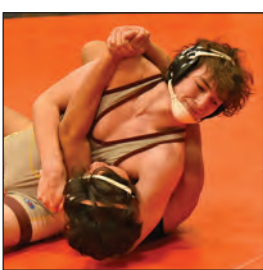




Give her a hand

A Ripton musician considers her fundraising for a new album make or break. See Arts + Leisure.



To the mats

Tigers wrestlers took second at their own annual tourney, and other locals fared well. Page 1B.



Top Ten!

What were the 10 biggest stories of the year in Addison County? See our annual choices inside.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Middlebury attracts housing, office plans

Four-level building OK'd near THT

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — When the words “development” and “South Pleasant Street” are mentioned in the same sentence, the mind naturally wanders to the recently launched construction of a new, 7,000-square-foot addition for the Town Hall Theater.

But there’s another interesting project just a stone’s throw away, at 150 S. Pleasant St., a site that could soon host a four-level, mixed-use building that will host offices for Marble Trail Financial

and a penthouse residence for that business’s owners.

The Middlebury Development Review Board has unanimously OK’d that four-level building plan, located in the town’s Mixed-Use District. Plans on file at the Middlebury planning office call for an 8,800-square-foot building standing 47 feet, 4 inches tall. The street-level floor and second floor are to be used for Marble Trail Financial offices. The third floor and a mezzanine level will

(See Projects, Page 12A)

Lincoln recording studio supporting area musicians

By MARIN HOWELL

LINCOLN — The hills of Lincoln are certainly alive with the sound of music.

That’s in part due to the 2023 reopening of Pepperbox Studio, a recording studio run by Lincoln resident and record producer Kristina Stykos that she originally founded in Chelsea. Since May, Stykos has welcomed a variety of

musicians to the rural recording space, which is connected to her home on French Settlement Road.

At Pepperbox, Stykos lends her musical expertise to artists from throughout the state and beyond, offering a range of services from songwriting assistance to hiring session musicians to play on tracks.

Her work with clients is

(See Lincoln studio, Page 14A)

Group offers community, events for Bristol seniors

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — Seniors in the 5-town area will soon have another opportunity to get together and participate in a variety of activities each week. That’s because the Bristol Recreation Department on Jan. 5 will kick off “Elder Eagles,” a weekly offering for golden agers in and around Bristol.

“We want to offer (seniors) a place where they can meet locals, share their interests, as well as

engage in activities that they would enjoy,” Program Coordinator Jackie Steponaitis said of the new offering.

The group will meet in Bristol each Friday for public speakers, educational classes and other activities at Holley Hall. The department recently put out a survey to gauge what other offerings local seniors might like to take part in.

(See Community, Page 13A)



Ka-boom

SEVERAL HUNDRED PEOPLE attended Middlebury’s New Year’s Eve fireworks at the town recreational fields Sunday night to witness a dazzling display, with temps in the low 30s. Many then packed the Memorial Sports Center for a couple hours of free ice skating.

Independent photo/Angelo Lynn

Inflation a big driver in Midd budget

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury selectboard on Jan. 9 will hold a public hearing on a draft fiscal year 2025 municipal budget of roughly \$13.6 million that reflects a 5.5% increase compared to the current \$12.92 million spending plan.

As currently constructed, the tax-affecting portion of the budget is set at \$8,753,310. That represents a \$428,426 increase compared to this year that would require a 4.3-cent bump in the Middlebury’s municipal tax rate, which currently stands at 86.48 cents per \$100 in property value.

A penny on the town’s tax rate currently raises around \$98,000.

“Generally, the impact on the taxpayers is around 5%,” Middlebury Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay noted. “We’d like

(See Budget, Page 13A)

MUMS students get extra-long holiday break

MIDDLEBURY — Cleanup from a Saturday, Dec. 23, water main break at Middlebury Union Middle School will take longer than expected and resulted in students getting an extra day of holiday vacation.

Michaela Wisell, principal of MUMS, informed the school community of the water main issue through an automated phone call and email early on Friday, Dec. 29. She said contractors and Addison Central School District workers were busy cleaning up after the water main break, which rendered several classrooms unusable. Despite progress in the

(See MUMS, Page 13A)



By the way

The Middlebury College community is grieving the loss of first-year student Arianna Kamal, who was killed in an alleged act of domestic violence at her home in Dover, Mass., this past Thursday, Dec. 28. News sources originally reported just that the 18-year-old and her parents, Teena and Rakesh, were found dead at their home. Law enforcement officials then said early this week they believe Rakesh Kamal shot both his wife and daughter and then took his own life. Arianna, who had just finished her first academic term at Middlebury, was a member of an organization for students interested in foraging and of the Women in Computer Science. In

(See By the way, Page 13A)



FOLKS OF ALL ages are chugging over to Middlebury’s Sheldon Museum to view a massive model train layout, including this group on Dec. 28. “Holiday Trains: 30 Years Rolling Down the Tracks” will be on exhibit at the Sheldon through Jan. 13.

Independent photo/John Flowers

All aboard the Sheldon Express!

