.32, according to GasBuddy. Prices in Vermont are 18.3 cents lower than a month ago and 14.1 cents lower than a year ago. The cheapest station in Vermont was \$2.99, the most expensive was \$3.50. Meanwhile, the national average price fell 8.6 cents to \$3.03, which is 26.9 cents lower than a month ago and 6.8 cents lower than a year ago.

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Equipment

(Continued from Page 1A)
rescue truck — the only one in northeastern Addison County — also has pumper capacity (he recently called it “the busiest truck in the station”), while the ladder truck is one of just two in the county. Middlebury owns the other.

At a Dec. 12 Vergennes City Council information meeting, DiBiase said it was likely the department would also search for a used heavy rescue truck in order to contain costs.

The face value of the bond is about \$600,000 less than the bond the Vergennes City Council originally approved for a Dec. 5 vote. The council reduced the amount for the new vote date in light of the community’s many other infrastructure needs. That reduction was achieved by deciding to buying a used ladder truck instead of a new one.

City officials were also mindful of the ongoing dispute between Vergennes and Ferrisburgh officials about how much the town should be paying for its share of the city fire department’s budget. Mediation appears to be the next step in resolving the differences between city and town officials’ views.

Essentially, the communities are almost \$45,000 apart in talks, and Ferrisburgh’s support for the bond could be subject to a town-wide vote.

The Vergennes Fire Department serves as the first responder for all of Pantan and Waltham, all of Ferrisburgh west of Otter Creek, and the portion of Ferrisburgh south of Tupper’s Crossing, just north of Vergennes.

For the past four decades, those four communities have shared the cost of the city fire

department based on a formula using the grand list value of the real estate in each community for which Vergennes serves as first responder.

Ferrisburgh now contends that formula isn’t fair for several reasons: because much of its real estate value is tied up in land, not buildings; Vergennes benefits from a larger share of its fire department’s calls for service; Ferrisburgh, unlike Pantan and Waltham, also funds its own fire department that typically works with the city fire department; and the towns have little or no say in creating a city fire department budget.

On Dec. 8, the Ferrisburgh selectboard offered \$60,000 a year for five years for protection from the city department, backdated to July 1, 2023. That amount is almost \$50,000 less than the \$108,264 voters approved in March for that purpose, as city officials have noted.

Ferrisburgh selectboard Chair Clark Hinsdale said this week that budgeted money is a “placeholder,” not a contract that obligates the town to pay that amount. He told the *Independent* it’s part of the larger general fund budget over which the selectboard has discretion.

The board in its letter also noted the territory protected by the city department as a first responder is equal to the combined size of Pantan and Waltham, and that Ferrisburgh is now spending twice as much per capita for fire protection than the other three communities because it also funds its own department.

The letter also called into question that town’s support for the bond city residents supported on Tuesday: “The Ferrisburgh

selectboard will not commit Ferrisburgh residents to paying for a bond issue without the residents voting to do so.”

Back in July, the city budgeted \$104,676 as Ferrisburgh’s share in its current fiscal year budget. Note: The *Independent* in a Dec. 14 article erroneously stated a lower figure (about \$11,000 less) for the amount the city budgeted to receive from Ferrisburgh; the reporter apologizes for that mistake.

In stating the possible cost to Vergennes residents if the bond was supported, city officials said they had no clear way to do so other than use the current funding system. They came up with an estimate that it would add a little more than a penny to the city’s residential tax rate, but not until payments kick in down the road in about a year. That increase, when it takes effect, would translate to just over \$10 per \$100,000 of assessed value.

City officials also estimated at its peak the full bond would add \$23,000 to Ferrisburgh’s annual budget, about \$10,900 to Pantan’s, and about \$5,900 to Waltham’s; again, those figures assume the current shared financing system.

At the Dec. 12 public hearing, city officials emphasized there was plenty of time to resolves their differences with their Ferrisburgh counterparts before bond payments began.

Discussions to this point, however, have not proven fruitful. A Dec. 15 letter to Ferrisburgh Selectboard Chair Clark Hinsdale from Vergennes Mayor Chris Bearor and Deputy Mayor Dickie Austin stated, “It is clear to us that our efforts to resolve how we fund fire safety have reached an impasse.”

They recommended spending \$3,000 on a daylong mediation session, using a specialist upon whom both sides could agree upon from a list provided by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. They concluded with the hope for “the opportunity to work together in the spirit of

cooperation.”

On Wednesday morning, Hinsdale told the *Independent* the Ferrisburgh selectboard had unanimously agreed to mediation, although board members were disappointed that ongoing talks that had been facilitated by the Addison Count Regional Planning Commission were not continuing.

Hinsdale has past experience with the mediation firm that city officials have suggested.

“I certainly have a high opinion at what they do, and feel they’re very good at what they do,” he said.

Candlelight service to be held Saturday, Dec. 23, in Starksboro

STARKSBORO — The Starksboro Village Meeting House will offer its special Christmas Candlelight service on Saturday, Dec. 23, 2023, at 7 p.m. The program of lessons and carols will be led by Michael Blakeslee. Abigail Johnson is the pianist. All are welcome.

This non-denominational service has been held for nearly 60 years. Many families treasure it as a holiday tradition. The colored glass windows have been restored and the sanctuary walls repaired — the hall is looking the best it has in

many decades. The sanctuary is lit by the mirrored oil lamp chandelier, dating from 1884, and many candles.

Holiday cookies, treats and hot cider will be available in the foyer at the end of the service.

The Meeting House is located in the center of Starksboro village on Route 116, just north of the town offices. Parking is available to the rear in the town center parking area.

The Gothic Revival-style Meeting House was built in 1838-40 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



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Frederick Cope
Gladys Cope
Oliver Cope
Sarah Cope
Sharon Cope
Stephen Cope
Betty Counter
Bertha Counter
Henry Counter
Stanley Counter
John Cousino
Ruth Cousino
Wayne Cousino
Winfred Cousino
Clarence Cox
Ruth Cox
Jane Creaser
Jennifer Cromett
Jeffrey Crossman
Christopher Cunningham
Janet Cunningham
Linda Cunningham
Gramma & Grandpa Cunningham
Phyllis Burke Cunningham
Richard Cunningham
William Joseph Cunningham
Patti Curtis
Dolly Cyr
Kate Cyr
James Cyr
Leonard D. Sonny Cyr
Leonard P. Cyr
Mable Cyr
Doris Cyr-Pelkey
Richard L. “Dick” Daniels
James Danyow
Lucy Danyow
Raymond Buck Danyow
Arthur Danyow Sr.
Arthur Danyow Jr.
Patricia Danyow
Bertha Danyow
Jim D’Avignon
Patricia D’Avignon
Ann & Junior Davis
Grandpa and Gramma Davis
Uncle Walt Davis
Leola Deering
Matt Deering
Lena DeLage
Marilyn Delaney
Andy Denis
Barbara Denis
Lucien Desabrais
Norman Desabrais
Moses J. Desabrais
Julia Desabrais
Roger J. Desabrais
Thea Desabrais
John Desforges
Leo Desforges
Yvette Desforges
Bertha Desjadon
Dean Desjadon
Walt Desjadon
Helen Draper
Daniel Dubois
James Dubois
Marcel Dubois
Robert Dubois
Norma Duclos
Robert Duclos
Janet Duffany

Rube Duffany
David Dupoise
Heath Dupoise
Joyce Dupoise
Marilyn Dupoise
Michael Dupoise
Al Edson
Ray Clark
Ethel Edwards
Thomas Edwards
Donald Ellison Sr.
Joyce Ellison
Virginia Ellison
Terry Elynn
Bob Euber
Gene Evans
Rita Fallon
Lori Farnsworth
Lucien Farnsworth
Lynn Farnsworth
Armand Faubert
Lucille Faubert
Sidney Fenson Sr.
Joel Fifield
Rebecca Fifield
Clarence Bub Fisk
Sheldon Fisk
Rena Fisk
Elizabeth Fiske
Jack Fiske
Thelma Flachsland
William Flachsland
Eric Flanagan
Sue Flanagan
Larry Flemming
Janice Forbes
Janice Forguites
Leslie Forguites
Lorenzo Gagnon
Peter Gagnon
Dolly Gara
Jack Gara
John Gebo
Bertha Gemmill
Wallace Gemmill
Edward Gervais
Shirley Gervais
Holly Burke Gordon
Rick Gowan
Lyle Greenwood
Peggie Greenwood
Guinness and Bailey
Blanche Hallock
Jesse Hallock
John Hallock
Gladys Hallock
Olga Hallock
Andrea Halnon
Ernestine Hawkins
Baily Helfon
Guy “Lucky” Hoague
Marlene Hoague
Inez Hubbell
Louise Hubbell
Robert Hubbell
Lynn Huestis
Erma Humiston
Ernestine Humiston
Howard Humiston Sr.
Laurie A. Humiston-Raymond
Nellie Humiston
Sidney Humiston
John Isham
Alberta Jackson
Ara Jackson
Dean Jackson
George Jackson
Jacqueline White Jackson
Ruth Jackson
Walter Jackson
Lynn James
Agnes James
Stephen James
Walker James
Meridith Jermain
Leonard Jerome
Andrew Jewell
Ralph “Chet” Jewell
Anna Johnson
Stanley Johnson
Allen Jones
Fred Jones
Phyllis Jones
Rita Jones
Donald Keeler Sr.
Julie Keeler
Eric Kemp
Darwin Kimball
Guy LaBel
Marty LaBel
Peter LaBel
Raymond LaBel
Becky LaBerge
Charlie Laberge

Elizabeth Laberge
Barbara LaDuc
Jerilyn LaDue
Aline LaFountain
Carla LaFountain
Doris LaFountain
James LaFountain
John E. LaFountain
Joseph LaFountain
Lisa LaFountain
Raymond LaFountain
Reginald LaFountain
Robert J. LaFountain
Wilfred LaFountain Sr.
Pat Lafraboise
Clifford Lagrow
Donald Lagrow
Hugh Lagrow
Irene Lagrow
Jean Lagrow
Joyce Lagrow
Robert Lagrow
Fred and Helen Landon
John Langfeldt
Ursula Langfeldt
Joyce Laperrie
Robert K. LaPlant
Harris Larocque
Joey Larocque
Leo Larocque
Roger Larocque
Carrie LaRose
Emeline LaRose
Donna Lawton
Tee LaVerdiere
Dolly Lebeau
Helen Lebeau
Marge Lebeau
Paul Lebeau
Jeff Lienhard Jr.
Floyd Litch
Gisele Litch
Helen Litch
Jim Litch
Tim Litch
Bradford Seabury Littlefield
Betsy Love
Theo Fuller Lowell
Bud Lundrigan
Rhodee Lundrigan
Joan Maloy
Joe Malzac
Nora Malzac
Brian Manchester
Gary Marshall
Judy Marshall
Fay Martin
Faye Martin
Brian Mayer
Genevieve Mayer
Karen Mayer
Paul Mayer
Steve Mc G.
Mac McCarty
Sara McCarty
Jack McKinley
John McKinley
Mrs. Jack McKinley
Ronald McKinnon
John McWilliams
Cheryl Miller
Beaver Mitchell
Elwin Mitchell Jr.
Elwin Mitchell Sr.
Helen Ann Mitchell
Jean Mitchell
Jerry Mitchell
John Moynihan
Marion Moynihan
Paul Munson
Douglas G. Murray
Douglas J. Murray
Douglas Murray Jr.
Rita Murray
Bonnie Murray
Howard Murray
James Muzaca
Joan Myrick
Tom Myrick
Gert Needham
Warren Needham
Janice Neilson
Angie Neri
Audrey Newton
Bernard Newton
Kenneth Nicholson
Tim Nolan
David Nueder
Doris O’Brien
Philip O’Brien Jr.
Philip O’Brien Sr.
Maud O’Dea
Judy O’Donnell
Leon O’Donnell

Edmund Ouellette
Delia Ouellette
Lucien Ouellette
Raymond Ouellette
Betty Parizo
Matt Stub Parizo
Alfred Lyman Payne
Margaret Payne
Marion H. Payne
Ralph A. Payne
Ralph (Sonny) Payne Jr.
Stanton F. Payne
Stella Payne
Beverly Peck
Floyd Supe Peck
David Peryea
Debbie Peryea
Harold Peryea
Jean Peryea
Thomas Peryea
Augustus Pidgeon
Duane Pidgeon
Kathleen Pidgeon
Verna Pidgeon
Robin M. Pierce
Wilma Poljacik
Casey James Poquette
Jane Porcheron
Maud Porcheron
Raymond Porcheron
Warren Potter
Helen Pratico
Phillip Pratico
Dick Preble
Don Preble
Neola Preble
Parker Preble
Peg Preble
Edna Puls
Robert Puls
John Dean Purdy
Susan Love Purdy
Christa Quenneville
Alice Quesnel
Alice Condon Quesnel
Bugger Quesnel
Matt Quesnel
Mike Quesnel
Tom Quesnel
Laurie Raymond
Betty Lou Rheume
Monika Rhodes
Don Richer
Helen Ann Riley
Janet Riley
Mary Riley
Vernon Riley Jr.
Vernon Riley Sr.
Carol Ringey
Paul Ringey
Carol Rivers
Duncan Rosborough
Adele Rounds
Lee Rounds
Robert Rounds
Shirley Rounds
Jeanette Cole Rowe
Albert Ringey
Jeffrey Ringey
Dean Rubright
Deane Rubright
Ann Russett
Al Ryan
Jane Ryan
Ada Safford
Steven Sanborn
Michael Sander
Sarah Sander
Daisy Scott
David Sears
Walter Sears
Deb Shackett
Mary Shackett
Mike Shackett
Joe Shackett Sr.
Butch Shaw
Jourdy Shaw
Robert Shaw
Harold Shepard
Lena Shepard
Susan Shepard
Ted Sheldrake
Dewey Shiverette
Flora Shiverette
Father John Shortill
Eleanor Sisco
Dutton Smith Sr.
Emma Smith
Floyd Smith
Kay Smith
Hilda Spaulding
James Steady
Pauline Steady
Randall Steady

Randy Steady
Theresa Steady
Tippy Steady
Kathy Stearns
Nancy A. Stearns
Dick Stillings
Jerry Stout
Joyce Burke Stout
Alerta Swain
Isabelle Swain
Michelle Swain
Winston Swain
Robert Taylor Jr.
Bill Thomas
Joan Thomas
Terry Thomas
Larry Thorpe
Jane Thulin
Reginald Trudeau
Stephen Tucker
Edgar and Ruth Turpin
Ernest Turpin
Joe Turpin
Mary Ann Turpin
Jere Urban
Dave Van Vleck
Eunice Van Vleck
Butch Varno
Helen Varno
Mabel Varno
Paul Varno
Richard Varno
David Volkert
Rose Marie Wakefield
James and Kay Walker
John Walker
Bob Wallace
David Wallace
Hazel Wallace
Howard Wallace
Joseph Wallace
Tom Wallace
Rick Warner
Nicholas Warren
Sandra Warren
Tim Watts
Crystal Wells
Katy Wells
Barbara Wheelock
Donna Wheelock
Edward Wheelock
Rodney Wheelock
Betty Wilder
Doug Williams
Everett Williams
Pauline Williams
Phil Williams
Chief Don Williamson
Ellen Williamson
Barbara Wimett
Edward Wimett
Ronald Wimett
Helen Wisell
Jim Wisell
Leo Wisell
Tom Wisell
Jean Litch Withington
Alice Cunningham Worden
Patricia Ann Wright
H Kent Wright IV
Viola Wry
David York
Anthony Zawistowski
Edward Zawistowski
Leo Zawistowski
Mary Zawistowski
Stephania Zawistowski

In memory of Lions listed below who started in 1952 and have served unselfishly.
Their work will live on as we fellow Lions follow in their footsteps to serve our Middlebury area community.

“Not above you, not beneath you, but always with you. We serve.”

Merry Christmas

Lion Forrest Lowell
Lion Bert Demarais
Lion Harris Thurber
Lion Martin Broughton
Lion Stan Payne
Lion Bob Frett

Lion Ray Mason
Lion Frank L. Cutler
Lion Erie Volkert
Lion Stan Lazarus
Lion Harry Browe
Lion Paul Munson

Lion Sid Ward
Lion George Saul III
Lion Tom Brown
Lion Ron Knep
Lion Bill Clark
Lion Francis Haggarty

Lion Roscoe Pratt
Lion Floyd “Supe” Peck
Lion Chet Ketchum
Lion Dr. Ray Collins
Lion Bob Brooks
Lion Greg Lyons

Lion Irwin Brent
Lion Gerald C. DeWitt
Lion Roger Desabrais, Sr.
Lion Maurice Desautels
Lion Don Hunt
Lion Al Stillman

Lion Dave Van Vleck
Lion Ray Giroux
Lion Jim D’Avignon
Lion Rollie White
Lion Steve Ketchum
Lion Paul Schroeder

- School News
- Classifieds
- Legal Notices
- Police Logs

Mt. Abe girls surge late past visiting Solons

By ANDY KIRKALDY
BRISTOL — The Mount Abraham girls' basketball team started and finished strong against visiting Montpelier on Tuesday, and that was enough for the Eagles to get past both the Solons and a few of their own mid-game struggles in a 40-30 victory.

The Eagles looked like they were on their way to a romp in the first quarter, in which they took a 15-4 lead. The Solons crept back into the game slowly and twice cut the lead to two points, the second time at 23-21 with 2:45 left in the third quarter.

Mount Abe then responded with a clinching 13-1 run over the next 4:05. During that surge junior center Mackenzie Griner and junior guard Hazel Guilmette combined for 12 points.

Coach Koran Cousino said afterward there remain wrinkles to iron out on both offense and defense, but didn't dispute one fact. "We're 3-0," Cousino said. "A year ago we were 0-3."

The first quarter showed what the Eagles are capable of. Their aggressive player-to-player defense, new this season, and full-court press forced nine Solons turnovers in the period, and Griner dominated inside, with eight points, including two three-point plays. Griner finished with 21 points, 13

rebounds and two blocks. Then came a second quarter both teams would probably just as soon forget, or at least chalk up to early-season inconsistency.

The Solons were a little happier by halftime: They managed four baskets, two each by seniors Ireland Donahue and Willow Sterling-Proulx, and hit three of 11 free throws to score 11 points in the period.

Meanwhile, Griner's short baseline jumper 1:20 before halftime was the only Eagle basket in the period, and the team combined to make just four of 12 free throws. At least both teams padded their rebounding stats: They combined for 25 in the period, 13 by the Eagles.

As for the numbers that mattered most at the half: The score was Eagles 21, Solons 15.

Both Guilmette and Eagle junior Abba Parker found themselves in foul trouble, which Cousino said hurt the Eagles' energy and ability to contain Donahue in the second period and in the third.

"We don't stay in this game without Abba Parker playing defense on their No. 20 (Donahue)," Cousino said.

That halftime lead twice shrank to two points in the third period, first when Donahue scored four

(See Eagles, Page 3B)



EAGLE JUNIOR CENTER Mackenzie Griner goes up for two of her game-high 21 points during Tuesday's home game. Mount Abe defeated Montpelier, 40-30.

Independent photo/Steve James

Score BOARD

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS		
Girls' Hockey		
12/16 Hartford vs MUHS		1-2
12/18 MUHS at Rutland		Postponed
12/20 Missisquoi at MUHS		Late
Boys' Hockey		
12/16 Rutland vs MUHS		4-1
Boys' Basketball		
12/13 Winooski vs Mt. Abe		57-55
12/13 VUHS vs Northfield		59-20
12/15 Randolph vs Mt Abe		39-35
12/15 VUHS vs Stowe		53-23
12/16 Essex vs MUHS		60-36
12/16 Hartford vs OV		59-45
12/18 VUHS at Williamstown		Ppd.
12/19 OV vs Mt. Anthony		69-60
12/20 Winooski at Mt Abe		Late
12/20 MUHS at U-32		Late
12/20 Fair Haven at VUHS		Late
Girls' Basketball		
12/13 Mt Abe vs U-32		41-30
12/14 Fair Haven vs OV		60-20
12/15 VUHS vs Peoples		56-24
12/16 Mt Abe vs BBA		34-29
12/16 U32 vs MUHS		51-28
12/19 Harwood vs MUHS		43-36
12/19 OV vs Proctor		49-43
12/19 Mt. Abe vs Montpelier		40-30
12/19 VUHS vs Fairfax		69-13

Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS		
Girls' Hockey		
12/27 BBA at MUHS		1 PM
12/28 TBD at MUHS		1/5 PM
Boys' Hockey		
12/23 MUHS at Colchester		5 PM
12/27 Brookline at MUHS		3 PM
12/28 TBD at MUHS		3/7 PM
Boys' Basketball		
12/22 Mt Abe at MSJ		7 PM
12/23 Mill River at MUHS		12:30 PM
12/23 OV at Springfield		1:30 PM
12/23 VUHS at Williamstown		2:30 PM
12/27 OV at Brattleboro		7 PM
12/27 Twinfield at VUHS		7 PM
12/27 Mt Anthony at Mt Abe		7 PM
12/29 OV at Mt Abe		7 PM
12/29 MUHS at Harwood		7 PM
Girls' Basketball		
12/22 Williamstown at VUHS		7 PM
12/22 MUHS at OV		7 PM
12/27 Mt Abe at FH Tourney		5:30 PM
12/27 OV at Fair Haven		7 PM
12/28 VUHS at Northfield		6 PM
12/29 OV at FH Tourney		5:30 PM
12/29 Mt Abe at FH Tourney		7 PM
12/29 St. Albans at MUHS		7 PM
Nordic Skiing		
12/21 MUHS hosts at Rikert		2 PM
Wrestling		
12/27&28	MUHS Tournament	
Gymnastics		
12/27 BBA at MUHS		6 PM
COLLEGE SPORTS		
Women's Basketball		
12/29 Midd at Stevens		3 PM
12/30 Midd vs N. Paltz at Stevens		7 PM
Men's Basketball		
12/29 Midd at Brandeis		5 PM
Men's Hockey		
12/31 Midd at Hobart		3 PM
1/2 NEC at Midd		7 PM

Tiger boys' hockey gels in 4-1 victory over Rutland

By ANDY KIRKALDY
MIDDLEBURY — Consistent defense and opportunistic offense sent the Middlebury Union High School boys' hockey team past visiting Rutland on Saturday night, 4-1.

The Tigers improved to 2-0 heading into a game at Colchester this coming Saturday, to be followed next week by their annual holiday tournament at the Memorial Sports Center, with games on Dec. 27 and 28. They'll play Brookline, Mass., on that Wednesday, with the Thursday game's time and foe depending on that result.

Against the 0-2-1 Raiders, MUHS took charge with first-period goals from Toby Draper, an unassisted gem, and Eyon Tembreull, on a rebound of a shot by defender Iver Anderson. Landon Kean, on a pretty pass

(See Tigers, Page 2B)



EYON TEMBREULL, WITH inside position on the Rutland defense, makes no mistake on this rebound of a shot from the point by teammate Iver Anderson.

Independent photo/Steve James

Looking back with hope on past year

I will admit that it's a bleak Monday morning. Between the rain and the low clouds, I can barely see the hills a half mile from my house. The nearby cornfield looks like one vast puddle.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not a hater of Mondays. And I usually really like Stick Season. I think it's beautiful when the black-striped white of the paper birch outside my window glows in the low late-afternoon light, when chickadees and rose-breasted nuthatches return to the feeder below the window, when I can see to the top of the forest canopy and admire maple branches scratching powdery blue skies, and when turkeys gather again in big flocks out in the stubble of cornfields (when they're not flooded). Even gray days of December with their short hours of daylight hold great charm. I wish it were one of those cold bleak days carrying a promise of snow — maybe even with a few dandelion seedpod snowflakes drifting past.

But the temperature is already up in the mid-50s. It shouldn't be like this just three days before the winter solstice and a week before Christmas. What little snow we had frosting the peaks and giving the late sunrise its special seasonal alpenglow is destined to disappear fast (along with any hope of Nordic

skiing). Or, rather, it won't disappear; it will transform into torrents of mud in the rivers. By mid-morning, the New Haven River was already over its banks and out into the trees upriver of Sycamore Park. News reports are showing videos from across the mountains of flooded roads and schools in the Mad River Valley. I expect the flooding will be worse on both sides of the mountains before the day is over. Maybe even before I'm done writing this column. It is eerily reminiscent of the summer floods, which proved brutally devastating to many Vermonters.

Yet 2023 was also a year that brought hope. In late June, I stood atop a bridge over the Cobbosseecontee Stream just upriver of its confluence with the larger Kennebec River in Gardiner, Maine, a few miles from the site of where the old Edwards Dam had been removed a decade earlier. I was part of a small crowd of excited folks staring down into the water. Below us, several Atlantic sturgeon seven to eight feet long finned in the rain-swollen current. A biologist said

there were more of them, some 10-foot long, just a hundred or so yards downriver and out in the Kennebec. Massive creatures. By a longshot, the largest fish I have ever seen in freshwater in the wild. It was the first time in about 200 years that sturgeon had been seen in that river, which is why the crowds had gathered. The fish had come up from the ocean to spawn in habitat that had once again become friendly to them. A larger school of much smaller river herring, another *anadromous* ocean-going fish that needs fresh water for spawning, was also visible in the shallow, sandy area not far from the sturgeon. Striped bass were also in the river, chasing the herring.

Earlier that day, I had helped transport two Atlantic salmon from another dam farther upstream up to the Sandy River to spawn. Although those two fish had only brought the 2023 count of returning salmon into the mid-90s — a tiny fraction of the tens of thousands of salmon that spawned in that river system three centuries ago — it represented 10 straight years of increasing numbers of returning fish.

Here in Vermont, I also read about funds from Habitat Stamps — entirely voluntarily contributions, coming mostly from those purchasing fishing and hunting licenses — used for conservation

projects, like the planned 2024 removal of the old Blake Higgins over Saxtons River — a project that should open up spawning passage for both lamprey (which are native in that area and an important part of the ecosystem) and American eels (which are native to the entire east coast and are the only known North American species of *catadromous* fish, which spawn in the ocean and live their adult lives in fresh water.)

Amid all the evidence of climate change — with our summer floods, wildfire smoke and December temperatures nearing 60 just a small sample — I also continue to read news of folks making meaningful efforts to fight climate change, reducing their carbon footprints. These include individuals as well as large, impactful companies like Patagonia. And as awful as the summer floods were, I also witnessed many ways Vermonters came together as communities to support one another. These stories also gave me reasons to hope.

When I focus on the sensationalized mass media, it is easy to lose hope, especially with climate and environmental news. When I see what many of my neighbors as well as creative innovators and many responsible business owners are doing, some of that hope returns.

CVU tops MUHS gymnasts, but Tigers set personal bests

MIDDLEBURY — Visiting high school gymnastics power Champlain Valley coasted past host Middlebury in a Dec. 13 meet, 130.1 to 65.8. Nonetheless, Tiger Coach Natalia Little was pleased that two of her gymnasts, one of them an independent from the Vergennes area who trains with the squad, set personal records.

Tiger Alixis Williams set one personal record (PR) in finishing third in the all-around competition, and another while taking sixth in the vault.

Bella Audy from Vergennes finished third in the floor exercise while setting a personal record.

"I am hoping that these

personal records show the start to a strong season where we will hopefully see more PRs," Little wrote in an email.

The winners in each event and the MUHS and independent

scorers in the top seven were:

VAULT: 1. Warner Babic (CVU), 8.6; 6. Williams (MUHS), 8.0 (PR).

BARS: 1. Babic (CVU), 8.1; 7. Williams (MUHS), 6.2.

BEAM: 1. Ruby Opton (CVU), 9.1; 5. Williams (MUHS), 8.0.

FLOOR: 1. Cadence Haggerty (CVU), 8.4; 3. Audy (Vergennes), 7.9 (PR); 6. Alixis Williams (MUHS), 7.0.

ALL AROUND: 1. Opton (CVU) 32.95; 3. Williams (MUHS), 29.2 (PR).



THE TIGER DEFENSE took care of business in front of goalie Casey Calzini against visiting Rutland on Saturday night. Here Iver Anderson marks RHS skater Riley Rodrigues, while Quinn Collins (21) also patrols the slot.

Independent photo/Steve James



TIGER SENIOR SKATER Eyon Tembreull celebrates his first-period goal vs. visiting Rutland on Saturday night.

Independent photo/Steve James

Tigers

(Continued from Page 1B)
from Quinn Collins, made it 3-0 in the second period, and Jake Kadar added an empty-netter.

In all, MUHS outshot RHS, 24-16. Coach Jordan Stearns said he thought the Tigers played with more consistent poise and energy than they did in their opening 8-4 win at U-32 on Dec. 9, noting they cut the penalties down from nine vs. U-32 to two on Saturday. Stearns also noted that more often than not, his skaters vs RHS came away with the puck in scrums along the boards.

“The effort from the bell tonight was awesome. It was really great, way better than last week. We had a hard week of practice, and I think it showed tonight,” Stearns said. “We won a lot of those 50-50 battles.”

He was also happy with the defensive work of his back line in front of senior goalie Casey Calzini, who made 15 saves and allowed only Cameron Rider’s third-period power-play goal to elude him.

Stearns noted his defensive rotation includes several seniors: Anderson, Kadar and Eliot Heminway all logged plenty of ice time, along with younger players. He said they moved the puck well as well as kept the Rutland attackers on the perimeter and controlling the occasional rebound.

“We’ve got a little bit of an older group,” he said. “They held their composure really well, too. That’s something we’ve been working on a lot. For those guys, it’s not just throwing the puck up the ice. It’s regrouping. We possess the puck really well in the defensive zone, which allows us to break the puck out and get into the neutral zone with possession.”

Stearns did say, as one might expect early in the season, the Tigers’ attack showed a bit less consistency, but still offered stretches of dangerous offensive zone time and effective puck

movement, particularly late in the first and early in the second periods.

One reason was the coaching staff juggled personnel, Stearns said, and he expects more cohesion moving forward.

“These were fresh lines tonight, lines we haven’t had together yet this year,” Stearns said. “We tried something new tonight, and it seemed to work well. They had a lot of chemistry working the puck up out of the zone, too. And once they got in the offensive zone they were finding each other pretty well. We’ve just got to work on creating possession once we create that turnover in the offensive zone. That will come with time.”



LANDON KEAN GOT plenty of mustard on this shot at the Rutland goal on Saturday night in Middlebury, but RHS goalie David Pelach was up to the task.

Independent photo/Steve James

Early on, the Tigers established an edge in play, but each team had chances in the opening minutes. In the fourth minute, Kean and Collins broke in two-one-one, and Kean slipped the puck to his right to Collins for a one-timer, but Rutland goalie David Pelach slid to deny it. About a minute later, Calzini kicked away a contested backhandler from the slot.

Draper gave MUHS the lead with a coast-to-coast rush at 7:16 as a power play was winding down. Draper burst down the left side past RHS skaters, beat the last defender inside the Rutland blue line, cut to the middle, and from close range beat Pelach with a low forehead shot into the right side of the net.

After Calzini stopped another backhandler from the slot, this one from Riley Rodrigues, the Tigers made it 2-0 at 9:46 with

Tembreull’s goal. Anderson, at the left point, fired low into a knot of players at the near post. Pelach made the save, but the puck bounced out front to the waiting Tembreull, who made no mistake with a quick one-timer.

The Tigers early in the second period had their best stretch of sustained pressure, with Pelach holding them at bay. But the RHS goalie had no chance on the third Tiger goal at 7:36.

Anderson went deep into the zone to win the puck and sent it to Collins in the right circle, and Collins quickly relayed to Kean at the top of the crease for the tap-in.

Later in the period it looked like Draper would have a chance at another breakaway, but RHS defender Colin Rider, a step behind, dove and swiped the puck away cleanly just as Draper entered the Rutland zone.

Pelach made a couple more saves early in the third, and later the Tigers were assessed their first two penalties of the game. During the second, Cameron Rider got the puck along the left boards, moved between the top of the circles and found the lower right corner through traffic at 11:56.

Rutland pulled its goalie with a little more than a minute to go, and Kadar picked up the puck at center ice and hit the empty net from long range to make it 4-1 with 30 seconds left. Heminway earned an assist for breaking up the RHS clear.

Stearns is happy with the team’s progress in the early going. He also noted the Tigers have a tougher schedule this year: They’ll play a number of games vs. Division I teams before they participate in the D-II playoffs, a challenge he believes will only help them compete in their own division.

“I’m really impressed with where we’re at right now, two games into the season. The goal is to continue to build, to continue to get better,” Stearns said. “I think we can do some serious damage. As long as we’re playing hard, playing well, I think when it comes to the end of the season and we’re firing on all cylinders, I think we can be pretty successful in the postseason.”

VUHS, OV wins highlight boys’ hoop

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — In high school boys’ basketball play between Dec. 13 and 19, Vergennes won twice to remain unbeaten, Otter Valley split a pair of contests, Mount Abraham dropped a pair of heartbreakers, and Middlebury lost its only outing.

COMMODORES

On Dec. 13, the Commodores blitzed visiting Northfield, 59-20. **Oakley Francis** paced Vergennes with 19 points and seven rebounds, and **Levi Cogger** and **Ryker Mosehauer** chipped in eight points apiece.

On Dec. 15, the Commodores took a 25-3 lead into the locker room at halftime in a 53-23 victory over Stowe. **Spencer**

Gebo led VUHS with 13 points and added five rebounds, and **Cogger** added 10 points.

The Commodores’ Monday game at Williamstown was postponed.

The 3-0 Commodores were expecting a challenge from visiting Fair Haven on Wednesday after deadline for this edition.

OTTERS

On Saturday, host Hartford dealt the Otters a 59-45 setback. The Hurricanes pulled away from a 27-22 halftime advantage. Scoring in double figures for OV were **Logan Letourneau** (12 points), **Connor Denis** (11) and **Drew Pelkey** (10).

The Otters bounced back and improved to 2-1 by defeating visiting Mount Anthony on Tuesday, 69-60. OV took the lead early in the first period and never trailed afterward.

Pelkey erupted in the second half for all of his 22 points and, Letourneau scored 19.

Carter Thompson led the Patriots with 23 points.

EAGLES

On Dec. 13, host Winooski edged the Eagles, 57-55, in Mount Abe’s opener. The game was decided in the final seconds. Eagle Coach Martin Clark said Winooski used pressure defense to erase Mount Abe’s 11-point halftime lead and enter the fourth quarter with a 43-41 advantage.

From there the game stayed close to the wire. Eagle **Ian Funke** made two free throws with 21 seconds left to tie the game at 55-55. Winooski’s Omar Turnage hit a runner in the lane with about six seconds left to give Winooski the 57-55 lead. The Eagles got a decent look before the buzzer, but the shot wouldn’t drop.

Funke (23 points), **Noah Ladeau** (12) and **Jacob Prouty** (11) all reached double figures for the Eagles. Sam Parris (19 points) and Turnage (14) led the Spartans.

On Friday, visiting Randolph edged the Eagles, 39-35. The Ghosts led at the half, 19-18, and then outscored Mount Abe by 13-9 in the third period to lead by six entering the final quarter, an advantage the Eagles couldn’t quite overcome. Funke led Mount Abe with 12 points, and **Hayden Lutz** and Prouty added eight apiece.

Shea Fontanello (13 points) and Luke Tucker (11) reached double figures for Randolph.

The 0-2 Eagles were set for a rematch with Winooski at Mount Abe on Wednesday after the deadline for this edition.

TIGERS

On Saturday, 10 Essex players scored in the D-I Hornets’ 60-36 victory over visiting MUHS. Nick Allaire led the balanced Essex offense with 11 points.