Model trains take senior conductors back to their youth

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Gerry Slager is 78 years old. But once he crosses the threshold of Middlebury’s Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, he’s back to being a 6-year-old. He’s magically transported back to his childhood by train — or more specifically, an elaborate Lionel model train layout in the Sheldon that’s drawing throngs of visitors of all ages.

Called “Holiday Trains: 30 Years Rolling Down

the Tracks,” the exhibit stands three levels high, with tracks running Lionel O gauge trains, Lionel 027 gauge trains, and an upper track running HO trains. The layout includes a backdrop of the Green Mountains painted by local artist Gayl Braisted, an operating gondola ski lift, skiers, snowboarders and rock climbers, bicyclists, animals, buses, vans, and a lot of other eye candy.

(See Trains, Page 11A)



BILL FRANK, 81, gives a child some hands-on tutelage about trains at the Lionel model train layout now on display at Middlebury’s Sheldon Museum. Frank is one of around 10 volunteer “train conductors” who each year set up, run and disassemble the delightful exhibit.

Independent photo/John Flowers

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3 Squares to change hands after 17 years

The Birongs selling to friends and fellow restaurateurs from Bolton

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — In retrospect it all seems inevitable.

Sometime in the near future, most likely between Jan. 8 and 15, Matt and Danelle Birong will sell their downtown Vergennes eatery, 3 Squares Café, to longtime friends Scott Collins and Jody Hayes, a couple living in Bolton with their own deep ties to Vermont's restaurant sector.

The Birongs, who have owned 3 Squares for 17 years, have been quietly marketing the restaurant at 141 Main St. for a year and a half. Matt Birong, a three-term Democratic representative from the Vergennes area in the Vermont House, was patiently waiting for

the right fit, including a buyer who would partner with him in the catering end of the business after the restaurant sale. A couple prospective deals didn't work out.

On top of finding buyers he could work with post-sale, Birong said there were other considerations, including wanting to keep the restaurant's employees on board.

"We were really trying to find the right people who were the right fit for the staff, for the business, for the community, for the Ryans (landlords Tim and Liz Ryan)," Birong said. "There was a lot to take into consideration."

Meanwhile, Collins and Hayes had been looking for a breakfast-and-lunch restaurant, and hadn't

found what Collins called "the right fit."

At about the same time a potential deal for Collins and Hayes fell through this summer, one did also for Birong and 3 Squares.

When Matt Birong and Collins worked together at a catering gig in September, everything fell into place.

"I worked a wedding with Matty, and he made the pitch," Collins said. "We were thinking about it before he even brought it up to us, and then everything aligned perfectly."

Collins, 48, is a Los Angeles native who first came to Vermont more than two decades ago to attend the former New England Culinary Institute. He met Birong while student interning at Burlington's The Waiting Room restaurant, where Birong was working.

Eventually there came a stint where Collins and Hayes operated a food cart in Portland, Ore., before returning to Vermont seven years ago. Collins has since worked in restaurants in Stowe and Waterbury and served as Bolton Valley's food and beverage director until a year and a half ago, when he stepped away for a bit from the restaurant business to work as a financial advisor.

Meanwhile, Hayes is also a familiar figure in the Vermont hospitality sector. She is a representative for restaurant supply company Performance Foodservice and will keep that position, but also be a presence at 141 Main St.

"I want to be part of 3 Squares, but I'm going to continue to do what I'm doing right now," Hayes said. "But I still want to be part of the community, go in on the weekends,

meet everybody, work with the staff, bus tables, do whatever needs to be done," Hayes said.

They have a son, a high school senior who plans to attend Castleton University, and a 12-year-old daughter. At some point, when the time is right, they plan to move to the Vergennes area.

Other than a long-held goal to own their own restaurant, why 3 Squares Café?

"It's the type of place we've been looking for, and we've been a fan of 3 Squares the whole 17 years it's been around," Collins said. "And it's in a community. We've always wanted to be in a smaller, but not tiny, community, that we could really become part of."

As well as keeping the staff on board, they plan no major changes to the menu, although Collins said a few tweaks are likely.

"We're not in a hurry to change anything. We're just going to get in there, get to know the community, get to know the staff, and then go from there," Collins said. "We're definitely not going to take any favorites off (the menu), but we're going to add some of our own dishes."

They're also looking forward to partnering with Birong on off-site work with the 3 Squares food tuck, essentially in the summer and fall months when Birong is not preoccupied with legislative business.

"We're happy about everything about the deal," Collins said. "We're happy to work in the restaurant



MATT BIRONG WILL soon be a former owner of 3 Squares Café, which he has operated in two different downtown Vergennes locations for the past 17 years. Birong will still cater under the 3 Squares name with new owners — and longtime friends — Scott Collins and Jody Hayes.

Independent photo/Andy Kirkaldy



JODY HAYES AND Scott Collins, longtime friends of 3 Squares Café owners Matt and Danelle Birong, expect to close a deal to buy the Vergennes restaurant within the next week or so. They plan no major changes, and will partner with the Birongs on the catering end of the business.

Photo courtesy of Scott Collins

we've always enjoyed and be in a community we've always enjoyed.

And working with Matt also in the deal is also exciting," BIRONG REFLECTS

Birong seems likely to have, as he put it, "two part-time jobs" — catering and lawmaking. He has already announced he'll

seek a fourth term in the House, and has easily prevailed in three races, the last time by more than 700 votes

over the third-place finisher in a four-way competition for two seats.