Cam Whitlock scored eight points for the Tigers, who dropped to 0-2 heading into a game played on Wednesday after deadline.



Upcoming Events

Thursday, December 21:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Saturday, December 23:
2:30 - 4:00 PM Public Skating

Tuesday, December 26:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Thursday, December 28:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Saturday, December 30:
3:00 - 4:30 PM Public Skating

Sunday December 31:
7:00 - 8:30 PM Free Public Skating
Sponsored by the
Town of Middlebury
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Tuesday, January 2, 2024:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Thursday, January 4, 2024:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Skate Sharpening available during all events.

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*Assumption of the
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY*
ST. MARY'S - ST. BERNADETTE - ST. GENEVIEVE



Solemnity of Christmas
Vigil Mass - Dec. 24, 4 pm - St. Mary's
Mass at Night - Dec. 24, 7:30 pm - St. Mary's
Mass During Day - Dec. 25, 9 am - St. Bernadette
www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org
Parish Office 802-388-2943



**THE CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF MIDDLEBURY, UCC**

We will have
Christmas Eve Services at
4:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
The 4 p.m. service will be
live-streamed on
Facebook and YouTube.

Christmas Day Service
10:00 a.m.

Links can be found
on our website.

www.midducc.org



CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

Sunday, December 24
8:00 am Advent 4 Holy Eucharist
10:30 am Advent 4 Holy Eucharist *
4:00 pm Christmas Eve Pageant
and Holy Eucharist *
8:30 pm Carol Prelude
9:00 pm Holy Eucharist *

Christmas Day, December 25
10:30 am Holy Eucharist with Carols

Sunday, December 31
8:00 am Holy Eucharist
10:30 am Christmas Lessons
and Carols Service *

*These services will also be
broadcast on Zoom



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Please visit our website for the latest updates on
Christmas worship, and life at St. Stephen's



**St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church**

community calendar



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.

Winter Solstice celebration in Middlebury. Thursday, Dec. 21, 4 p.m., Town Hall Theater and surrounds, 68 S. Pleasant St. In the third annual solstice pageant, "A Winter's Carol," actors, dancers, puppets and revelers bearing lanterns will lead the audience in a ritual celebrating the shortest day of the year and the coming of the light. Free. For all ages.

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.

dec 22

FRIDAY

Last Minute Falala in Bristol. Friday, Dec. 22, 5-8 p.m., downtown. Bristol businesses will be open until 8 p.m. with carolers and free hot chocolate to get you through that last-minute shopping.

dec 23

SATURDAY

Memory Tree lighting in Leicester. Saturday, Dec. 23, 5 p.m., Leicester Meeting House. Remember loved ones at this time of year. The cost is \$5 for six names, or one dollar per name. Send names and payment to Diane Benware at 1594 Old Jerusalem Road, Salisbury, VT, by Dec. 21.

Christmas Candlelight service in Starksboro. Saturday, Dec. 23, 7 p.m., Starksboro Village Meeting House, Route 116. A program of lessons and carols. All are welcome to this non-denominational service that has been held for nearly 60 years. Holiday cookies and treats and hot cider will be available in the foyer at the end of the service.

dec 31

SUNDAY

Best Night in Bristol. Sunday, Dec. 31, 3:30-11 p.m., downtown Bristol. Come to Bristol for an afternoon and evening of ringing in the New Year. As the date draws closer, check out bristolbestnight.org for details.

New Year's Eve fireworks and skating in Middlebury. Sunday, Dec. 31, 6:30 p.m., Middlebury Rec Park. Usher out the new year with fireworks, then head on into Memorial Sports Center and enjoy an hour and a half of free skating.

New Year's Eve Dance in Middlebury. Sunday, Dec. 31, 6:30 p.m.-midnight, VFW, 530 Exchange St. Dance to the tunes of DJ Triple B. Light snacks and desserts on offer, as well as party favors. Tickets \$10. Open to the public.

New Year's Eve with Mihali in Middlebury. Sunday, Dec. 31, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Ring in the New Year at Town Hall Theater with Mihali, Vermont-based solo singer, songwriter, guitarist, artist, and Twiddle co-founder. Join THT on New Year's Eve and bring the whole family. Ring in 2024 early with a countdown somewhere between 9:30 and 10 p.m., and the price of an adult ticket includes a champagne toast. Tickets \$40 adults/\$20 children under 12, available at townhalltheater.org.

jan 1

MONDAY

First Day Walk in Ferrisburgh. Monday, Jan. 1, 9 a.m., Button Bay State Park. New Year's Day birding trips are a tradition held by many in the birdwatching community as they begin to fill their annual bird lists. Otter Creek Audubon Society has combined that tradition with the more recent tradition of First Day Hikes held at state parks across the country.

jan 2

TUESDAY

Gary Margolis and Arianna Moulton in Middlebury. Tuesday, Jan. 2, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Father and daughter duo Gary Margolis and Arianna Moulton will read from their respective collections, "What It Means to Be Happy" and "I've Been Meaning to Tell You," in the research room at Ilsley Public Library. This event is part of the monthly VBS/Ilsley Library Vermont Authors Series.

jan 6

SATURDAY

Youth Ministry Bingo in Vergennes. Saturday, Jan. 6, 5 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 South Maple St. Doors open at 5 p.m., Bingo starts at 6 p.m. This is a family friendly event. All cash prizes, 50/50 raffle. Refreshments sold. This event is sponsored by St. Ambrose and St. Peter's Youth Ministry to benefit the on-going program costs.

jan 13

SATURDAY

Bingo in Vergennes. Saturday, Jan. 13, 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, 50/50 raffle. Refreshments sold. Sponsored by St. Peter's Cemetery Committee to benefit the ongoing efforts for cemetery improvements.

Roast Pork Supper in Vergennes. Saturday, Jan. 13, 5-6 p.m., Vergennes United Methodist Church, Main Street, across from the Opera House. Preorder and take-out only. Menu



Kaboom!
MIDDLEBURY'S ANNUAL NEW Year's Eve fireworks display will take place on Sunday, Dec. 31, at 6:30 p.m. at the Middlebury Rec Park. Stick around afterwards for free skating and other festivities in Memorial Sports Center.

includes roast pork, mashed potatoes, stuffing, gravy, vegetable, applesauce, roll and dessert. Cost \$12. To preorder call 802- 877-3150 before 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 11.

Contra dance in Cornwall. Saturday, Jan. 13, 7-9:30 p.m., Town Hall, Route 30. Dance away the winter chill at the Cornwall Contra Dance. Lausanne Allen will be calling. Live music Red Dog Riley. Tickers \$5 to \$10 or pay what you can.

jan 14

SUNDAY

Breakfast Buffet in Vergennes. Sunday, Jan. 14, 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.

jan 20

SATURDAY

Hocus Pocus Magic Show in Vergennes. Saturday, Jan. 20, 2 p.m., Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. Fun, engaging and great-for-the-entire-family magic fun, comedy, and surprise by magician Blaine Goad. Great for all ages. Tickets \$10 adults/\$5 kids/\$25 family of 4. More info at vergenesoperahouse.org.

**HEALTH
and WELLNESS**

Al-Anon meetings in Middlebury. For a list of online meetings visit vermontalananonlateen.org. Online Sundays, 7:15 p.m. and Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m. If you'd like to speak to an Al-Anon member, call our answering service (866-972-5266) and an Al-Anon member will call you back.

Bright Day Memory Café in Middlebury. Third Thursdays, 9 a.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. This monthly program offers a variety of activities such as music, speakers, and more. Help create a community for folks to feel seen, safe and engaged.

Gathering of Joys and Concerns in Middlebury. Gather, 48 Merchants Row, Sundays, 9-10 a.m. Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community hosts an informal circle in which people can share a joy or a concern, or just listen. It is an opportunity to express feelings in a safe and welcoming space. Followed by coffee and cookies gathering/social hour. People may come in and leave as they wish.

Midday Mindfulness in Middlebury. Gather, 48 Merchants Row, noon-12:30 p.m., Wednesday-Saturday. Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community hosts this half-hour of mindfulness. No experience necessary Midday Mindfulness, Wednesday-Saturday, noon-12:30 p.m.

Tai Chi classes in Middlebury. Congregational Church, 27 N. Pleasant Street

Fall Prevention Tai Chi, Tuesdays 10-11 a.m., Contact Lindsay Hart lindsayhart09@gmail.com.

Fall Prevention Level 1, Fridays, 10 a.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Contact Wendy at wcacovey@gmail.com or 802-238-5217 to leave a message.

Ongoing tai chi practice, Tuesdays, 11:15-12:15 p.m. Contact Lindsay Hart lindsayhart09@gmail.com.

Yang 24 for Beginners, Mondays 4-6 p.m., starting Sept. 12. Contact Elizabeth Wiris wirselizabeth@gmail.com

Tai Chi Classes in Vergennes. St. Peter's Catholic Church Parish Hall, 85 S. Maple St.

Fall Prevention Tai Chi Level 1 and 2, Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-10 a.m. starting Sept. 13. Contact Lee Francis lfhfrancis839@gmail.com.

Bixby Memorial Free Library (258 Main St.):

Fall Prevention Tai Chi Level 3, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10 a.m., starting Sept. 12. Contact Lee Francis lfhfrancis839@gmail.com.

Long Form Sun 73, Wednesdays, 10 a.m. starting Sept. 13. Contact Beverly Blakeney beverlyblakeney@gmail.com

Yang 24, Tuesdays 1-2:30 p.m. starting Sept. 12. Contact Beverly Blakeney at beverlyblakeney@gmail.com.

West African dance class in Middlebury. Sundays, 5 p.m., Vermont Sun, 812 Exchange St. Join Soriba "Simbo" Camara for a weekly class and learn traditional dances from Guinea while getting a great cardio workout. \$20 to drop in. No gym membership is necessary to attend. All are welcome.

Women's alcohol use virtual support group. Tuesdays, 5 p.m., Zoom. More info contact Kathy@MountainLakeCounseling.com

ARTS and CRAFTS

Middlebury Writers Workshop. Second and fourth Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., Meeting Room, Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. A respectful, engaged group of writers welcoming all skill levels and genres. Look closely at each other's work and help cultivate, inspire strengthen our individual craft. All are welcome. For more info contact Andrea Chesman at andreachesman@gmail.com or Masha Harris at masha.harris@gmail.com.

The Makery Sewing lab. Thursdays, 5-9 p.m., The Makery at Hannaford Career Center, 51 Charles Ave. Get your questions answered and learn new skills from our kind and talented Mentors. All levels are welcome from never used a sewing machine to advanced pattern making. Limit of 4 participants. Registration required. Free, \$5 Drop-In Fee or Membership Cards. Select what works best for you. More info at hannafordcareercenter.org/the-makery.

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR
CALENDAR ONLINE
addisonindependent.com

Area Holiday Worship Services

ADDISON COUNTY — A number of Addison County-area churches have set their schedules for special Christmas events and services. Note that these plans may change.

ADDISON
Addison Community Baptist Church will have Christmas Eve service at 4:30 on Sunday, Dec. 24.

BRANDON/FOREST DALE
The Brandon United Methodist Church will have a Christmas Eve service on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 4 p.m. Everyone is welcome.
St. Thomas & Grace Episcopal Church (Route 7, Brandon village) will have regular Sunday worship at 10 a.m. on Dec. 24 and then will hold its Christmas service that evening, Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24, at 7 p.m. This will be a family-friendly, festive service with carols and special music. On Sunday, Dec. 31, there will be a service of Lessons & Carols at 10 a.m.

BRIDPORT
St. Bernadette's Catholic Church will hold Christmas Day Mass on Monday, Dec. 25, at 9 a.m. Please also see the listing for Middlebury – St. Mary's for Christmas Eve. Tel. 802-388-2943, www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org.

BRISTOL
St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church will hold Christmas Eve Mass on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 7 p.m., and a Christmas Day Mass on Monday, Dec 25, at 9 a.m.

CHARLOTTE
Charlotte Congregational Church Lighting the Advent Wreath: Sunday, Dec. 24, 10 a.m. Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24: Simple morning service with carols and a few surprises, 10 a.m.; Outdoor Family Carol Sing for all in the courtyard around the Christmas Tree, 4 p.m.; Indoor service of Lessons and Carols with children's choir 5 p.m.; Indoors service of Lessons and Carols, 7 p.m.

CORNWALL
First Congregational Church of Cornwall and the Weybridge Congregational Church will hold a Christmas Eve service on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 5 p.m. at Weybridge Church. (Masks are welcome.) Participants will sing together and bring the Christmas story into our own time and lives, once again. Kids are welcome! There will be activity packs with a special bulletin for them to follow along at their own pace. The offering will go to HOPE and the Charter House Coalition, community partners who offer care to

those who are food and housing insecure. Happy holidays to all of our neighbors in Weybridge and beyond! For those who wish to join the service via Zoom, please email weybridgechurch@gmail.com to receive the link.

EAST MIDDLEBURY
The East Middlebury United Methodist Church and the Middlebury United Methodist Church will hold a combined Sunday morning worship service at 11 a.m. at the Middlebury United Methodist Church on Sunday, Dec. 24, and a combined Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 4:30 p.m. at the East Middlebury United Methodist Church on Sunday, Dec. 24.

LINCOLN
The United Church of Lincoln will hold two Christmas Eve services on Sunday, Dec. 24. The 6 p.m. service will be family friendly, including Carols and candle lighting. The 11 pm service will be more intimate, including communion.

MIDDLEBURY
The Middlebury United Methodist Church and the East Middlebury United Methodist Church will hold a combined Sunday morning worship service at 11 a.m. at the Middlebury United Methodist Church on Sunday, Dec. 24, and a combined Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 4:30 p.m. at the East Middlebury United Methodist Church on Sunday, Dec. 24.
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (St. Mary's) Catholic Church will hold Christmas Eve Masses on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 4 and 7:30 p.m. (choral prelude at 7:15 pm). Please also see the listing for Bridport – St. Bernadette's for Christmas Day. 802-388-2943, www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org.
The Congregational Church of Middlebury, UCC will have Christmas Eve Services, Sunday, Dec. 24, at 4 and 7:30 p.m. The 4 p.m. service will be live streamed on Facebook and YouTube. Links can be found on our website, www.midducc.org. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!
Memorial Baptist Church on S. Pleasant Street in Middlebury will hold a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 7 p.m. and a 'come as you are', joyful Christmas Day service at 10-10:30 a.m., memorialbaptistvt.org, membaptistvt@gmail.com, 802-388-7472. The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Allen, Pastor
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church will hold Advent IV Holy Eucharist will be held on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 8 and 10:30 a.m.; a Christmas Eve pageant and Holy Eucharist will be held at 4 p.m., and at 8:30 p.m.

there will be a Carol Prelude followed by a Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist at 9 p.m. The Christmas Day Holy Eucharist takes place on Monday, Dec. 25, at 10:30 a.m. On Sunday, Dec. 31, there will be a Holy Eucharist at 8 a.m., and a 10:30 a.m. Christmas Lessons and Carols service. All services are in person with some also being broadcast on Zoom. Please visit ststephensmidd.org for links and other information on our Christmas worship services.

The Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society. Sunday Dec 24, 4 pm: No-Rehearsal All-Ages UU Nativity Pageant! Family-friendly. Come be part of our joyful story with Mary, Joseph, Jesus, shepherds, sheep, angels, animals, wise ones, stars, and a UU justice slant. Our casting is inclusive: anyone can play any part and we often have multiples and also unusual animals. Come in costume or wear one of ours. Or just sit, watch, and sing along with the traditional carols. Sunday Dec 24, 6:30 pm: Christmas Eve Traditional Service: The Light of Jesus. Led by Rev. Christina Sillari. Special music. Readings from the Christmas Story. Both services take up collections for HOPE and end with traditional lighting of candles and singing of Silent Night. Attend either in person or online via Zoom link at cvuus.org.

ORWELL
St. Paul's Catholic Church will hold mass on Christmas Day, Monday, Dec. 25, at 10 a.m. and a New Year's Day Feast of the Holy Family on Monday, Jan. 1 at 10 a.m.

RIPTON
Ripton Community Church will hold its annual candlelight Christmas Eve service on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. Bill McKibben will preside over an hour of carols, seasonal songs, and carols. Light refreshment contributions encouraged.

SALISBURY
Salisbury Congregational Church will hold a Christmas Eve Service at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 24.

SHOREHAM
Shoreham Congregational Church will host a traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 5 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 24, in the Sanctuary. All are invited to attend.

STARKSBORO
The Starksboro Village Meeting House Christmas Candlelight service, Saturday, Dec. 23, at 7 p.m. with a program of lessons and All are welcome. This non-denominational service has been held for nearly 60 years. Holiday cookies and treats and hot cider will be available in the foyer at



Light in the darkness

A FIRE AND light dancer entertains the crowd on the Bristol town green during the annual Lumen Celebration of Fire & Light, held Dec. 16.

Photo by Tom Pollak

Lincoln

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

NEWS

LINCOLN — Get your tickets now for a special show featuring one of our own Lincoln residents. Burnham Presents proudly welcomes Michael Chorney's Freeway Clyde to the stage on Saturday, Jan. 6, at 7:30 p.m., at Burnham Hall.

Michael Chorney, Tony Award winning composer and arranger, is one of Vermont's most prolific artists. After working for years on the score for the eight-time Tony Award-winning Broadway hit, "Hadestown," he longed to develop an ensemble approach to music making. He found it back

in Vermont and put together a group of the region's most intuitive players and Freeway Clyde was born.

Freeway Clyde is a seven-piece ensemble composed of guitarist and composer Michael Chorney, Jeremy Fredrick on drums, Will Andrews on trumpet and synthesizer, guitarist Taylor Haskins, Matt LaRocca on viola, electric guitarist Zack DuPont and Pat Ormiston on electric bass.

Doors open at 7 p.m. and music begins at 7:30 p.m. Admission is on a sliding scale — general \$15 to generous \$20/\$25 or pay what

you can. Refreshments will be available during the break.

SAVE THE DATE

The Ladies Aid Industrial invites you to their Ladies Holiday Gathering on Wednesday, Jan. 3, at 1 p.m., at Burnham Hall. Join them for an afternoon of fun, fellowship and refreshments. Wrap an inexpensive gift to exchange and bring a friend.

REMINDER

The library will be closed on Monday, Dec. 25, Tuesday, Dec. 26 and Monday, Jan. 1.

Until next time ... Merry Christmas And Happy Holidays!

the end of the service.

service at 6 p.m. the same day.

VERGENNES
St. Paul's Episcopal Church will hold a service of Morning Prayer on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 9:30 a.m., and a service of Holy Eucharist on Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24, at 4 p.m. All are welcome.

St. Peter's Church will hold Christmas Eve Mass on Sunday, Dec. 24 at 4 p.m. and midnight.

WALTHAM
Victory Baptist Church will hold a special Christmas service at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 24 as well as a Candlelight

WEYBRIDGE
Weybridge Congregational Church and the First Congregational Church of Cornwall will hold a Christmas Eve service on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 5 p.m. at Weybridge Church. (Masks are welcome.) Participants will sing together and bring the Christmas story into our own time and lives, once again. Kids are welcome! There will be activity packs with a special bulletin for them to follow along at their own pace. The offering will go to HOPE and the Charter House Coalition, community partners

who offer care to those who are food and housing insecure. Happy holidays to all of our neighbors in Weybridge and beyond! For those who wish to join the service via Zoom, please email weybridgechurch@gmail.com to receive the link.

WHITING

WHITING COMMUNITY CHURCH will hold Christmas Eve Services on Sunday, Dec. 24, at 10:30 a.m. (No Sunday School), and an evening candlelight service at 7 p.m. A New Year's Eve Morning Service will be held at 10:30 a.m. (no Sunday School).

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

Middlebury Union High School

Iver Anderson

Middlebury Union High School introduces Iver Anderson as our latest Student of the Week. He is the son of John and Theresa Anderson. Iver is the youngest of four children; his three siblings, Helen, Ada and Abel, are all graduates of MUHS.

Teachers use the words thoughtful, kind, motivated and responsible to describe Iver. He is a dedicated and talented student who is focused on earning certificates in the International Baccalaureate program. Iver is respected by his peers and teachers alike and is known to put in extra effort when needed. He says he is grateful for all of his teachers and thinks they've all been helpful and encouraging. He's especially appreciative of Mr. Krahn's teaching style as Language and Literature is his favorite subject. His academic achievements have prepared him well for college study and he hopes to attend a small, four-year, liberal arts college. While still somewhat unsure of a major, he is considering Rhetoric or Business.

A three-sport athlete, Iver plays soccer, hockey and tennis for the Tigers. He's a dedicated leader and he is a captain of our varsity hockey team, a sport he has played "forever," he says. He's actively involved in the MUHS chapter of Best Buddies and SPARC, both of which are focused on building inclusivity. Iver served as a Peer Leader to a group of ninth-graders in the fall and enjoys being a member of the school's Chess Club. They meet twice a week and play chess in Mr. Long's classroom.

Iver has worked in shipping for AquaVitae, a local company that produces seltzer and kombucha. He also, with his brother, spent the summer cutting, splitting and preparing firewood for sale. He said both opportunities were fun and allowed him to earn extra spending money. He's enjoying his senior year at MUHS and is looking forward to college but says "the year is going so fast!"

We wish him well in his final months at MUHS and know a bright future lies ahead.



Iver Anderson
MUHS

Vergennes Union High School

Siobhan Potter

Congratulations to Siobhan Potter of North Ferrisburgh, Vergennes Union High School's Student of the Week. Siobhan has excelled during her time at VUHS. She loves the small, tightly-knit community, where she has known all the people since 7th grade. Some of her favorite classes have been AP Biology, AP Calculus and all of her German classes. "These are all very different classes," she says, "but what they have in common is that I have been challenged and felt a sense of accomplishment when I have mastered parts of the curriculum." Her hard work has paid off. She is a consistent honor roll student. She has received the Elmira College Key Award, AP Biology Award, Art Award as a junior, the American Literature Award and U.S. History Award as a sophomore, and the Math Award as a freshman. She is class vice president, National Honor Society vice president, and a Vergennes Environmental Club "Green Team" member. The last few years Siobhan says she has learned a lot about social justice issues and has developed an interest in "Zines." Siobhan has played soccer all four years at VUHS, and served as team captain this year.

Outside of school, she works for the Monkton Extended Learning Program as an afterschool counselor during the school year. In the summer she lifeguards works at Basin Harbor. When not in school or working, Siobhan enjoys spending time with her family — parents Genevieve Williamson and Christopher Potter, brother Julian Potter, and their five dogs, Luna, Bruno, Violet, Thelma and Petey — and friends. In winter she snowboards and plays futsal (indoor soccer) with Addison United soccer club. She also plays soccer in the spring with the club's U-19 team.

Siobhan says she has learned to persevere and believe in herself even when it is tough going. Last year she took extremely difficult classes and found herself somewhat overwhelmed. "I pushed through roadblocks and challenges, and found my grit," she says. "Finding this 'grit' has strengthened my academic skills and my character. Don't let challenges deter you. Take the harder class, play the sport you have not mastered, run for a leadership position. The only missed opportunities are the ones you don't try."

After high school, Siobhan plans to study Biology and Pre-med in college, then attend medical school to study Pediatrics, Neurology or Internal Medicine. We at VUHS look forward to seeing what Siobhan accomplishes going forward.



Siobhan Potter
VUHS

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Agriculture News

DigIn podcast series explores Vt. food & farms

Want to learn more about farming in Vermont and its relationship to Vermonters who distribute food and run restaurants? You can listen to the new DigInVT Podcast, a production of the Vermont Fresh Network.

The podcast, which you can listen to on your phone or computer, features conversations with chefs, farmers and others in Vermont's food community who raise the food we eat and bring it to our table.

Funding for this project is provided by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets and the Working Land Enterprise Board.

Find the podcasts on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts.

This new six-episode series features the relationships among Vermont Fresh Network members, and showcases how mission-driven food businesses can have an impact on their local communities and Vermont's rural economy. Episodes are between 35 and 60 minutes long. Take a seat at the table, and hear all about it.

The topics of each episode are as follows:

Episode 1: Vermont Ingredients in Belizean Cuisine
ChaCha Garna is a food tent and catering company that has

brought Belizean cuisine to the Burlington Farmers Market, the South End Get Down, and other favorite events across Vermont this summer. Owners Morgan Bouloy and Ashton Harrewyn chat with our executive director Tara Pereira about how their company came to life, their first season running a food tent, and how they've built connections and partnerships with local producers to celebrate Vermont ingredients while crafting internationally inspired cuisine.

Episode 2: Cutting Edge: A Sustainable Whole Animal Butcher Shop at the Center of a Small Town

Peter Varkonyi owns and runs Brownsville Butcher & Pantry with his partner Lauren Stevens. Peter talks with our executive director Tara Pereira about his farm and producer partners, how he attracts and keeps great staff, his commitment to the Brownsville community, and so much more.

Episode 3: Ingredients for Change: Community and Connection through Local Food

Nicole Grenier and Stephanie Biczko own and run Stowe Street Cafe, a Waterbury institution that celebrates local food, local artists, and the local community. On this episode, Vermont Fresh Network Executive Director Tara Pereira (See Podcasts, Page 7A)

State to hold virtual farm and food industry stakeholder listening session

VERMONT — The Agency of Agriculture is hosting in-person and virtual listening sessions for the ag community over the coming months. The goal is to hear directly from producers, processors, and distributors; understand needs, priorities, and concerns; and help inform and guide our programs and future grant opportunities.

The agency is still finalizing the details of its January, February, March and April sessions. To get details, head online to tinyurl.com/FarmListen. There will be virtual sessions each month, where you log-in and participate online. Officials said that in February they will include an in-person session that serves Addison County.



A VERMONT FARMER spreads manure on a field in the waning days of fall before the winter ban on spreading began on Dec. 15. Photo courtesy of Vt. Agency of Agriculture

Winter manure spreading ban kicks in

MONTPELIER — The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM) reminds all farm operations that the annual winter manure spreading ban began last Friday, Dec. 15. VAAFM is aware that many Vermonters experienced unprecedented rainfall this summer, and these conditions reduced manure spreading opportunities and stressed manure storage capacity for farms. The winter manure spreading ban is still in place, but farmers can seek exemptions for emergency situations occurring because of the historic wet weather Vermont experienced in 2023.

Gov. Phil Scott signed an executive order instructing VAAFM and the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) to outline appropriate best management practices that enable farmers to spread excess manure while protecting the environment. Following that collaboration, VAAFM is prepared to issue exemptions to farms that request an emergency exemption and demonstrate a related need because of the Flood of 2023 and

the related disastrous weather and field conditions. Gov. Scott, VAAFM and ANR understand that many farms lack sufficient storage capacity because of the persistent rain and flooding. Farmers' shared commitment to protect the environment is important, and these state officials say they recognize that farmers were often unable to responsibly access their fields to harvest crops or to spread manure while Vermont experienced record wet conditions this season.

Between Dec. 15 and April 1, no manure or other agricultural nutrients (including compost and spoiled feed) may be spread on agricultural fields throughout Vermont unless an emergency exemption has been granted to an individual farm operation. This annual ban is required by the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs), which is a part

of Vermont's overall strategy to protect water quality, the working landscape, and natural resources.

For more than 35 years, restrictions on winter manure spreading have been in place to protect water quality. These restrictions have minimized spreading and potential runoff during winter, when field conditions may be particularly susceptible to it. The annual spreading ban requires farmers to either have a storage structure that can hold all agricultural manure and runoff that is required to be collected between Dec. 15 and April 1 — that's 107 days — or they must be able to stack

all manure produced in a way that meets RAP standards and will not lead to adverse water quality impacts. Years like this one, with natural disasters and severe weather conditions, can upend Vermont's standard restrictions

and create the need for emergency exemptions.

Manure spreading is a common and widespread practice in Vermont agriculture, it enhances soil health and fertility for optimal crop production, plays a pivotal role in the nutrient cycle, and reduces imported nutrients (you can read that as "fertilizers"). As crops grow, they require nutrients to mature into feed for livestock, which, in turn, provide bioavailable nutrients, or healthy food, for humans. The cycle completes as nutrient-rich manure is reapplied to fields for the following season of crop production. Per the RAPs, farms are required to use nutrient management planning to minimize any adverse environmental impact. This includes keeping records of applications that occur including the date, time, amount, field location, field conditions and weather at the time of application.

To get an emergency exemption, farmers or custom applicators must contact either their regional farm coordinator or they can contact Laura DiPietro at 802-595-1990 or Nate Sands at 802-224-6850.



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ON THE NEW DigIn VT podcast, Master Gardener Benjamin Pauly talks about how Kelly Way Gardens help give Woodstock Inn visitors a taste of agriculture in action.

Podcast

(Continued from Page 6A)
chats with this duo about how Stowe Street Café came to be, what they do, and some of the exciting things they have on the horizon.

Episode 4: Cultivating Flavor from Garden to Table

For more than a decade, Master Gardener Benjamin Pauly of Kelly Way Gardens has been growing fresh produce for the Woodstock Inn and Resort, where Chef Matthew McClure turns them into exciting offerings on the hotel’s menu. On this episode, they speak with VFN’s executive director Tara Pereira about the relationship between the inn and gardens, and how the gardens help give Woodstock visitors a taste of agriculture in action.

Episode 5: A Farmer’s Perspective on Restaurant Partnerships

Christa Alexander owns and runs Jericho Settlers Farm with her husband, Mark. Christa chats with Tara Pereira about Jericho Settlers’ journey from an egg and meat farm to a vegetable farm, how they’ve grown and evolved



NICOLE GRENIER, CO-OWNER of the Stowe Street Café in Waterbury, talks about how her business celebrates local food, local artists, and the local community in Episode 3 of a new podcast series that explores Vermont farm to table.

with their Vermont community over the past 20 years, some of the logistics of partnering with local restaurants, and more.

Episode 6: Local Brew Connections

Foam Brewers has become one of Vermont’s favorite breweries, since they opened their doors on Burlington’s Lake Street in 2016. Since then, they’ve expanded to offer a full-service restaurant called Deep City, and they work with a variety of local farm partners to not

only source food for the restaurant, but also source hops and grain for the beers brewed at foam. VFN’s Tara Pereira talks with Bob Grim of Foam Brewers, Zach Toensing of Deep City, and Kevin Broderick of Whitefield Hop Yard about the relationships their businesses have, and how they’ve built a sustainable cycle from the farm, to the glass, to the table.

Learn about the whole series online at diginvt.com/diginvt-podcast.

Impact Grants fund farms, supply chain

Vermont’s Working Lands Enterprise Initiative Impact Grant pre-applications are open now through Jan. 19.

There are two types of impact grants: ARPA Primary Producer Impact Grant and the Supply Chain Impact Grant. Both grants can cover market development, research and development, infrastructure, and workforce training and development. Awards range from \$50,000-\$250,000.

ARPA Primary Producer Impact Grant: Applicants must have been operational prior to January 2020. Only primary producers of farm or forest products are eligible to apply for this grant. Examples of eligible primary production activities are farming, livestock rearing, sugaring, dairy, and logging.

Supply Chain Impact Grant: Applicants must be farm, forest, or local food business in Vermont. Projects proposed for this grant must have a supply chain and/or market level impact on its respective sector, such as:

- Make significant process and/

or infrastructure improvements for medium to large scale production, producer-processing initiatives, or distribution of primary products in the forestry and/or agriculture sectors.

- Scale of the primary product being brought into supply chain has ability to strengthen the industry, address the sector on a market-wide scale, and/or address a market downturn.

- The technology or approach is innovative and will lead to new opportunities for multiple businesses and/or will increase the scale of the enterprise in a way that enables it to meet a growing market demand.

Projects eligible for funding in either grant may relate to one or more of the following categories:

- Market development
- Research and development
- Infrastructure development
- Workforce training and development

Applicants will be notified in mid-February 2024 if they are invited to submit a final round application,

which will be due at the end of March. Final round applicants will be notified of award decisions in early May, and projects can begin in June.

These grants expect a match equal to 100% of the grant request, meaning that for example a business applying for a \$100,000 grant should expect to contribute \$100,000 in their own cash and/or labor. Under limited circumstances, the matching requirement may be reduced or waived for applicants who demonstrate a clear need for this accommodation.

Visit the WLEI funding opportunities calendar and the Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets grant calendar to see other grants available for Fiscal Year 2024.

For updates and application announcements, follow @vtworkinglands and sign up for the Agriculture Development Bulletin.

For questions regarding WLEI grant opportunities, please contact: Clare Salerno at clare.salerno@vermont.gov or 802-917-2637.

BIPOC farmers and farm workers awarded millions

WASHINGTON, D.C. — As Congress continues to negotiate the next food and farm bill, a group of organizations with expertise in agriculture, labor, climate change, food security and nutrition this week announced a first of its kind effort to uplift the voices of food and farmworkers, marginalized farmers and frontline communities in the farm bill process. Through a participatory grantmaking process, the groups awarded \$2.235 million in grants to support 28 grassroots groups. The grants will support capacity building, organizing and advocacy efforts around the food and farm bill.

“For decades, federal farm policy has been geared first and foremost to the interests of large-scale industrial farming, giant agribusinesses and mostly white landowners. That must now change,” said Ricardo Salvador, director of the Food and Environment Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), which brought together funders and nonprofit organizations to raise and distribute the funds. “To transform

the food and farm bill so that it serves all of us, the communities that have been the most marginalized by the status quo must be centered in policy debates and play an active role in those conversations.”

A grantmaking advisory committee — made up of majority Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) leaders from grassroots and national coalitions representing farmers, workers and impacted communities — received \$8 million in requests from 54 organizations, showing widespread interest among frontline organizations in engaging in federal policy debates. The committee, which had a fraction of that amount to allocate, ultimately recommended funding 28 organizations, 91% of which are BIPOC led. All grantees represent BIPOC communities.

“The current status quo farm bill is benefiting corporate agribusiness at the expense of the wellbeing of farmers, workers and everyone who eats. As the climate crisis intensifies, we need a food and farm bill that invests in agriculture as a solution

to the climate crisis and honors the climate leadership of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color farmers,” said Shantell Bingham, the organizing director for the Climate Justice Alliance, a member of the grantmaking committee.

Grant awards range from \$25,000 to \$130,000 with an average grant size of \$80,000. The funding reaches 21 states and Washington, D.C., two territories (Mariana Islands and Virgin Islands), the Navajo Nation, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, and the Nez Perce Tribe.

Grantee organizations represent farmers, workers, communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis, and low-income individuals supported by SNAP. Funding may be used to educate members of Congress on the needs of these communities. Several grantees are hiring policy staff to increase their capacity to engage in federal policy. Others are sending farmers to Capitol Hill or to meet with members of Congress in their districts.



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VERGENNES FREE THINKERS Founded in 1935 on the principle of one alcoholic helping another to achieve sobriety, A.A. is an effective and enduring program of recovery that has changed countless lives. A.A. has always been committed to making its program of recovery available to anyone, anywhere, who reaches out for help with an alcohol problem. The Vergennes Free Thinkers meeting was created in January of this year to maintain a tradition of free expression, conduct a meeting where alcoholics may feel free to express any beliefs, doubts or disbelief they may have, to share their own personal form of spiritual experience, their search for it, and/or their rejection of it, without having to accept anyone else's beliefs or having to deny their own. Meetings are held with a high regard for compassion and inclusion without judgment or exception. If you think we can help, please join us on Thursdays at 6pm by contacting Vergennes-freethinkers@gmail.com for Zoom and in-person meeting information.


Public Meetings

VERMONT SUPPORT LINE Are you struggling with a challenging situation? Do you have feelings of sadness, loneliness, isolation, anger, or depression? You don't have to face it alone. Talk with a caring person who understands what you're going through today by calling or texting the free and confidential Pathways Vermont Support Line available 24/7 at (833) VT - TALKS.