As for catering, Birong said that part of the hospitality business is still appealing and he always wanted to keep it. He was happy Collins was agreeable.

"I really enjoy doing off-site work still, so we decided to operate an events business," he said

Birong believes the off-site business can be expanded if he has more time to devote to it; he noted the legislative session coincides with the slowest time of the year for catering and events.

"There are a lot of growth opportunities there," he said. (See 3 Squares, Page 7A)

Male-Riordan to helm Bristol library

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — Collaboration has been a key part of Katie Male-Riordan's work as director of the New Haven Community Library. Throughout the past two and a half years she's spent leading the literacy hub, Male-Riordan has worked with various organizations in town to create programming for New Haven residents of all ages.

It seems fitting, then, that collaboration is what Male-Riordan is most looking forward to as she pursues her next endeavor. Later this month, Male-Riordan will step down from her post in New Haven to take over as the new director of the Lawrence Memorial Library in Bristol.

"What really drew me to applying for the Lawrence position was the opportunity to collaborate with other staff

members. With some of my previous directorships that I've undertaken, it's been with smaller staffs or led by myself. This was an opportunity to get to collaborate with and work with a great team," Male-Riordan said.

"I really appreciate those conversations that I have at the front circulation desk and the ways that we can build relationships together and help build a better community."

— Katie Male-Riordan

Male-Riordan, 33, has spent the better part of the past decade working within the walls of libraries in Vermont and New York. Prior to relocating to Addison County in 2020, Male-Riordan served as the library manager of the Hay Memorial Library in Sackets Harbor, N.Y. Her responsibilities at the literacy hub included coordinating year-round programming for adult and youth services and maintaining the library collection.

Upon moving to Vermont, Male-Riordan took on a similar position as director of the New Haven Community Library. She began leading the library in May



KATIE MALE-RIORDAN this month will leave her post as director of the New Haven Community Library to begin leading another literacy hub in the 5-town area — Bristol's Lawrence Memorial Library.

Photo courtesy of Katie Male-Riordan

of 2021, at a time when the organization and many others were still navigating social distancing protocol and other pandemic-related restrictions.

(See Male-Riordan Page 8A)

Bristol mulls zoning regulations change

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — The Bristol selectboard will on Jan. 22 hold a final public hearing on proposed changes to the town's zoning regulations, after tweaking a handful of the amendments originally put forth by the Bristol Planning Commission.

The planning commission has spent the past year exploring potential revisions to the town's Unified Development Regulations that would help expand housing opportunities in and around Bristol's village area, specifically by making it easier to develop smaller, affordable homes in the Village Planning Area in alignment with the Bristol Town Plan.

The endeavor was part of the commission's work with a \$9,800 Bylaw Modernization Grant the town received in 2022 from the Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development.

Through its work with the grant, the commission identified several potential changes to the town's zoning regulation, including altering the boundaries of several zoning districts to encourage more housing, changes to uses allowed in various districts, revising bylaws

governing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to conform to state statutory requirements and to further define regulations related to those units.

Bristol residents got a chance to weigh in on those and other proposed amendments during two public hearings held by the planning commission in November and two subsequent hearings held by the selectboard last month.

Selectboard members heard feedback from several residents at those two hearings, some of whom proposed additional changes to the town's zoning regulations, such as eliminating "business yard" as a permitted use in Bristol's Rural Agriculture 5 district and revising the bylaws governing ADUs to implement additional guidance for the development of those units when combined with another permitted use, such as construction of a new building that is both an ADU and an accessory building like a garage or workshop.

Residents expressed concern that current regulations do not provide sufficient oversight in cases where a property owner proposes a new structure that is both an ADU and an accessory building and that the

lack of oversight has in the past led to negative impacts on surrounding neighbors.

"I'm really concerned about the idea of an ADU plus something else, and I feel like there really does need to be more oversight," Bristol resident Porter Knight told the selectboard during a Dec. 11 public hearing. "All of that language about ADUs, about (being) subordinate to the structure, once you combine it with something else, it's naturally going to get bigger, and if there's not going to be oversight that's a problem."

During the Dec. 11 hearing, Bristol resident John Moyers suggested the board restore the 2017 language of the bylaws governing ADUs, which stipulated that proposed new buildings with two uses (such as an ADU and a garage) are subject to a conditional use review.

"Until the last revision of Section 404 in 2020, Bristol zoning regulations made an assumption, and a proper one, I think, that a new building combining two new uses is likely to have more impact on neighbors," Moyers told the board. "It'll be a larger building, and

(See Zoning, Page 3A)

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Community support helps local icon

MIDDLEBURY — “Officer Clemmons,” aka François Clemmons, was a vital part of the “Mr. Rogers Neighborhood” show on PBS for more than 25 years. He then showcased his musical talents on other stages, including as Middlebury College Artist in Residence.

Well, Clemmons is certainly feeling the love these days. Legions of his fans near and far recently contributed to a GoFundMe campaign initiated to help cover the Diva Man’s ongoing expenses at The Residence at Otter Creek, where he now resides at age 78. Supporters this week eclipsed their GoFundMe campaign goal; as of Wednesday, \$104,204 had been raised through donations from 671 people.