Services
CH DRYWALL and plastering. Call Joe 802-234-5545.

CONSTRUCTION: ADDITIONS, RENOVATIONS new construction, drywall, carpentry, painting, flooring, roofing, pressure washing, driveway sealing. All aspects of construction, also property maintenance. Steven Fifield 802-989-0009.

Help Wanted



Positions offer generous, twice a year bonuses as well as an employee discount on all products!

Warehouse Worker
Loading and assisting with customer orders from the yard, warehouse and store; Stocking shelves and Filling propane tanks. Skills/Qualifications: Ability to lift 50 lbs repeatedly throughout the day. Ability to demonstrate strong organizational skills. Forklift & Skid steer experience preferred. Weekends and dependability a MUST! Preferable age 18+.

Cashier - Customer Service
Immediate Openings available. Must be able to work until 6pm. Weekdays and Weekends a MUST. Up to 40 hours per week. Wage commensurate with experience.

Please send resumes to info@middleburyagway.com or fill out an application at **Middlebury Agway**, 338 Exchange Street, Middlebury VT.

Please no phone calls.

Middlebury Agway 338 Exchange St. – Middlebury, VT.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted



Addison County Parent/Child Center


VAN DRIVER JOB OPENING
Addison County Parent/Child Center

We are seeking a van driver who will transport children, youth, and parents to our center from around Addison County.

Strong candidates must have a clean driving record and experience with children and families.

Great working environment and benefits. This is a 20-hour position with hours split between mornings and afternoons.

Please contact **Donna Bailey** at dbailey@addisoncountypcc.org




Addison County Parent/Child Center

Join the Parent/Child Center Team
CHILDCARE WORKER/PARENT EDUCATOR

Childcare Staff Position: We are seeking a childcare worker who will work with children and parents in our therapeutic program. This is a full-time position with generous benefits. We are a therapeutic childcare program that supports children birth through 5 and their families.

Strong candidates must have knowledge of **child development, family systems**, excellent communication skills, and want to work with young families. Flexibility and collaboration are a must. Experience with children and families wanted: a minimum of a Bachelor's degree preferred.

Please send a resume and cover letter, along with 3 references to **Donna Bailey** at dbailey@addisoncountypcc.org



Town of Bridport DPW Crew Member

The Town of Bridport is seeking applicants for a full-time DPW Crew member. CDL Class B with a clean record required. Duties include all facets of municipal road maintenance and function as a positive team player. Overtime required during snowstorms and other emergencies. Basic mechanical skills a plus. Benefits include competitive hourly wage, health insurance, paid time off, municipal retirement, and uniforms.

Applications available at the Town Office or on the Town website at www.bridportvt.org

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted



Hiring for 2024
RN/LPN
\$5,000 sign on bonus
Sign-on Bonus, Travel Allowance, Free Meal, New Wage Bands and Shift Differentials

Applicants must be able to work weekends and holidays. Background checks required.

Please email your resume to Kristen LaFlam at klaflam@residenceottercreek.com or use our new QR Code



The Residence at Otter Creek
350 Lodge Road, Middlebury, VT 05753
www.residenceottercreek.com




Hiring for 2024
Houskeeper - FT
Med Tech and RCA FT and PT
Travel Allowance, Free Meal, New Wage Bands and Shift Differentials

Applicants must be able to work weekends and holidays. Background checks required.

Please email your resume to Kristen LaFlam at klaflam@residenceottercreek.com or use our new QR Code



The Residence at Otter Creek
350 Lodge Road, Middlebury, VT 05753
www.residenceottercreek.com



People Caring for People

Elderwood at Ticonderoga invites you to join our team
OPPORTUNITY ABOUND – with our New Leadership! Newly implemented gas allowance - let us make your drive worth your while!

Join our team today and help us build a solid future for one of the most vulnerable populations.

Are you a CNA, LPN, or RN? Do you have experience in Long-Term Care or are you interested in working with seniors? Are you looking for a change or the next step in your career? Look no further!

Elderwood at Ticonderoga has exciting opportunities for an Assistant Director of Nursing (ADON). We also have positions available for CNAs, LPNs, and RNs. We are also looking for a Nurse Aide Trainees to fill our CNA training class. **This is FREE, PAID training!**

Many shifts to choose from including FT, PT, and Per Diem positions. We offer a robust benefits package! Take advantage of our Pay in Lieu of Benefits Program - for New, PT staff and more! Earn 16% more!

DON'T DELAY — APPLY TODAY!
www.elderwoodcareers.com

Opportunities


Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities


Opportunities

Opportunities



Tax Aide Scheduler & Envelope Addresser

RSVP of Addison County is in need of a volunteer Tax Aide Scheduler (must be comfortable with spreadsheets and computers) and Envelope Addresser. These volunteer opportunities will start in January and will be done from the comfort of your own home.



AmeriCorps Seniors

If you are interested or would like more information please contact us at 802-468-7056.

Addison Independent CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM

Cash in on our 4-for-3 rates! Pay for 3 issues, get 4th issue free! An ad placed for consecutive issues runs the 4th time for free!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Or, submit your classified ad on our website: addisonindependent.com

DEADLINE: Monday at 5 p.m.

• 25¢ per word • minimum \$2.50 per ad
• \$2 internet listing for up to 4 issues • minimum 2 insertions

- Special 4 for 3 rates not valid for the following categories: Services, Opportunities, Real Estate, Wood heat, Attn. Farmers, For Rent & Help Wanted
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notices | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Wanted | <input type="checkbox"/> Att. Farmers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Card of Thanks | <input type="checkbox"/> Help Wanted | <input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personals | <input type="checkbox"/> For Sale | <input type="checkbox"/> Cars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Meetings** | <input type="checkbox"/> Trucks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free** | <input type="checkbox"/> For Rent | <input type="checkbox"/> SUVs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lost 'N Found** | <input type="checkbox"/> Want to Rent | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobiles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garage Sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Heat | <input type="checkbox"/> Boats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lawn & Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate | <input type="checkbox"/> Wanted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Animals | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Wanted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption | | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Rentals |
- ** no charge for these ads Spotlight with large ✓ \$2

PLEASE PRINT YOUR AD...

Number of words: _____

Cost: _____

of runs: _____

Spotlight Charge: _____

Internet Listing: **\$2.00**

TOTAL: _____

The Independent assumes no financial responsibility for errors in ads, but will rerun classified ad in which the error occurred. No refunds will be possible. Advertiser will please notify us of any errors which may occur after first publication.

Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

M MAPLEFIELDS

Looking for work in your hometown?

We offer medical, dental, paid vacation, personal time, sick time and 401K for full time positions.

ALL ADDISON COUNTY LOCATIONS CURRENTLY HIRING!

For openings and to apply, visit Maplefields.com

Help Wanted ads
can be found on Pages
10B and 11B.

MIDDLEBURY UNION HIGH SCHOOL

COACHING POSITIONS

Middlebury Union High School is seeking coaches for the following:

- Varsity Dance
- Assistant Track & Field (2)
- JV Girls' Lacrosse

Applicants must possess a strong knowledge of coaching principles with previous coaching experience preferred. Must possess strong organizational skills and the ability to communicate and relate to student athletes.

Interested parties should send a letter of interest, resume, and three current letters of reference to:

Sean Farrell/Athletic Director
Middlebury Union Middle School
73 Charles Avenue
Middlebury, VT 05753

Applications will be accepted until the position has been filled.
E.O.E.

Services

MELISSA'S QUALITY CLEANING Services. Residential and commercial. Fully insured. Great rates. Reliable and thorough cleaning. 802-345-6257.

ODD JOBS; PROPERTY clean up, junk removal, brush cutting, lawn work. Call us today, we do other jobs too! 802-999-2194, John.

WE BUY OLD STUFF Estates, collections, antiques etc. Also hunting and fishing items. Call Erik 802-345-0653.

Help Wanted



Production Team Members

Vermont Soap is looking for attentive, reliable and responsible people to work in our production department.

This position requires basic computer skills, attention to detail, the ability to sit or stand for long periods of time and the ability to lift up to 50lbs. Must be a team player and also able to work independently.

This is a full time position (Mon-Fri 7-3:30) with paid vacation time, paid holidays, 401k with employer match, and more!

Please send cover letter and resume to nichole@vermontsoap.com.

Free

DIGITAL ACCESS View obituaries, calendar listings and classifieds online at addisonindependent.com. Don't miss out on events, garage sales, or opportunities- check out our free digital listings. Looking to read more? Become a subscriber!

Help Wanted

LOOKING FOR FARM HELPER in Ferrisburgh. General farm chores. Experience with equipment not necessary. Room available, if needed. Call Steve at 802-324-9879 if interested.

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.

Help Wanted

THE MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY MUSIC Center (MCMC) is expanding its staff, and is seeking an enthusiastic and motivated Summer Camp Coordinator to support our 2024 summer camp program, and a Music Together Teacher for our parent/child and in-school classes. If you are interested in learning more or applying for the positions please visit www.mcmcvt.org/careers and send your resume, cover letter, and 2 letters of reference to info@mcmcvt.org. We hope to hear from you soon!

For Sale

2022 CAN AM 4X2, 90 CC'S in excellent condition. \$1,900 or best offer. Call 802-759-2030.

Help Wanted

For Sale

SHED FOR SALE. 10x10' very nice condition. Insulated and dry-walled, wired with lights and outlet. Painted light grey. Bought new from Livingston's in 2020. \$6800 new, asking \$4200 or best offer. Located in Cornwall. Please call or text to get pics. 510-205-9064.



THE STEVEN'S FARM-STEAD is providing 12 week blocks of dinner for 2 and dessert delivered on Tuesdays! What a great opportunity to take a day off from cooking. The next block begins on 1/2/24. Please email me at: thestevenfarmstead@gmail.com or call (802)623-6755 for all the details.

For Rent

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

Help Wanted

For Rent



ALL REAL ESTATE advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or persons receiving public assistance or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD Toll-free at 1-800-424-8590. For the Washington, DC area please call HUD at 426-3500.

ATTRACTIVE 1 BEDROOM 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.

MIDDLEBURY 2BD/1.5 BA DUPLEX, no smoking or pets. Heat/elec not incl. \$1250/mo + sec dep. References. Available Jan. 802-388-6938.

MIDDLEBURY SUGARWOOD APARTMENTS is currently taking waitlist applications for 2, 3, 4 bedroom apartments. Minimum occupancy requirements. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply- Rent based on income. Equal Housing Opportunity 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www.SummitPMG.com.

For Rent

MIDDLEBURY, OFF CAMPUS HOUSING available. 802-388-4831, AJ Neri Property Rentals.

PANTON: NO RENT/UTILITIES in exchange for providing companionship and cooking/sharing meals on a flexible schedule. Gentleman who enjoys animals and time with family. Unfurnished bedroom/private bath. A cat or dog would be welcome! 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

ROOM FOR RENT. \$200 a week on Lake Champlain. Torrey Island in Shoreham, Vermont. Call 802-417-5334, prefer text.

SUDBURY: SEEKING FEMALE to share a home with avid reader in her 60s who enjoys volunteering and classical music. \$500/month, plus sharing companionship and outdoor chores. Must be cat-friendly! Private bath; shared kitchen. 802-863-5625 or svdwmiller@icloud.com with "horse" in the subject line for more information.

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.

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."

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For Rent

VERGENNES: LOVELY RURAL HOME to share with active professional woman who enjoys hiking, skiing, and family time. Seeking pet-lover to lend a hand letting dogs outside, and chip in on outdoors chores. \$550/month plus utilities. Large bedroom, private bath. No additional pets. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

Wood Heat

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

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 svdwmiller@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.

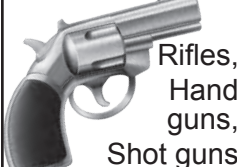
Trucks



2015 SILVERADO TRUCK 1500 LS 2 door, 1/2 ton, 4 WD 8 cylinder, bench seat, near 88,400 miles. Newly inspected and in great shape. \$20,500, sold as is. TEXT 802-355-6892 or 802-989-9941.

Wanted

OLD & USED GUNS WANTED



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

Experienced Residential Carpenter

Silver Maple Construction is currently hiring a full-time Carpenter who is eligible for benefits. The ideal candidate should have a strong focus on providing excellent customer service and delivering high-quality work.

- Competitive Weekly Pay (based on experience)
- Comprehensive Medical, Dental, and Vision Plans
- 401k Retirement Plan + Company Match
- 15 days Paid Time Off
- 7 Paid Holidays
- Commuter + Mileage Reimbursement
- Life, Disability And Accident Insurance
- Paid Parental Leave
- And MORE!

To learn more, please visit silvermapleconstruction.com, email hr@silvermapleconstruction.com, or call our office at (802) 989-7677.



Apply Today!

Help Wanted



Addison County Parent/Child Center

Join the Parent/Child Center Team EARLY INTERVENTIONIST

We are seeking an **Early Interventionist** to work with young families as an outreach worker on our highly skilled, creative and energetic team.

You will work in coordination with parents in the home, community, and in our program in Middlebury in order to ensure that children are growing healthy and strong.

Candidates must have a solid understanding of child development, early intervention Part C, family systems, communication skills and flexibility. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in a related field is required.

Please contact **Donna Bailey** d Bailey@addisoncountypcc.org

Looking for something different?

Your local newspaper
is your
BEST RESOURCE
for local job
opportunities!

Also available online:
addisonindependent.com

ADDISON COUNTY
INDEPENDENT

Auctions



MARKET REPORT

ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT
Sales for 12/14/23 & 12/17/23

		COST		
BEEF	LBS.	/LB	\$	
P. Livingston	1400	1.10	\$1540.00	
B. Veldman	1754	1.00	\$1754.00	
H. Degraaf	1070	1.00	\$1070.00	
Woodnotch	1690	.96	\$1622.40	
Gosliga Farm	1750	.95	\$1662.50	
A. Brisson	1735	.95	\$1648.25	
Vorsteveld Farm	1440	.87	\$1252.80	

		COST		
CALVES	LBS.	/LB	\$	
H. Sunderland	89	5.50	\$489.50	
Barnes Bros.	90	5.20	\$468.00	
Vorsteveld Farm	108	5.00	\$540.00	
R. Scholten	83	5.00	\$415.00	
A. Morrill	118	4.75	\$560.50	
Quarry Hill Farm	120	4.25	\$510.00	

Total Beef - 223 Total Calves - 229

We value our faithful customers.

Sales at 3 pm - Mon. & Thurs.
call 1-802-388-2661

Email your Public Notices to legals@addisonindependent.com

and Jenna makes sure
it gets in the paper

Public Notices Index

Public Notices for the
following can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT
on **Page 11B and 12B.**

Addison County
Courthouse (1)

Bridport (1)

Middlebury (2)

Middlebury College (1)

Slate Valley Unified School
District (1)

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.

For appointment, go to
www.addisoncountyclerkvt.com
or call 802-388-1966



We're hiring
and we need...
you!

Paraprofessionals:

- Are essential to our schools!
- Collaborate with teachers and support class instruction
- Support and supervise students with school work, social emotional needs, and play

Intensive Services Paras:

- Provide one-on-one support to a student needing individual services

This could be a great fit if you:

- Love supporting kids!
- Are flexible, energetic, inclusive, and kind
- Have experience with special needs students (but this is not required)

Benefits:

- Health insurance for you/r family
- Dental insurance
- Work school hours on the school calendar in a friendly environment
- Benefits include paid sick, holiday time and retirement
- Starting pay: \$16-\$24/hr
- Intensive Services Paras now earn an extra \$4/hr on top of starting pay plus paid professional development

To apply: acsdvt.org/Page/4418 or scan the QRCode which will show all available ACSD jobs:
Questions: 802-382-1281



City police kept busy with multiple issues

VERGENNES — Calls for service to the Vergennes police between Dec. 11 and 17 included an accident with injuries, mental health issues, a verbal family dispute, a credit card fraud case, and a request to store a sex assault kit for possible later prosecution.

During that week, city police conducted five patrols in cruisers and one on foot, a property watch and 15 traffic stops; responded to two false alarms; processed four fingerprint requests, and also:

- On Dec. 11:
 - Conducted a background check for a gun purchase on behalf of New York State Police.
 - Took a report of \$459 of unauthorized purchases on a resident’s credit card. Police said the resident was working with her bank to reverse the charges.
- On Dec. 12:
 - Responded to a Macdonough Drive residence to help a person having a mental health crisis and took the resident to Porter Hospital.
 - Calmed a person who approached an officer at the Maplefields convenience store and began aggressively complaining about the government and the state of the nation.
 - Dealt with a minor, two-car accident on Main Street.
- On Dec. 13, picked up a sexual assault kit after a resident had undergone testing at the UVM Medical Center. Police said they’re holding that evidence while waiting to see if the resident decides to pursue

Vergennes Police Log

- charges.
- On Dec. 14:
 - Checked out the Meigs Road area after a resident called to report a possible gunshot; police found nothing amiss.
 - Helped convince an uncooperative Green Street resident to return home to a caregiver.
 - Served a relief-from-abuse order on a city resident.
- On Dec. 15, responded ,along with firefighters and the Vergennes Area Rescue Squad, to Green Street, where a driver had sustained injuries after striking a tree. VARS took the driver to the UMV Medical Center.
- On Dec. 16:
 - Heard from a Main Street resident that someone might have thrown a rock at his vehicle’s windshield; police checked the area, but found no evidence.
 - Were told by a Walker Avenue resident he might have dropped some money while being picked up by an ambulance the day before. Police found nothing.
 - On that day and the next, received calls from a Hillside Drive resident who insisted spirits were inhabiting her apartment. She refused psychiatric help, police said.
- On Dec. 17, calmed a verbal family fight at a Hillside Drive apartment and separated the parties for the evening.



On behalf of the youngest

NINE LOCAL CHILDCARE providers and advocates recently attended the Early Childhood Leadership Institute at Stratton Mountain. The program runs over the next six months. Participants included: Su White, back left, Lincoln (Quarry Hill School); Maeg Booska, Bristol (First Roots- Wild Roots); Susan Vigne, Whiting (Aurora Preschool); Tara Brooks, Vergennes (Heartworks); Kristen Dunne, Benson, and Brianna Heller, Orwell (Mary Johnson Children’s Center); Ashley Bessette, front left, New Haven (Evergreen Preschool); Cheryl Mitchell, New Haven (Early Care and Learning Partnership); and Tessa Dearborn, Starksboro (Red Clover Children’s Center).
Photo courtesy of Tessa Dearborn

Bristol woman cited for DUI after accident

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police cited Halee Ross, 23, of Bristol for driving under the influence, following their investigation of a crash at the intersection of Foot Street and Quarry Road Dec. 16. Police said they measured Ross’s blood-alcohol content at 0.101%; the legal limit for driving is 0.08.

- 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:
- Took a report of a potential internet scam on Dec. 11.
 - Investigated an alleged road rage complaint in the Court Street area on Dec. 11.
 - Received a report that someone had painted slurs on the walking bridge off Creek Road on Dec. 11. Police also found a vandalized trash can in that area.
 - Responded to a complaint of a drunken person allegedly trying to steal alcohol from a Court Street convenience store on Dec. 11.
 - Enforced Middlebury overnight winter parking ban in the downtown

Middlebury Police Log

- area on Dec. 11, 12, 14, 15 and 16.
- Arrested Cassandra Chasse, 32, of Middlebury on an active in-state arrest warrant, at the intersection of Cross Street and Bakery Lane on Dec. 12. Police said she was released on citation.
 - Received a report that a package had been stolen from in front of a Maple Street building on Dec. 12.
 - Were informed on Dec. 12 that graffiti had been spray painted under the Cross Street Bridge.
 - Assisted a person having a mental health crisis on Porter Hospital campus on Dec. 12.
 - Reunited a person with their lost phone on Dec. 12.
 - Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS (MREMS) as rescue workers evaluated a suicidal woman in the Elm Street area on Dec. 13.
 - Assisted a Maple Street restaurant with an agitated man who had refused to leave the premises

- On Dec. 13.
 - Helped a disabled man who had been walking along Court Street Extension on Dec. 13.
 - Assisted two motorists as they changed a flat tire on Route 7 South on Dec. 14.
 - Helped a Good Samaritan find the owner of a lost wallet on Dec. 14.
- Assisted a Washington Street business with an unwanted person on Dec. 14.
- On Dec. 14, cited Tyler Deveau, 22, for petit larceny, following a police investigation of theft “and other suspicious circumstances” at the state offices within the South Village Green development off Court Street.
- Assisted MREMS in evaluating a person who had been experiencing mental health issues at the Abby Pond Trailhead on Dec. 14.
- Responded, with MREMS, to a report of a person who had passed out in their vehicle parked off East Main Street on Dec. 15.
- Cautioned a person who had reportedly been driving unsafely on Case Street on Dec. 15.

- Served a no-trespass order on a person who had refused to leave a Washington Street business on Dec. 15.
- Helped evacuate a Seminary Street apartment that had filled with smoke at around 10:50 p.m. on Dec. 16.
- Issued court diversion paperwork to a youth who was the subject of an underage drinking complaint in the Jackson Lane area on Dec. 16.
- Assisted Middlebury firefighters investigating a report of smoke in the Otterside Court area on Dec. 16.
- Set up a command post in the Marble Works complex during the Dec. 16 “Very Merry Middlebury” celebration and handed out free popcorn as part of ongoing community outreach efforts.
- Responded multiple times — along with the Middlebury and Bristol ambulance teams — to the Abbey Pond Road area on a report of a person having a mental health crisis.
- Assisted an Exchange Street business with an unhappy customer on Dec. 17.

Public Notices can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 11B and 12B.

PUBLIC NOTICE
POLICY WARNING

The Slate Valley Unified Union School District Board will conduct a public hearing at their meeting on January 22, 2024 at 6:30 P.M. and take action on the following policies:
B22 Public Complaints About Personnel
B20 Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Checks
D20 Curriculum Development and Coordination
B7 Tobacco Prohibition
Copies of the policy are available on the district website at slatevalleyunified.org
Brooke Olsen-Farrell
Superintendent of Schools

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
MEANS WOODS TRUSTEE

The Middlebury Select Board is looking for applicants for a position on the Board of Trustees for Means Woods. The Trustees are responsible for overseeing the care and maintenance of Means Woods.
If you are interested in this position, please submit an Application for Appointment available on the Town’s website www.townofmiddlebury.org under Government/Boards-Committees-Commissions-Task Forces, or by contacting Beth Dow at bdow@townofmiddlebury.org. Please submit Applications for Appointment to the Manager’s Office, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, or e-mail to bdow@townofmiddlebury.org, by Wednesday, January 3, 2024. If you would like to find out more about this position, please contact us at 388-8100, Ext 202.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
PUBLIC NOTICE

The following roadways are located on the property of Middlebury College:

- Porter Field Road - The roadway which serves Porter Field and extends from South Main Street to South Street.
- South Service Road - The roadway which serves the upper campus of Middlebury College and extends from Hillcrest Road to South Main Street.
- Hepburn Road - The roadway which serves the upper campus of Middlebury College and extends from College Street to South Service Road.
- Le Chateau Lane - The roadway which serves the upper campus of Middlebury College and extends from College Street to Le Chateau.
- Freeman Way - The roadway which serves the site of the Freeman International Center and extends from Weybridge Street to Gorham Lane and to the Freeman International Center.
- Old Chapel Road - The roadway which serves the lower campus of Middlebury College and extends from College Street to the Service Building parking area.
- HMKL Way - The roadway which serves the upper campus of Middlebury College and extends from College Street to Kelly/Lang Dormitory.
- Golf Course Way - The roadway which serves the Golf Course, Kirk Alumni Center and Hadley House, and extends from Route 30 to the Hadley House and the Alumni Stadium.
- Ridgeline Road - The roadway which serves the houses of Middlebury College known as Prescott, Palmer, Brooker, Brackett and extends from Route 125 to Hillcrest Road.
- Adirondack View - The roadway which serves the Adirondack View houses, Ridgeline Town Houses, and Ridgeline Suites of Middlebury College and extends from Route 125 to Hillcrest Road.
- Bicentennial Way - The roadway which serves the western campus of Middlebury College and extends from Route 125 to Bicentennial Hall.

The above listed roadways have never been set apart, surrendered or otherwise dedicated by Middlebury College to the public use. All persons using said roadways do so in subordination to the rights and by permission of Middlebury College and are subject to this notice.
These roadways will be closed to public use from midnight Sunday, December 24, 2023, until midnight Monday, December 25, 2023. They will be reopened the following day for public use with the permission of Middlebury College.
Middlebury College
By: Norm Cushman, Operations

TOWN OF BRIDPORT
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Bridport Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, **January 9, 2024**, in the Town Office at 82 Crown Point Road, on each and to consider each of the following application(s):

- At **6:30 PM** on Application **(#23-54)** by **Hunter & Ellyana Carl** for a 1 lot +/- 3 acre subdivision of parcel ID# **07-049** owned by **Leo J. Connor & Cheryl Connor**. The property is located at **2710 VT Rte 22A**.
- At **6:45 PM** on Application **(#23-55)** by **Jeffrey & Alethea Bahnck** for a boundary line adjustment of .75 acres ID# **06-015** owned by **Jeffrey & Alethea Bahnck**. The property is located at **237 Holstein Dr**.
- At **7:00 PM** on Application **(#23-49)** by **Andre and Lydia Vorsteveld** for a lot subdivision of parcel ID# **07-043** owned by **Andre and Lydia Vorsteveld**. The property is located at **1616 Middle Road, Bridport**.

Plans and additional information regarding any such application may be viewed at said Town Office or by calling (802) 758-2483, Ext. 2. Participation in the Planning Commission’s proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal on any decision of it on an application.
Michael Wojciechowski, Zoning Administrator

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Middlebury Development Review Board will hold a public hearing(s) at the Middlebury Municipal Offices, Large Conference Room, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, VT on Monday, January 8, 2023, beginning at 7:00 p.m. to consider the following application(s). The hearing will be available to participants via a Zoom video link. The Zoom link will be provided on the meeting agenda posted on the Town’s website.

- Application (file #2023-04:060.000-NCU) by Remora, LLC. The applicant is proposing to change the existing non-conforming office use to another non-conforming use (healthcare clinic/office) pursuant to sections 320 and 810 of the Middlebury Zoning and Subdivision Regulations. As proposed, the entire 18,000 sq. ft. building would be used for healthcare clinic/office purposes. The property is located at 23 Pond Lane in the Industrial District (IND) zoning district, parcel #004:060.000.
- Application (file #2023-24:098.000-SD) is a request by Hackamore Partners, LP for final plan/plat approval for a 4-lot subdivision of the property located at 364 Weybridge Street, pursuant to the Middlebury Zoning and Subdivision Regulations (MZR). Applicant proposes to subdivide the property into four parcels of 0.54ac, 0.50ac, 0.27ac and 0.46ac. Parcel 1 contains an existing 4BR home. Parcels 2-4 will be buildable house lots accessed by a new shared driveway off Weybridge Street. The property is identified as parcel #024:098.000 in the R-8 zoning district. Staff has determined this is a “minor subdivision” as defined in the MZR.

The applications will be heard in the order listed. Plans and additional information may be viewed at the Planning and Zoning Office in the Town Offices or by calling 388-8100, Ext 226. Participation in this public hearing is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal as an “interested person(s)”. Interested persons wishing to participate in this hearing may do so by contacting David Wetmore at 388-8100, Ext 226 or email to dwetmore@townofmiddlebury.org.
David Wetmore
DRB Coordinator, AZA

STATE OF VERMONT
SUPERIOR COURT CIVIL DIVISION
Addison Unit Docket No.: 23-CV-02766
Case Title: Vermont Land Trust et al. v. Kerry Kurt et al.
SUMMONS AND ORDER FOR PUBLICATION

THIS SUMMONS IS DIRECTED TO Defendant Keenan Kurt a/k/a Sovereign-Naan Keenan-Phillip Of-Allodium
1. YOU ARE BEING SUED. The plaintiff has started a lawsuit against you. A copy of the Plaintiff’s Complaint against you is on file and may be obtained at the office of the Clerk of the Court, County Court House, 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, Vermont.
Do not throw this paper away. It is an official paper that affects your rights.
2. PLAINTIFF’S CLAIM. Plaintiff’s claim is for violation of a conservation easement and trespass arising out of construction of unauthorized dwellings on land subject to a conservation easement held by Plaintiffs.
3. YOU MUST REPLY WITHIN 42 DAYS TO PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS. You must give or mail the Plaintiff a written response, called an Answer, within 42 days after the date on which this Summons was first published, which is December 21, 2023. You must send a copy of your Answer to the Plaintiff’s attorney located at: Justin B. Barnard, Esq., Dinse, P.C., PO Box 988, Burlington, VT 05402-0988.
You must also give or mail your Answer to the Court located at: Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit - Civil Division, 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, Vermont, 05753.
4. YOU MUST RESPOND TO EACH CLAIM. The Answer is your written response to the Plaintiff’s Complaint. In your Answer you must state whether you agree or disagree with each paragraph of the Complaint. If you believe the Plaintiff should not be given everything asked for in the Complaint, you must say so in your Answer.
5. YOU WILL LOSE YOUR CASE IF YOU DO NOT GIVE YOUR WRITTEN ANSWER TO THE COURT. If you do not send the Plaintiff and the Court your Answer within 42 days, you will probably lose this case. You will not get to tell your side of the story, and the Court may decide against you and award the Plaintiff everything asked for in the Complaint.
6. YOU MUST MAKE ANY CLAIMS AGAINST THE PLAINTIFF IN YOUR REPLY. Your Answer must state any related legal claims you have against the Plaintiff. Your claims against the Plaintiff are called Counterclaims. If you do not make your Counterclaims in writing in your Answer, you may not be able to bring them up at all. Even if you have insurance and the insurance company will defend you, you must still file any Counterclaims you may have.
7. LEGAL ASSISTANCE. You may wish to get legal help from a lawyer. If you cannot afford a lawyer, you should ask the Court Clerk for information about places where you can get free legal help. Even if you cannot get legal help, you must still give the Court a written Answer to protect your rights or you may lose the case.
ORDER
The verified Complaint or Affidavit filed in this action shows that service cannot be made with due diligence by any of the methods provided in Rule 4(d)-(f), (k), or (l) of the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure. Accordingly, it is **ORDERED** that service of the Summons set forth above shall be made upon the defendant, Keenan Kurt, by publication as provided in Rules 4(d)(1) and 4(g) of those Rules.
This Order shall be published once a week for two weeks beginning on December 21, 2023, in the Addison County Independent, a newspaper of general circulation in Addison County, and a copy of this Summons and Order as published shall be mailed to the Defendant, Keenan Kurt, if an address is known.
12/15/2023
David R. Fenster
Superior Court Judge

Real Estate

Exhibits

Entertainment

Music

Calendar

Feature Interviews

ARTS+LEISURE

The Addison Independent

December 21, 2023



mihali NYE PARTY

TWIDDLE CO-FOUNDER
TAKES THE STAGE IN
MIDDLEBURY, DEC. 31

SEE STORY
PAGE 3

Mihali, co-founder of Twiddle, will perform a one-man-band show on Dec. 31, at Middlebury's Town Hall Theater to ring in the New Year.

COURTNEY GARBOW PHOTOGRAPHY

Neal Preston photo print auction to benefit Homeward Bound

Have you ever been in Rockers Pizzeria in Vergennes and found yourself strangely mesmerized by the large-scale photos hanging on the walls?

If you have, well done! Those are indeed some pretty fancy prints, by a guy named Neal Preston — maybe you've heard of him? He's just "one of the

BY **ELSIE**

LYNN PARINI

most highly respected photographers in the history of the music business," explains his bio on his website. "His career in photography, which started in high school (in the mid-'70s) and continues to the present, has spanned well over four decades. Through his body of work Preston has made a significant contribution to the pop culture histories of multiple generations. His archive stands as one of the music industry's single most elite (and extensive) photographic collections."

So how did this famous photographer's prints come to be in our local pizza joint?

Well, one of Preston's dearest friends moved East from Los Angeles, and "through a series of events and one wayward turn, she ended up in Vermont," Preston told the *Independent* this month.

He was here visiting and staying at a B&B in Vergennes. They decided to go for pizza...

"We walked in to Rockers and went into the big room," Preston remembered. "I looked



Buy \$1 raffle tickets at Rockers Pizzeria in Vergennes to be entered in a drawing to win a print of one of the photos by Neal Preston hanging in the shop. All proceeds from the raffle will benefit Homeward Bound. A winner will be drawn on Dec. 31.

INDEPENDENT PHOTO / STEVE JAMES

around and saw all these rocker photos. I knew immediately the photographer was a newspaper photographer — I know the look... So I introduced myself to Jon Zimmers and told him I was in the same business as the guy who shot these photos, but I had some prints that I thought would look a lot better.

"It didn't take long before we became really close friends," Preston added. "I said look, frame these prints and I guarantee you that

people will go nuts! People love these photos — that's how I get my cookies; it's not about me, it's about the photographs."

And it was as simple as that. Zimmers, who co-owns Rockers with his partner Arielle Liu, installed about 18 prints that hang in the pizzeria permanently.

"It's the largest amount of photos I have on a wall in the U.S.A." Preston said. "I don't even have that many at exhibits in L.A. or New York."

Why did Preston do it?

"It's about having Rockers *really* become Rockers," he said. That and his mini Australian Shepherd, Panda, gets free meatballs every time they visit, naturally.

Turns out Preston is a huge advocate for animals; especially K-9s.

"Neal called me one day and said, 'Hey, let's find a way to support the local animals with a raffle of one of my photos,'" said Zimmers, who is hosting a raffle at Rockers Pizzeria to benefit Homeward Bound.

Tickets are for sale at Rockers and cost \$1 — buy as many as you like — to be entered in the raffle drawing. The winner gets to select their favorite photo from the walls and Preston will make them a new print. All proceeds from the raffle will be donated to Homeward Bound, Addison County's Humane Society. A drawing

SEE ROCKERS ON PAGE 4



Freddie Mercury performing at London's Wembley Stadium.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEAL PRESTON

Mihali performs NYE concert at Town Hall Theater

Completing an 18-year run as a co-founder of the well-known Vermont quartet Twiddle, Mihali and the other three members of the band are taking an "indefinite hiatus" to "explore their individual creative pursuits and spend more time with their families." For Mihali, that means coming home to his wife Kellie and their three kids in Middlebury. And also, it means taking the stage as a one-man-band for the Town Hall Theater's New Year's Eve concert.

BY ELSIE
LYNN PARINI

"It's been nice to be home," Mihali said in an interview last week. "I've been getting some good family time in."

Mihali's Sunday, Dec. 31, concert will be one for the books, for sure. The Vermont-based solo singer, songwriter and guitarist entwines reggae spirit, fluid soundscape architecture, and invigorating mantras meant to be chanted aloud in a packed venue.

"It's my looping act," Mihali said. "I'll be playing mostly my original material with some covers."

Following years of fan demand, Mihali served up his solo debut "Breathe and Let Go" in 2020. It boasted collaborations with Citizen Cope, Matisyahu, G. Love & Special Sauce, and Trevor Hall, and instantly drew audience reactions, gathering millions of streams. In addition to glowing reviews from JamBase and Live For Live Music, Grateful Web exclaimed, "Mihali's musical talent is special." Mihali also recently played on the Grammy-nominated best reggae album "Cali Roots Riddim 2023" with Collie Buddz.

During the pandemic, Mihali kept writing songs. One particular tune, "All Day" (featuring Nathan Aurora), reminded him of tourmates and friends Iya Terra, a Root Reggae band.