In a short interview on Wednesday, Clemmons was very appreciative of this outpouring of love. He has experienced two strokes in the past few years, that have slowed his body,

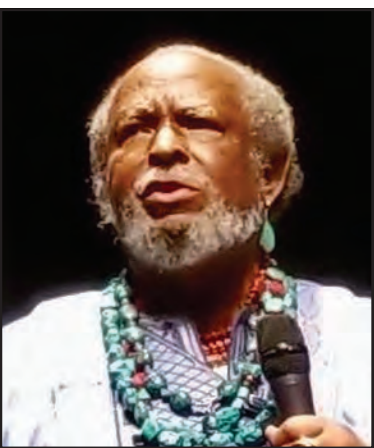
but not his incredible singing voice.

“I can’t walk two miles without getting winded, but I can sing for a couple hours,” he said from his apartment at The Residence.

Clemmons credits his continuing ability to sing to prayer, meditation and a positive outlook on life.

This past August, Clemmons moved from Gorham Lane. He said he was lonely in this one-person abode. Now at The Residence, he resides with scads of interesting and thoughtful people. And he’s happy to share his talents with them. “I gave an extemporaneous concert in the dining room the other day,” he said.

The fundraiser was started by friends Clemmons made at Oberlin College 60 years ago. He credited two groups of friends, one he calls his “Kitchen Cabinet,” and the other is “Friends of François.” Donations came from all over — New York, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Colorado, and, of course, Vermont.



FRANÇOIS CLEMMONS

He mentioned Paul and Frances Stone of Orwell as locals whom he was particularly grateful to.

The singer noted that many people donated in appreciation for his work playing “Officer Clemmons” on “Mr. Rogers.” Although the show is still widely seen in reruns and PBS

(See Clemmons, Page 7A)



Healthy Cooking Demo

Start the new year with a delicious and healthy lifestyle! Otter Creek's chef, Jeff Trump, as he provides healthy cooking tips and ideas in a live cooking demonstration.

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Outdoor excursion

EXTRA WIDE TIRES on fat bikes that can be rented at the Rikert Outdoor Center in Ripton allow people who don’t ski to get out on the trails in winter to get some exercise and soak up the scenery. With pipes blowing snow on the 5K loop behind the Breadloaf Campus, a family from Stowe picked up some cycles on Sunday and started out across the Rikert field toward some trails in the woods. Pictured are Mike and Sarah Welch and their 11-year-old son, Miles.

Independent photo/Angelo Lynn

Zoning

(Continued from Page 2A)

likely taller. It’ll have people living there, in tighter proximity, with the potential light, noise, parking, privacy and other impacts that predictably come with increased residential density. This assumption in the 2017 language of Section 404 makes perfect sense. That’s likely why planning commissioners of yore put there in the first place.”

After hearing from residents, selectboard members at the board’s Dec. 26 meeting deliberated on proposed amendments to the zoning regulations and considered possible revisions.

Selectboard members at that meeting proposed further

amending regulations regarding size requirements for accessory buildings, specifically by updating requirements for the size of those structures in the town’s High Density Residential district.

“The idea is that we’re listening to the public with regard to the size, and the idea is in the smaller lots, the denser area of the village, you’re hopefully putting a little bit more of a restriction on that in terms of those accessories,” Selectman Ian Albinson said of the proposed amendments. “You’re allowing people to do it, but it’s just a little bit smaller, hopefully keeping the character and matching the buildings that are there.”

The selectboard also agreed on adjustments in areas of the zoning regulations addressing floodplains and definitions.

Bristol residents will have another opportunity to weigh in on the updated proposed amendments during a public hearing scheduled for Jan. 22.

Following the hearing, the selectboard has until Jan. 31 to adopt the proposed regulations under the Bylaw Modernization grant program. Adoption of the proposed amendments by the selectboard is required before directing recommended changes to voters on Town Meeting Day in March.

Thank You, Fred!

After 32 years of dedicated service to G. Stone Motors, its customers, and our communities, Fred McAtee has decided to retire. We wish Fred all the best in his retirement and are forever grateful for his years of service and friendship to all!



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Editorials

Sharpening skates for a race that may never come

As we enter the New Year, the weather is on our minds partly because it has been so unusually warm and snowless; but more to the point it’s how that changing weather impacts our lives. We live in an environment that more traditionally has offered snow and colder temperatures — and the winter fun that provides: skiing in one form or another, snowboarding, ice-fishing, snowmobiling, sledding, ice hockey, ice skating, broom ball or any other winter sport you can imagine. When that lifestyle is interrupted it sparks conversation — and concern.

But as much as we talk about climate change, it is interesting how easy it is to deny the reality that the warming climate is changing our winter culture faster than many of us are willing to admit.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the case of the Elfstedentocht, a long-distance ice skating race held in the Netherlands that had been a tradition since 1909. The race has been captured in rich, historic paintings by revered artists like Hendrick Avercamp. They depict scenes of whole communities on the ice, tents pitched, horses and sleighs freighting folks and goods hither and yon, parties and festivities everywhere. The joyful winter scenes are part of local folklore that still excites the imagination and inspires anticipation of the next race, with locals anxiously monitoring local weather reports hoping colder temps will freeze the canals with a layer of ice thick enough to be safe.

It hasn’t since 1997.

The race once went through 11 historic cities of Friesland and remains one of the country’s “most beloved national traditions,” according to Benjamin Moser, a Dutch resident and author who wrote an essay in Wednesday’s *New York Times*. It hasn’t happened in 26 years. It is now unknown to a whole generation.

“What nobody can bring themselves to say is that the Elfstedentocht is gone,” he writes. “Over. Living in a country protected from the sea by huge manufactured barriers, we are starting to understand that even these heroic constructions will not be strong enough for climate change ... And when we imagine the losses to cultural heritage that global warming entails, we often think of things we’d try to rescue, or buildings we can’t move, or of a striking few images: snowless Alps, drowned Venice. We don’t always think about the immaterial losses that warming will bring — or, in the case of the Elfstedentocht, that it already has ... (Yet) nobody can stand to say it’s over. You’d hate to be the prime minister who told everyone to forget about such a beloved national tradition. Instead, barring some freak storm, it just somehow will never happen again.”

The denial of such truths has consequences, Moser continues, making an analogy to the myth of the country’s rural farmers, who have long since been replaced by large, heavily industrialized and subsidized agribusinesses. “There’s nothing traditional about mass factory farms, but their lobbyists have been able to convince a large percentage of the population that attempts to reduce (farm) pollution are an attack on a traditional way of life.”

The parallels to life in Vermont are undeniable.

The Dutch may be ahead of us a decade or so, but the trajectory on climate is similar. And Moser’s point doesn’t just pertain to the changing climate. In Vermont, it’s also the demise of small farms, of Nordic centers and smaller ski resorts, of independent retailers, of smaller schools and churches, and in many communities the loss of the local newspaper.

His larger point is that we must confront the reality — to name it and honor it — and make the necessary changes to save what we treasure before being resigned to live with the consequences.

“Maybe if we could find a way to mourn the Elfstedentocht, we could understand that there is a price to refusing to see what inaction on the climate has cost us. If we refuse to look at it head-on — to name and remember these losses — we’ll find ourselves like those older people in Friesland, glued to the weather reports, measuring the thickness of the ice, sharpening their skates for a race that will never come again.”

Angelo Lynn

A phrase to ponder

In his column today, Hector Vila, a professor at Middlebury College, writes a probing piece about how the humanities might be an antidote to the anxieties of today’s era; how love and the concern for each other might counter our society’s obsession with the ills that ail us.

He covers this as the closing discussion of a class taught this past semester, reflecting on the challenges facing Middlebury students. But it also gives a fascinating and thoughtful insight into the underlying roots of a fractured society that has proved unsettling for many of today’s younger generation and helps define that angst. A key quote in his column is this from Ernest Becker in “The Denial of Death.” Becker writes, “The great perplexity of our time, the churning of our age, is that the youth have sensed — for better or for worse — a great social-historical truth: that just as there are useless self-sacrifices in unjust wars, so too is there an ignoble heroics of whole societies.” Vila notes that students agreed with that assessment, and that they recognized the result — again, from Becker — a “hyperanxious animal who constantly invents reasons for anxiety even where there are none.”

Such “ignoble heroics of whole societies” is a phrase to ponder as it applies in our culture at large, but also in our local communities. For more context, please read Vila’s column on Page 5A.

Angelo Lynn



Winter fun
MIKE AND SARAH Welch, with their 11-year-old son, Miles, all of Stowe, cruise on rented fat bikes along one of the trails in the Battel section of the Rikert Outdoor Center trails this past Sunday.
Independent photo/Angelo Lynn

Spontaneity adds joy to traveling

This past summer my family and I went on a trip to France. We went partly to indulge my Dad’s desire to see some of the Tour de France, and partly to fulfill my daughter’s wish to visit Paris. Knowing that summer is peak tourism season in France, we started planning well in advance. All our tickets were booked online with timed entries. As a result, our itinerary was locked in.

We spent several days in Paris, visiting the Eiffel Tour (but not going up it as tickets were sold out months before), climbing the stairs to the top of the Arc de Triomphe, meandering around Montmartre and Notre Dame, and enjoying day trips out to Versailles and Monet’s garden. We also experienced the high-speed train out to Dijon, where we stayed in the tiny village (and by tiny I mean three houses) of Cras. We joined the crowds for two stages of the Tour, and visited countless castles and vineyards, returning to Paris to witness the final stage of the Tour as the athletes cycled down the Champs Elysées.

It was a well-planned trip, we packed in the sights yet still had some time to wander and explore and several free evenings to fill. With everything pre-booked and tickets purchased we had nearly no ability to make any changes, for example to adjust for the weather. With a popular place like France in the high season, the only way to see what you want without waiting in very long lines for tickets that may sell out, is to plan in

advance. Of course, I had a marvelous time, indulging in pastries from the boulangerie every morning, having picnic lunches from the markets, and long dinners with a carafe of local wine.

But it sharply contrasted with other trips I’ve taken. Spontaneous travel is more my style — I’m not sure this type of travel is even feasible any more.