Mihali, co-founder of Twiddle, just ended an 18-year tour with the band to pursue independent avenues. He'll take the stage at Middlebury's Town Hall Theater on Dec. 31 for a New Year's Eve concert from 7-10 p.m.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MIHALI

So he sent the demo to Iya Terra vocalist and guitarist Nathan Feinstein. Vibing with the direction, Feinstein finished the song and fired it back to Mihali, unassumingly kicking off the process behind his new record, "Effection" (released via Ineffable Records on July 22, 2022).

"Effection: means 'a doing,'" Mihali explained when asked about the album's title. "That stood out to me, and that's how my music comes together... I don't over think it. I allow the music to have its place in my life and allow it to come out. I do try to put something out there that is going to help make a difference."

"It was very easy," reads Mihali's comments on his website, mihalimusic.com. "Reggae has always been such a passion of mine. I'd write a song, send it to Nate, and we'd work on it. It simply happened. We basically agreed, 'Let's write a record.' It was more about having fun as buddies. Nathan's a genius. He did all of the drums, bass, piano and a bit of guitar. Every morning, I would wake up to a new .wav file, and it was like Christmas!"

"There's a lot of happiness and hope on 'Effection,'" Mihali said, adding that a lot of the recording was done in Middlebury with The Grift's Clint Bierman. "I'm incredibly proud and excited to be releasing so much music and, as always, evolving."

Mihali will take the stage at Middlebury's Town Hall Theater on New Year's Eve to share the "hope, happiness and evolution" of his music with a local audience this year.

"For the second year in a row, THT

presents a New Year's Eve fit for the whole family," quipped THT Executive Director Lisa Mitchell. "We'll ring in 2024 early with a countdown somewhere between 9:30 and 10 p.m. — otherwise known as Ripton midnight."

"New Year's Eve has been one of the biggest shows of the year for me normally," Mihali said, who has spent the past 18 years touring with Twiddle. "I've only been home for one New Year's and that was during Covid.... It's nice to be home with the family now, and to play a little too."

The show runs on Sunday, Dec. 31, from 7-10 p.m. Tickets for adults are \$40 and include a champagne toast; tickets for kids under 12 are \$20. Tickets are available online at townhalltheater.org or by calling 802-382-9222. Cash bar available throughout the show.

"I'M INCREDIBLY
**PROUD AND EXCITED
TO BE RELEASING SO
MUCH MUSIC** AND, AS
ALWAYS, EVOLVING."
— Mihali



Winter Solstice Party!

Friday, Dec. 22nd • 6-11pm

Happy Valley Apple Orchard
217 Quarry Rd, Middlebury, VT

Live Music!

Soulstice

Performance by:

Cirque De Fuego

• Bonfire • Pies • Donuts
• Cookies • Hot cider



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ROCKERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

will be held on Dec. 31, when the winner will be announced.

For Preston, this is not only a nice thing to do for his animal friends, but also a way to become “part of the fabric in this community.” That’s important to him, because the Nevada resident just recently closed on a home in East Middlebury, where he hopes to spend more and more time.

As the year comes to a close, stop in at Rockers, grab a slice, a handful of raffle tickets and look up to notice not only the incredible images on the wall, but also the places that our new neighbor, Neal Preston, has been. Oh, yes, he has more than a few

“I SAID LOOK, FRAME THESE PRINTS AND I GUARANTEE YOU THAT PEOPLE WILL GO NUTS! **PEOPLE LOVE THESE PHOTOS — THAT’S HOW I GET MY COOKIES;** IT’S NOT ABOUT ME, IT’S ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHS.”

— Neal Preston

stories to tell from his tours with Led Zeppelin, Billy Joel, Bruce Springsteen, Madonna, Michael Jackson, Wham!, Whitney Houston, Heart, Duran Duran, Queen and many others.... But those are tales for another time.

Good luck, from all the animal loving friends at Rockers!



David Bowie as Ziggy Stardust.



U2.

ART ON EXHIBIT

CONANT SQUARE GALLERY

4 Conant Square in Brandon
For more info call 802-558-0874.

"Seldom Seen," a new exhibit featuring local and statewide artists Fran Bull, Carolyn Shattuck, Tom Merwin, Sandy Mayo, Joan Curtis, Bob Hooker and Dorothea Langevin. This exhibit is a holiday cornucopia of unique art, books and accessories. On view through Jan. 5, 2024, with an Artist Talk on Saturday, Jan. 6, at 4:30 p.m.

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

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.

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.

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 14

Cosmic Forecast

ARIES: March 21/April 20. People may not be available this week to get together, and that is perfectly fine by you, Aries. Solitude is just what you can use right now after a busy stretch.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Taurus, expect a delay or two this week as those who you are expecting simply keep you waiting and it's very frustrating. This will be a lesson in patience for now.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. Gemini, you may envision a plan in your mind, but now it is up to you to move it from your thoughts and into the reality of coming to fruition. It will take a little time.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Cancer, give yourself some time to have fun and play around. The inner child in you needs the opportunity to explore and try new things. You'll have plenty of chances.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. This week may bring many different feelings to the surface, Leo. You may not be ready to explore all of your deep emotions just yet, but you can start by being honest with others.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, empathy may inundate you this week, as you are in tune with the feelings of many different people. Others will appreciate your thoughtfulness in the days to come.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. You have many chores on your list but things keep pulling you in different directions, Libra. If you can't focus on something difficult, try a creative pursuit.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Scorpio, you may find if you look ahead that there are really no pressing matters on your calendar. This gives you the perfect opportunity to have an outing and enjoy yourself.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. Past memories could put you in a funk, Sagittarius. Rather than dwell on what may have happened, think about the future in your control.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Focus your energy on ideas this week, Capricorn. You might not be changing the world, but each innovation you think up will have a positive impact.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Aquarius, do not let moments of self-doubt derail you. Now more than ever, you need to believe in yourself. Think of this as a test that you can ace.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. Pisces, if you do not like what you are or where you are going right now, you have an opportunity to make any changes you want. This may be the ultimate resolution.

Get your last minute gifts!

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Wishing everyone a Very Merry Christmas!

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CLOSED: Sun 12/24 & Mon 12/25 & Sun 12/31 & Mon 1/1/24

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

DEC. 22 — Giacomo Puccini, composer (d)
DEC. 23 — Harry Shearer, actor (70)
DEC. 24 — Joseph Cornell, artist (d)
DEC. 25 — Louise Bourgeois, artist (d)

DEC. 26 — Ozzie Smith, baseball player (69)
DEC. 27 — Cokie Roberts, journalist (d)
DEC. 28 — Denzel Washington, actor (69)

CALENDAR

DEC. 21-JAN. 21
2023-2024

THURSDAY, DEC. 21

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN WEYBRIDGE. Thursday, Dec. 21, North Country Trail. Easy hike on the blue trail that branches off the Trail Around Middlebury (TAM). This hike is about 5 miles over level terrain with a mixture of field and forest. At the half-way point of the hike we will check out Bittersweet Falls. Microspikes and snowshoes required depending upon conditions. Contact trip leader Ken Corey at 802-349-3733 or kencorey53@gmail.com for questions and to sign up. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Dec. 21, 4 p.m., Town Hall Theater and surrounds, 68 S. Pleasant St. In the third annual solstice pageant, "A Winter's Carol," actors, dancers, puppets and revelers bearing lanterns will lead the audience in a ritual celebrating the shortest day of the year and the coming of the light. Free. For all ages.

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.

"AM AHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS" IN SALISBURY. Thursday, Dec. 21, 5:30 and 7:30 p.m., Salisbury Congregational Church, 853 Maple St. Come see the story a young boy and his mother, who host the three kings as they travel to Bethlehem. There is a great disparity in the wealth of the kings and Amahl's mother, and socio-economic conflict ensues, with a beautiful and altruistic resolution at the end. Tickets available at barnopera.com.

"IMMEDIATE FAMILY" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Dec. 21, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Immediate Family is the story of the brilliant session musicians who worked with the biggest stars of the 1970s and beyond: Danny Kortchmar, Leland Sklar, Russ Kunkel and Waddy Wachtel. They created the "Singer/Songwriter sound" and backed up iconic artists like James Taylor, Carole King, Jackson Browne, Don Henley, Linda Ronstadt, Warren Zevon and many more. A lively and entertaining documentary, "Immediate Family" is a fascinating portrait of how this timeless music was made. An MNFF Selects offering. Tickets \$14 advance/\$16 walk-up/\$75 for 7 films, available at townhalltheater.org

FRIDAY, DEC. 22

WINTER SOLSTICE PARTY IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Dec. 22, 6-11 p.m., Happy Valley Orchard, 217 Quarry Rd. Come celebrate the return of light with Mountain Mac cider, pies, doughnuts, cookies, and hot cider around the bonfire. Live music with the band Soulstice and a fiery performance with Cirque de Fuego. Free.

KAT & BRETT HOLIDAY SHOW IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Dec. 22, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Kat Wright & Brett Hughes get together once again this December for their 10th annual Vermont Holiday Tour. Joined this year by Tyler Bolles on stand-up bass and Will Seeders on pedal steel, banjo and fiddle, you can look forward to a decidedly non-denominational holiday romp. There will be a cash bar and the option to purchase drinks throughout the show. Tickets \$25/\$35 with one drink ticket, available at townhalltheater.org.

SUNDAY, DEC. 31

STEVE SAWYER TRIO IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Dec. 31, 2 p.m., The Residence at Otter Creek, 350 Lodge Rd. Free and open to the public.

BEST NIGHT IN BRISTOL. Sunday, Dec. 31, 3:30-11 p.m., downtown Bristol. Come to Bristol for an afternoon and evening of ringing in the New Year.

As the date draws closer, check out bristolbestnight.org for details.

NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS AND SKATING IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Dec. 31, 6:30 p.m., Middlebury Rec Park. Usher out the new year with fireworks, then head on into Memorial Sports Center and enjoy an hour and a half of free skating.

FROM VENICE TO VERMONT IN BRANDON. Sunday, Dec. 31, 7 p.m.-midnight, The Brandon Inn, 20 Park St. Barn Opera's annual New Year's Eve gala returns. More info and tickets at barnopera.com.

NEW YEAR'S EVE WITH MIHALI IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Dec. 31, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Ring in the New Year at Town Hall Theater with Mihali, Vermont-based solo singer, songwriter, guitarist, artist, and Twiddle co-founder. Join THT on New Year's Eve and bring the whole family. Ring in 2024 early with a countdown somewhere between 9:30 and 10 p.m., and the price of an adult ticket includes a champagne toast. Tickets \$40 adults/\$20 children under 12, available at townhalltheater.org.

MONDAY, JAN. 1

FIRST DAY WALK IN FERRISBURGH. Monday, Jan. 1, 9 a.m., Button Bay State Park. New Year's Day birding trips are a tradition held by many in the birdwatching community as they

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 22 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. Transition Town Jericho 6:26 p.m. Enabling Renewable Energy Integration 7:30 p.m. Gov. Scott Saturday, December 23 Through the Night: Public Affairs 5:30 a.m. Transition Town Jericho 6:26 a.m. Renewable Energy Integration 7:30 a.m. Gov. Scott 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 5:30 p.m. Eckankar 6 p.m. Energy Week 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Press Conferences 9 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour Sunday, December 24 Through the Night: From the Archives 8 a.m. Abled and On-Air 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 9:30 a.m. Press Conferences 11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 12:30 p.m. Transition Town Jericho 1:26 p.m. Renewable Energy Integration		4 p.m. Congregational Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Transition Town Jericho 8:26 p.m. Renewable Energy Integration 9:30 p.m. Gov. Scott Monday, December 25 Through the Night: Some from the Archives 5 a.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4:30 p.m. Christmas Mass (if available) 5 p.m. Special Programming 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10 p.m. Special Programming Tuesday, December 26 Through the Night: Public Affairs 5:30 a.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 6:30 a.m. Public Affairs 9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Congregational Service 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs Wednesday, December 27 Through the Night: Public Affairs 7:30 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass 10 a.m. Selectboard 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs Thursday, December 28 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 22 Through the Night: Dance, Poems, Plays, Comedy & Music 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 a.m. The Lost World and VYO Concerts 2022 East Meets West 8 a.m. Classicopia Four-Hand Holiday Music Part 2 8:44 a.m. "Breaking Twitter" - Author Ben Mezrich 9:30 a.m. Cooking Show: Thai Curries 10 a.m. Poets & Authors 11:01 p.m. School Board Meetings 3:44 p.m. Me2 Burlington Concert 5 p.m. "A Christmas Memory" 5:48 p.m. How To Make a Wreath 6 p.m. Poetry Reading with Sydney Lea 7:10 p.m. "A Christmas Memory" 8 p.m. St J Athenaeum Holiday Concert 9:15 p.m. All Brains Belong Saturday, December 23 Through the night: Music, Poetry, Stories & Dance 5 a.m. How to Make a Wreath 5:10 a.m. "A Christmas Memory" 6 a.m. All Brains Belong VT		7 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 8 a.m. School Board, Community and School Holiday Concerts 4:30 p.m. All Brains Belong 5:42 p.m. Poetry Reading by Sydney Lea 6:33 p.m. Lampshade Poets 7:34 p.m. VYO Shorts 8 p.m. Avant Dance - Seasons 9:15 p.m. VYO Shorts - The Lost World 10:01 p.m. "A Christmas Memory" Sunday, December 24 Through the night: Holiday Concerts (& Some Surprises) 4 a.m. North Co. Community Chorus 5:33 a.m. Caledonia Christian School 2023 Christmas Concert 6:22 a.m. St J Academy Winter Concert 7:30 a.m. St J Atheneum Holiday Concert 10 a.m. School Boards, Holiday Concerts 7:30 p.m. Tree Lighting Ceremony, "The Night Before Christmas" 8 p.m. Poetry by Sydney Lea 8:51 p.m. Tree Lighting, "The Night Before Christmas" 9:16 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 10:30 p.m. Poetry by Sydney Lea 11:21 p.m. Lampshade Poets Monday, December 25 Through the night: Music, Poetry, & Stories 8 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 9 a.m. "A Child's Christmas in Wales" 9:30 a.m. Special Programming		6:30 p.m. Green Mountain Mahler Festival 8 p.m. "A Christmas Memory" Tuesday, December 26 5 a.m. Music in the Morning 6:30 a.m. Yoga 7:30 a.m. Cooking Show: Thai Curries 8 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 9:10 a.m. Harwood Winter Concert 10 a.m. School Boards, Holiday Concerts 9 p.m. Middlebury Community Wind Ensemble 10:07 p.m. Mahler Festival Wednesday, December 27 5 a.m. Music in the Morning 7 a.m. Chair Yoga 8 a.m. School Board Meetings 3 p.m. Wind Ensemble 4:30 p.m. Mahler Festival 6 p.m. All Brains Belong 7 p.m. Authors and Poets Thursday, December 28 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga 6:30 a.m. Food & Cooking Programs 7:30 a.m. Poets and Authors 12 p.m. Mahler Festival 1:30 p.m. Ethan Allen Homestead 3 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 4 p.m. Yoga 5 p.m. School Board Meetings	

begin to fill their annual bird lists. Otter Creek Audubon Society has combined that tradition with the more recent tradition of First Day Hikes held at state parks across the country.

TUESDAY, JAN. 2

GARY MARGOLIS AND ARIANNA MOULTON IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, Jan. 2, 6 p.m., Ilesley Public Library, 75 Main St. Father and daughter duo Gary Margolis and Arianna Moulton will read from their respective collections, "What It Means to Be Happy" and "I've Been Meaning to Tell You," in the research room at Ilesley Public Library. This event is part of the monthly VBS/Ilesley Library Vermont Authors Series.

SATURDAY, JAN. 6

TWELFTH DAY WOODWIND QUINTET RECITAL IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Jan. 6, 4 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. The Borderland Woodwind Quintet will present a program to mark the end of the holiday season, with a mix of pieces written for woodwind quintet. A highlight of the program will be selections from Handel's oratorio "The Messiah."

MICHAEL CHORNEY AND FREEWAY CLYDE IN LINCOLN. Saturday, Jan. 6, 7:30 p.m., Burnham Hall, 52 E. River Rd. Come hear musician and composer Michael Chorney's latest project, Freeway Clyde, a group of the region's

most intuitive players. Admission general to generous \$15/\$20/\$25 or pay what you can. Info and tickets at burnhampresents.org.

SUNDAY, JAN. 7

"A COMPASSIONATE SPY" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Jan. 7, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. A gripping real-life espionage thriller about controversial Manhattan Project physicist Ted Hall, who infamously provided nuclear secrets to the Soviet Union. The story is told through the perspective of his loving wife Joan, who protected his secret for decades. Tickets \$14 advance/\$16 at the door. Part of the MNFF Selects series. More info at townhalltheater.org or middfilmfest.org/selects.

TUESDAY, JAN. 9

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN GOSHEN. Tuesday, Jan. 9, Blueberry Hill to Hogback Mountain. Beautiful Views from Hogback Mountain, easy snowshoe with a little elevation gain, 2.5-mile loop. Need microspikes or snowshoes. (Trails are maintained by The Moosalamoo Association, a nonprofit, which suggests a small donation from trail users.) Contact Morris Earle at morrisearle@gmail.com for more information and to register. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

SATURDAY, JAN. 13

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB SNOWSHOE IN RIPTON. Saturday, Jan. 13, Long Trail and Burnt Hill. Strenuous snowshoe from Middlebury Gap to the Burnt Hill trailhead of 6-7 miles with about 1,000 to 1,500 feet elevation gain. Trail breaking and trail finding will be required. Be prepared for a full day in the cold. Contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926 for details. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

BANJO WITH JIM SHAW IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Jan. 13, 1 p.m., Ilesley Public Library, 75 Main St. Jim Shaw, retired professor of physics and astronomy, will give a talk about the history, types, playing styles of banjos, along with a demonstration of three different banjos. He will treat us with music and sign along, with some tunes 200 or more years old.