During college, I studied abroad for a semester in Vietnam. I then had a free month before starting a TESOL course in Thailand, so I planned to travel through Cambodia and Laos. It was 2004, before most people had cell phones. In Vietnam, we had used internet cafes to write up our assignments and send missives home. Once the program was over, I ripped the pages for Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand out of my Southeast Asia Lonely Planet travel guide (the whole book was too bulky) and with a rough itinerary in mind, walked to the bus station and found out when the next bus left for Cambodia. I had no reservations, no way to search the internet for information, and a Ziplock bag full of ASA400 film.

The next four weeks were spent much like this: I would ask at the hotel or the bus station the departure times for the next day. I would take a long bumpy bus ride to the next town I wanted to go to. Once there, I would hoist my hiking backpack and walk until I found a hotel that had an affordable option. It might

(See Ways of Seeing, Page 5A)

Ways of Seeing

By Claire Corkins



Government must solve problems

The heart of effective governance lies in the intricate task of problem-solving, an inherent aspect of policymaking, legislating, and governing in our democratic society. Regardless of our roles — whether on school boards, in the legislature, or as the elected governor — it is imperative to address issues in harmony with the majority perspectives of our constituents.

Diverse values come into play in the realm of problem-solving; some officials prefer minimal intervention, others advocate for fiscal restraint, and some emphasize comprehensive solutions. While disagreements may arise regarding the existence or nature of a problem and the inconvenience of proposed solutions, consensus on the problem itself is the catalyst for progress. The more diverse values engaged in problem-solving, the higher the likelihood of reaching a successful resolution.

On Dec. 1, the Vermont Tax Commissioner projected a substantial increase in property taxes for the upcoming fiscal year, indicating expectations that are based on Vermont voters’ likely approval of school budgets and proposals from the Legislature and governor. The pandemic spurred financial needs in schools due to virtual learning, health and safety repairs, and heightened mental health requirements for students, staff, and administrators. Federal funding, previously available, is diminishing, compounding

the challenges now pressing on school budgets.

During the 2022 legislative session, Vermont also made substantial changes to the calculation of education property taxes by altering how student counts are counted, referred to as pupil weights. This adjustment was necessary to address outdated weights that had created equity issues, particularly for low-income and ESL students.

Vermont’s school finance system is complex and interconnected. The pupil weight changes mean that in the next fiscal year, some districts will increase school budgets and see tax rate reductions, while others might experience a tax rate hike even with flat spending. In addition, it has been nearly 16 years since Vermont provided school construction aid. We have also seen declining enrollments, district consolidations, and concerns about contaminants in school buildings. Some districts, lacking state and federal program funds, have independently managed repairs and maintenance, contributing to the burden on property taxes.

Huge cost increases tied to inflation, volatile fossil fuel markets, and staffing costs due to Vermont’s labor shortage have further added to the financial strain. The real estate boom has also caused grand list values in many towns to rise significantly, disrupting the common level of appraisal and triggering a tax penalty until reappraisal, which is a logistical

(See Sibilia forum, Page 5A)

Letters to the Editor

U.S. role in war bears scrutiny

We Americans sit back and self-righteously criticize governments around the world for atrocities. Yet our hands are not clean. Currently, over 21,500 people have been killed in Gaza — overwhelmingly innocent civilians, women and children — and those still alive are dying slowly from hunger, thirst and preventable diseases. Seventy percent of the population is homeless, and the infrastructure is destroyed. This death and destruction could not have happened without weapons, money and support from the United States. Support from our government, from our tax dollars.

We cannot control Hamas. We cannot control the Israeli government. We can vote in the United States. Contact your representatives and urge them to continue to call loudly for an immediate ceasefire, return of hostages/prisoners on both sides, real humanitarian aid, and meaningful negotiations. Thank your representatives when they do.

Elaine Bodurtha
Middlebury

Vt. election law needs update

Editor’s note: The writer sent this to State Sens. Ruth Hardy and Chris Bray, and State Reps. Robin Scheu and Amy Sheldon, and cc’d the Independent.

Dear Legislators, I strongly urge Vermont to pass and implement legislation requiring the Secretary of State to ensure constitutional eligibility for public office, including the office of the president. This would include all constitutional requirements, including age, birth in the U.S., Amendment 14 Section 3, etc., as applicable. It is dangerous and chaotic at best for states to nominate or elect individuals for public office when they are in fact not constitutionally eligible, as well as an expensive waste of time and money, if not an abuse of Vermont voters’ trust that their vote matters.

Please introduce and/or support legislation to this effect as quickly as possible, to take immediate effect, in time for Vermont’s primary in March, and if that’s not possible, before the general election in November, 2024. The legislature can act quickly if they want to. There are other states with laws to this effect that can be used as a model.

Please let me know where you stand on this and please keep the public apprised of the progress. Thank you.

Dorothy Mammen
Middlebury

Another view on Gaza conflict

As a Jew and a lifelong Zionist (meaning that I believe the Jewish people have a right to a state of their own) I want to present a different viewpoint from that of Hal Cohen. A Jew should know how dangerous it is to paint all members of a group, like the people of Gaza, with the same brush.

I disagree vehemently with the Netanyahu government, both for their attempts to subvert democracy in Israel and for their brutality toward the Palestinians, both in Gaza and the West Bank. Their behavior is contrary to my understanding of Jewish ethics and morality, and the precepts that should guide any decent and moral government. The duty of the Israeli government is to keep Israel safe, and to provide a haven for the Jews of the world. The actions of the Netanyahu government do neither. This war will not make Israel safe. And the rise of antisemitism around the world shows that Jews everywhere are less and less safe.

I come from a Zionist family. My great-grandfather attended the second Zionist congress in Basel in 1898. He moved to Palestine after World War II, and when the state of Israel was created, he voted for the first time in his life. He was in his eighties, but

(See Lowy letter, Page 5A)

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Letters to the Editor

Delisle made a difference for local folks in need

Caroline Delisle, who died on Dec. 20, was a long-time worker at the Middlebury Welfare office and at ACCAG (Addison County Community Action Group). She helped many people in need to navigate social agencies. She gave priority to human need, not

bureaucratic policy.

Such a Christian attitude offended bureaucrats in Burlington and Montpelier and even cost her a couple of jobs. More such people are sorely needed to support healthy families. We must, therefore, not listen to fascist

Trump stories. Do we want this country to be like Russia? That would be totally against the needs of people served by dedicated public servants such as Caroline.

Geoffrey Cobden
Weybridge

Sibilia forum

(Continued from Page 4A)
challenge for numerous towns due to shortages in technical expertise. In this challenging scenario, what is needed is leadership. At the highest government ranks, this involves acknowledging the irreplaceable value of a high-quality public education system to our children, communities, recruitment efforts, and to Vermont's future. It requires a fully staffed Agency of Education with an innovative educational leader at the helm developing scalable solutions for addressing factors beyond local control that affect our kids, schools, and taxpayers.

New superintendents and administrators need technical support to navigate the end of pandemic spending and to address inflation and healthcare increases. Schools experiencing significant pupil weighting changes require technical assistance to make judicious decisions. The governor's call for school boards to contain spending is appreciated, but transparent forward-facing leadership must also involve providing Vermonters with details about the state and national level pressures deeply impacting local school boards as they strive to balance budgets and deliver a high-quality education.

Government's purpose is not to dismantle itself, but to solve problems. Vermont's challenges encompass not only affordability but also safety, access, health, equity, demographics, infrastructure, and climate change. Addressing these multifaceted issues requires informed, strategic leadership and collaborative efforts at all levels of governance. Shorthand talking points to our constituents just won't do. The intricacies of these challenges demand a comprehensive and detailed approach, one that better captures what good governance is all about.

Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)
take several tries. I re-read the few paragraphs in my guidebook on the town and decided what I wanted to try and see and do. Occasionally I would share a room with another single female traveler. Or several of us would form a makeshift group to hire a boat or a taxi to visit a sight, and we'd split the cost. We might spend a day or two together, then head our separate ways. In Siam Reap I rented a mattress in a shared dormitory in the attic of a hotel for \$1 a night and rented a bicycle for \$1 a day and rode around Angkor Wat with a paper map. It was amazing. I might be waxing nostalgic about this type of travel, but I do love the unplanned, spontaneous nature of an untethered journey, without a phone, only the occasional

hour at an internet café to send a message home assuring loved ones I am safe. I prefer the process of discovering the best things to do and see, instead of simply lining up at the most Instagram-able spot and searching online for the top trending restaurant. Of course, the drawbacks are that this type of travel requires more time, more patience, with no guarantees that there will be a room for you when you arrive somewhere. Today, when the most remote places are connected and nearly every adult in the world owns a smart phone, this way of traveling may not even exist anymore. No matter where you go, even in tiny remote towns the hotels have websites with online booking, the restaurants have QR codes, and the buses have timetables and online

tickets. Today's youth will never have the experience of taking a bus to a strange city with no place booked to stay, no restaurants looked up for potential dinner plans, no Google Maps to get their bearings. They will never travel into a complete unknown. Claire Corkins grew up and lives in Bristol and studied Human Ecology at College of the Atlantic in Maine. After college she worked abroad teaching English as a second language. She currently works with her father in such various endeavors as painting houses, tiling bathrooms, building porches, and fixing old windows. She hikes, reads, plays ice hockey, travels, and wishes she could wear flip flops all year round.

Lowy letter

(Continued from Page 4A)
after living in Austria-Hungary, Belgium, and Cuba, it was the first time he was allowed to be a citizen with a vote. Both my grandfathers were lifelong Zionists, active in the movement in Antwerp, Belgium, Havana, and New York. My parents were members from childhood of Bnei Akiva and Tikvatenu, religious Zionist youth movements in Antwerp. In Cuba, where they lived during WWII after escaping from Hitler's Europe and being denied entry to the United States, they were members of a united Zionist youth movement. When I was 14, I joined Hashomer Hatzair, a Socialist Zionist youth movement, and spent two summers, at fifteen and at eighteen, working on kibbutzim in Israel. Why were we all Zionists? The experiences of centuries of life in Europe have taught Jews that without a country of their own they would always be guests,