CONTRA DANCE IN CORNWALL. Saturday, Jan. 13, 7-9:30 p.m., Town Hall, Route 30. Dance away the winter chill at the Cornwall Contra Dance. Lausanne Allen will be calling. Live music Red Dog Riley. Tickers \$5 to \$10 or pay what you can.

SUNDAY, JAN. 14

"DIAL M FOR MURDER" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Jan. 14, 6 p.m., Ilesley Public Library, 75 Main St. MCCFC's Hitchcock series continues with this film about a husband

scheming to murder his wife. Join in for the film followed by a discussion. View the films in person in the Jessica Swift Community Room.

FRIDAY, JAN. 19

TAKÁCS QUARTET IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Jan. 19, 7:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. The Takács will present their entire Bartók string quartet cycle, delayed from our 100th anniversary season in 2020. This ensemble has always had a particular association with Béla Bartók, the great 20th-century Hungarian composer whose six quartets are among the pinnacles of 20th-century chamber music. Tickets: \$25/20/10/5 available at go.middlebury.edu/tickets or 802-443-MIDD (6433).

SATURDAY, JAN. 20

HOCUS POCUS MAGIC SHOW IN VERGENNES. Saturday, Jan. 20, 2 p.m., Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. Fun, engaging and great-for-the-entire-family magic fun, comedy, and surprise by magician Blaine Goad. Great for all ages. Tickets \$10 adults/\$5 kids/\$25 family of 4. More info at vergennesoperahouse.org.

SUNDAY, JAN. 21

TAKÁCS QUARTET IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Jan. 21, 2 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. See Jan. 19 listing.





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ACROSS

- 1. Droops
- 5. Subatomic particle
- 10. Not in danger
- 14. Nursemaid
- 15. Black band worn in mourning
- 16. Long song in opera
- 17. Edible seed of a Philippine tree
- 18. Chicago political family
- 19. Pursues pleasure from one place to another
- 20. Appetizer
- 22. Hill (Celtic)
- 23. Simple shoe
- 24. Songs to one you love
- 27. Secret activities
- 30. Upset
- 31. Popular hot drink

- 32. Body art (slang)
- 35. Fired
- 37. Blood relation
- 38. Identical
- 39. Porticos
- 40. Partner to cheese
- 41. Type of sword
- 42. Enough (archaic)
- 43. Surface layer of ground
- 44. Cotton fabric woven like satin
- 45. Choose for a post
- 46. Father
- 47. Tell on
- 48. Indian title of respect
- 49. Fonts
- 52. Fencing sword
- 55. Mock
- 56. Vaccine developer
- 60. Atmosphere surrounding a person or place

- 61. Marten with a short tail
- 63. Chinese temple
- 64. Invests in little enterprises
- 65. Popular cut of meat
- 66. Charity
- 67. Iron-containing compound
- 68. River in Northern Europe
- 69. One point east of southeast

DOWN

- 1. Exhausts
- 2. Genus of fish related to gars
- 3. Impudent behavior
- 4. Adherents to Islam
- 5. They come after A
- 6. Spoke
- 7. Room to receive

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20				21		22				23				
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	7							2
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7			1	3				
						1	2	
					4		6	

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

guests

- 8. About opera
- 9. End-blown flute
- 10. Heroic tales
- 11. Member of a Semitic people
- 12. Dog's name
- 13. Opposite of west
- 21. Political divisions in ancient Greece
- 23. Ocean
- 25. Cool!
- 26. Young woman about to enter society
- 27. One from central Caucasus

28. Indian city

- 29. A way to serve ice cream
- 32. Emaciation
- 33. Escort aircraft carrier
- 34. Italian city
- 36. Mythical settler of Kansas
- 37. Unhappy
- 38. High schoolers' test
- 40. Measured in pace
- 41. Satisfies
- 43. Gullible person
- 44. Enclosed space
- 46. Substance used to color something

47. Shirt type

- 49. Discover by investigation
- 50. __-Castell, makers of pens
- 51. Semitic Sun god
- 52. Grads wear one
- 53. French river
- 54. Part of a cap
- 57. Digestive fluid
- 58. Metrical foot
- 59. Body part
- 61. Very fast airplane
- 62. Supplement with difficulty

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 13.



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HOLIDAY SCHEDULE THROUGH NEW YEAR'S EVE:

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LIGHT & FIRE

Celebrate the shortest day at Town Hall Theater's third annual **Winter Solstice Pageant** outside and inside the theater on **Thursday, Dec. 21, at 4 p.m.** There will be whimsical lanterns, puppets and young performers. BYO twinkly light.

If you missed the fire performers **Cirque de Fuego** at Bristol's Lumen festival last weekend, you can catch them at a solstice celebration at **Happy Valley Orchard in Middlebury this Friday, Dec. 22.**

SATURDAY MORNING CARTOONS

Middlebury's Marquis Theatre once again invites folks of all ages to come enjoy a morning of old-school cartoons — plus a cereal bar, breakfast burritos and mimosas — in the cafe on Dec. 23. Come relive your childhood.

SWIMMING

Need to burn some energy during the week off from school? Bristol Rec is offering three mornings of community swim time at the Mount Abe pool, Dec 27-29. Call the office to sign up for a time slot: 802-453-5885.

ANIMALS

A team of sled dogs visits ECHO in Burlington on Dec. 27, and live reindeer from Vermont Reindeer Farm will be there on Dec. 30. It's worth a visit up to the science museum regardless for its excellent hands-on exhibit "How People Make Things."

NOON YEAR'S EVE

Each year, Ilsley Library throws a wild New Year's countdown — to noon. The party is designed for little kids and their families. There are noisemakers, fun hats and glasses craft stations, and a Times Square photo booth. The fun starts at 10:30 a.m. on New Year's Eve and ends with the countdown to noon.

It's not the only way to celebrate the big night well before midnight. Head to the Mary Hogan rec fields to watch fireworks at 6:30 p.m., then join the ice skating party at Memorial Sports Center until 8:30 p.m.



Coloring page, just for fun!

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ASK A MASTER GARDENER

BENEATH THE MISTLETOE

The mention of mistletoe evokes images of a seasonal kissing ball adorned with its leaves and berries or of someone sneaking a kiss beneath a sprig of mistletoe hanging in a doorway. You probably don't think about where mistletoe comes from or what part it plays in the ecosystems where it grows in the wild.

BY **DEBORAH J.**

BENOIT

While there are over 1,300 species of mistletoe throughout the world, the one we're most familiar with and what we see in stores during the holiday season each year is typically American mistletoe (*Phoradendron serotinum*). You may hear it called by other names, such as eastern mistletoe, hairy mistletoe or oak mistletoe.

This flowering perennial plant is native to the southeastern regions of the United States. American mistletoe is hardy only to U. S. Department of Agriculture Plant Hardiness Zone 6, so you won't find it growing in the wild in Vermont.

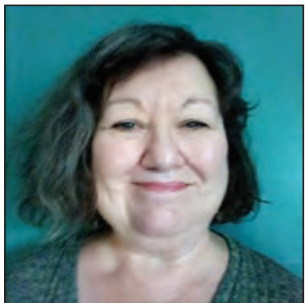
The Greek word *phoradendron* translates

to "thief of the tree" in English. Mistletoe is a semi-parasitic plant (called a hemiparasite) and, therefore, is considered a plant disease. It must have a living host plant to survive.

Its roots attach and tap into a host tree, extracting water and nutrients. It then uses those resources along with sunlight and the chlorophyll (the green pigment) in its foliage to manufacture food through photosynthesis.

Mistletoe grows into large, thick clumps on the branches of deciduous trees. Its evergreen foliage makes it easy to see during the late fall and winter months when the host tree's foliage has fallen.

While mistletoe does take nutrients from its host, a healthy tree is unlikely to be significantly harmed by its presence. However, it may cause damage to the portion of the branch beyond its location. In addition, a severe infection of numerous mistletoe plants on a single host can stress the tree, making it more susceptible to disease or other problems. Fortunately, mistletoe spreads slowly so it is not a threat to forested areas.



Deborah J. Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from North Adams, Mass., who is part of the Bennington County Chapter.

Mistletoe spreads with the help of birds who consume its berries. The seeds, which have traveled through a bird's digestive system, are then deposited onto host trees. Seeds also spread when they adhere to birds' feathers or animals' fur.

Once germination takes place, mistletoe's roots penetrate the bark of the host tree and appropriate nutrients and moisture from the tree. While its evergreen foliage allows mistletoe to perform photosynthesis, providing it with some of its needed nutrients, mistletoe does require a living host to survive and to reproduce.

Mistletoe produces small, white flowers in late spring and early summer. The flowers are followed by white berries.

All parts of the mistletoe plant are toxic to humans, and coming into contact with the plant may produce an allergic reaction and cause skin irritation or a rash for some people. Be sure to keep mistletoe, and its berries in particular, away from pets and small children.

On the other hand, the nectar of mistletoe flowers provides a nutritious feast for pollinators. Mistletoe berries, which ripen in December, are a welcome food source for birds and animals during the winter months. The thick bunches of intertwined branches provide habitat and cover for birds and small, tree-dwelling mammals throughout the year.

So, the next time you see a sprig of mistletoe this holiday season, remember the part it plays in nature all year long.

For more information on mistletoe and its place in the ecosystem, visit go.uvm.edu/mistletoe.



Sneaking a kiss beneath a sprig of mistletoe hung in a doorway is a popular holiday tradition, one that is believed to have started in the 18th century in Great Britain.

PHOTO / PAUL ZOETEMEIJER/UNSPLASH



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Keep your pets safe in the cold

Best Friends Animal Society, an animal welfare organization working to end the killing of cats and dogs in America's shelters by 2025, wants pet owners to be prepared as the cold front moves in. Best Friends released the below top 10 tips to help people and their pets stay as safe as possible:

- Keep your pets inside during extreme temperatures. Once the temperature drops below 20 F, pets are at risk of developing hypothermia or frostbite.
- Dogs and cats' paws, ears, and tails are the most common areas that pets can develop frostbite — this increases if those areas are wet.
- If a pet needs to spend time outside during extreme temperatures, keep both walks and potty breaks short.
- Use plastic water bowls for outdoors. A pet's tongue may stick to metal, and they could injure themselves when trying to pull away.
- Chemicals used to melt snow and ice can injure or irritate the pads of pet's feet. Look for pet-friendly ice melt products and steer clear of anti-freeze which is toxic to pets.
- Gently wipe their feet with a damp towel once they are back inside to avoid a trip to the veterinarian. Wearing boots can protect paws from irritating salt on the street.
- Many dogs, particularly those with short coats, will be more comfortable if they have a sweater or coat on. If a dog frequently lifts their paws, whines or stops during walks, it is probably because their feet are cold.

- Be particularly careful when taking older, arthritic animals and small pets outside. They may become stiff and tender quickly and often find it difficult to walk on the snow or ice.
- Don't let dogs off the leash during a snowstorm. No matter how much they want to play in the snow, they can easily lose their scent and become lost.
- Always make sure dogs are wearing ID tags and are microchipped before you take them out.
- Always check under the hood of a car's engine — a favorite hiding space for community cats. Check underneath a car, bang on the hood, and honk the horn before starting the engine to make sure a cat hasn't taken up temporary housing there.

Don't have a pet? Now is the perfect time to adopt or foster a pet in need. Visit Homeward Bound Addison County's Humane Society to learn more at homewardboundanimals.org.


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Pets In Need HOMEWARD BOUND Addison County's Humane Society



Frasier

Frasier is a 5-month-old male Teddy Bear mix Guinea pig. He is bashful in the beginning, but once he warms up he loves his people and loves head scratches! He could go home with other pigs, but would need a very slow and gradual introduction, or could do fine on his own as a solo pig.



Iris

Iris is a 1-year-old 60-pound pit bull mix. She is very affectionate but can be extremely shy when meeting new people. Iris is still a youngster and we are working with her on puppy manners. She likes other dogs but does not get along with cats. Iris has lived with young children but this is not recommended at this time. Here at the shelter, she likes to bask in the sun and roll in the grass. She loves treats and playtime, especially tennis balls. We're looking for an adopter who is willing to come to the shelter more than once, take it slow, and really get to know Iris so she is comfortable in her transition to a forever home.



Rhonda

Rhonda is a 61-pound hound mix. She is 2 years old and came to the shelter with her sister, Ruby, through a guardian surrender. She, like her sister, is very sweet but a little on the shy side. Rhonda gets along with cats, dogs, and children. She loves to use her nose to figure out puzzle toys, and to go for walks with our volunteers. Rhonda can be adopted together with her sister Ruby or separately. She would do best living with another dog to feel comfortable.



Ruby

Ruby is a 58-pound hound mix. She is 2 years old and came to the shelter with her sister, Rhonda, through a guardian surrender. She is very sweet, but a little on the shy side. Ruby gets along with cats, dogs, and children. She is food-motivated and loves to figure out puzzle toys, & go for walks with our volunteers. Ruby can be adopted together with Rhonda or separately. It is important that there is another dog in her new home for Ruby to feel more secure and to help with her confidence.



Furby

Furby is an affectionate and unique-looking 7-month-old Abyssinian mix Guinea pig. He is shy at first (as most pigs are!), but it doesn't take long until he is cozying up in your lap for snuggles! Furby lived with other pigs in his previous home and they played together and peacefully coexisted. He would do well as either a solo pig with the proper attention or as a new addition to a pig family. Furby would do great in just about any household, as long as he is given time to adjust to new surroundings. He has a very "chill and laid back" demeanor, and enjoys being held once he trusts you. Veggies are the way to his little heart!



Want to learn more?

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All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or persons receiving public assistance, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination."

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FROM OUR HOMES TO YOURS, HAPPY HOLIDAYS

We take enormous pride in consistently outperforming the market averages - but even more importantly, our clients' expectations with a 99% satisfaction rating.

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Addison | \$379,000
Chris von Trapp
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Shoreham | \$599,000
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COLDWELL BANKER
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PUZZLE

SOLUTIONS DEC. 21, 2023

ADD YOUR PIECE!

BE THE NEXT SPONSOR OF THE PUZZLE PAGE.

EMAIL CHRISTY@ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM TO FIND OUT HOW.



S	A	G	S		B	O	S	O	N		S	A	F	E
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Happy Holidays!

IPJ Real Estate

ipjrealestate.com

34 Main Street, downtown Middlebury
info@ipjrealestate.com | 802.388.4242

EXHIBITS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street,
Middlebury
For more info visit
photoplacegallery.com.

"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.



SUPPORT THE ARTS
SUBSCRIBE • DONATE • ADVERTISE

ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM



From our house to yours, we wish you a wonderful holiday season full of friends, family and merriment!



4174 Vermont Route 30, Cornwall, VT \$650,000

Come and see this 1816 Center Hall Colonial. Beautiful grounds/gardens with a fenced-in patio for privacy, majestic maple trees and views of the Green Mountains. Currently used as a business, it could easily be converted back to a home with minimal effort. Large Kitchen and enormous game room, which could be made into a master suite. There are three baths throughout the home.

Upstairs you will find 3 bedrooms and an in-law apartment with a separate entrance. This house has been lovingly cared for and updated. Ample parking for up to 12 vehicles and a large barn too! Don't miss out on a slice of Vermont, 8 minutes to Middlebury College and town.

Looking to see what your house is worth?
Call us for a complimentary
Market Analysis today!



802-388-0505 • Middlebury, VT • www.midvthomes.com



Bonnie Gridley – Broker
 802-349-8646
bgridleyvt@gmail.com



Cory Cheever – Realtor
 802-989-0859
cheever.cory@gmail.com



Judy Murdock – Realtor
 802-458-7589
judymurdockvt@gmail.com

f Follow Us!

**Wishing you a very Merry Christmas from all of us
 at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Vermont Realty Group**



Happy Holidays!

**May your day be filled with laughter,
 gratitude, and delicious food!**







BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HOMESERVICES | **VERMONT REALTY GROUP**



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YOUR FOREVER REALTORS, BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS ONE HOME AT A TIME!





HOUSE FAVORITES

Bleu 'Shrooms baked mushrooms in blue cheese cream sauce • warm bread



Potato Cheddar Pierogies sauteed spinach • onion butter



Autumn Harvest Salad baby field greens • apples • dried cranberries • crumbled blue cheese • toasted almonds • balsamic vinaigrette



Saffron Red Lentil Stew saffron rice • curry toasted cashews • vegan coconut cream spinach



Spicy Maple Rib creamy mac & cheese • cabbage slaw • house-made pickles

The Squeeze Burger pickled onions • roasted peppers • greens • bacon •

A
HOLIDAY
GIFT
for you...



TUES.- SAT., 4PM - 8PM
Order by phone or online for take-out
UPSTAIRS IN-PERSON DINING AND FULL BAR

161 MAIN STREET • VERGENNES, VT • 802.877.9962 • PARKSQUEEZE.COM



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BLACK SHEEP BISTRO

Casual atmosphere • Great Food • Exceptional Value

GIVE THE GIFT OF TASTE

FOR EVERY \$100 WORTH OF GIFT CERTIFICATES PURCHASED, YOU WILL RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL \$25 VOUCHER ON US! VISIT US AT WWW.BLACKSHEEPBISTROVT.COM OR CALL TO HAVE YOUR GIFT CERTIFICATES MAILED TO YOU! VALID NOW THROUGH 12/31/2023.



SAMPLE MENU

- CURRIED PUMPKIN BISQUE** toasted pepitas
- BLACK SHEEP WALDORF SALAD** bacon, cheddar, candied walnuts, dried cranberries, apple
- STEAMED PORK DUMPLINGS** maple soy demi glace
- THAI BROILED HADDOCK** toasted almonds, coconut curry sauce, creamed spinach
- BRIE & BACON CHICKEN BREAST** balsamic cream, garlicky green beans
- ROSEMARY LAMB MEATLOAF** roasted garlic sage demi, roasted broccolini

253 Main Street • Vergennes, VT • 802-877-9991 • blacksheepbistrovt.com
TUES. - SAT., 4:00PM - 8:00PM • Reservations Accepted