sometimes welcome, sometimes not, in someone else's land. My great-grandfathers were born in Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary, where their families had lived for many generations. But they were not citizens of those countries. Three of them moved to Belgium, where they did well economically, but were not allowed citizenship. My grandfather was born in Belgium but because his father was born in Austria-Hungary (Slovakia) he was not a citizen. My father, his son, was also born in Belgium, but the German invasion of World War II prevented his "naturalization." Both my parents and their families left Belgium in 1940 because of that invasion. They managed eventually to get to Cuba by 1942. They were lucky — only my mother's brother was caught by the Nazis. He died in Auschwitz at the age of 26. The state of Israel is the one place in the world where Jews are not guests, liable to be evicted

at the slightest shifting of the political winds. Over history we have been oppressed, and evicted from Poland, Russia, and Germany, where we had a long and rich history. The Jews of Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Yemen, Libya, and other countries, with if anything, an even longer history, were all exiled from them. That's why I am a Zionist. I believe that the Palestinians should have a state; we need a two-state solution. It was wrong of the Israeli government to continue to occupy the land taken during the Six Day War; the West Bank should have been unoccupied long ago, and Jewish settlements not allowed. Both Jews and Palestinians need and deserve a homeland where they can be safe and free to live and raise their children. The hatred and anger in the world have to stop somewhere. Michele Lowy
Middlebury

The Humanities: An antidote for the times?

By HECTOR VILA
In the two culminating courses of the recent fall term, where the focus was on delving into profound and demanding experiences to foster expressive exploration, I deliberately opted to center my final discussion on love. We examined how love, grief, death, and mourning are connected. In *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Joan Didion uses love to examine the dynamics within her marriage and how her relationship with her husband influenced her understanding of grief. In *The Fire Next Time*, James Baldwin emphasizes the importance of love as a transformative force, suggesting that genuine love and understanding have the power to break down racial barriers. Baldwin's idea of love is a transformative and healing force that has the potential to bring about positive change in the context of racial tensions and societal divisions, a hard sell for students today. In *The Stranger*, a complete turnaround from Baldwin, and interestingly more familiar to students, Albert Camus portrays love as a societal construct that Meursault, the detached main character, does not fully engage with in a traditional sense; he embraces the absurd. Camus spoke to students; they recognized Meursault's invisibility and insignificance, his dissolution, something our students understand all too well. Ernest Becker in *The Denial of Death* says that "The great perplexity of our time, the churning of our age, is that the youth have sensed — for better or for worse — a great social-historical truth: that just as there are useless self-sacrifices in unjust wars, so too is there an ignoble heroics of whole societies." Students agreed, and the result — a "hyperanxious animal who constantly invents reasons for anxiety even where there are none" — they recognized. Students agreed that there is a deep malady in our society that brings about mental health challenges — bandaging a wound that won't stop bleeding is not care. We must get to the cause, say students — why and how the "hyperanxious animal" develops in the shadows, alone and invisible, struggling to find relevance in the magnanimity of stress. No one sees how anxiety festers in an obscure existence. We also agreed that our institutions are ill-equipped to reach those wandering in



VILA

obscurity in plain sight. In mental health, especially in colleges and universities, we're fixated on treatment and recovery after the fact, which is certainly essential. We learn to adjust to fragments of a former life. Causes are harder to grasp so we focus on rescue and retrieval of what was, which will never be totally recovered, rather than pursuing the why and how and imagining alternative ways of going about our business of education. "A large part of artistic creativity, our political commitment and our religious piety is fueled by the fear of death," says Yuval Noah Harari in *Homo Deus*. "Equality is out—immortality is in." This means that "humanity's next targets are likely to be immortality, happiness, and divinity." Thus, John R. Perry's exploration of metaphysical questions surrounding personal identity, survival, and the nature of existence in *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality* hit home with students. The dialogue considers whether identity is tied to physical continuity, psychological continuity, or a combination of both. Is survival dependent on the continuity of one's consciousness? The tragic deaths of Evelyn Mae Sorensen '25 and Ivan Valerio '26 loomed in our discussions. What will be the lasting legacies of Evelyn and Ivan? Will we have a day honoring them, a scholarship — anything? Unforeseen suffering was a major theme in these courses. We were speechless in the face of Evelyn and Ivan — how do we make sense of it all? Where do we begin? I initiated the final class session with a series of probing questions serving as a thematic foundation to anchor our discourse in complex and nuanced concepts. Contemplating the intricacies of love, I pondered its elusive presence. "Why must the pursuit of love necessitate a conscious effort, a deliberate quest? And in the context of institutional frameworks, especially in education, how do institutions manifest their concern for individuals, the collective welfare of civilization, and humanity?" "I ... fear that if I died, many who knew of me or had interacted with me would choose to play pong over honoring my death for an hour," writes a student in the final

essay, cited with permission. "It is wild to me that somebody like Martin Luther King dies, and we get an entire day off from work and school for the rest of history; yet a student dies and the school can't even cancel one morning of class. I understand the idea of maintaining a routine, but to carry on business as usual feels disgraceful. It haunts me to know that if I died tomorrow, class would just go on, kids would learn about economics and calculus, meanwhile I would have literally departed the Earth forever." This is "the hyperanxious animal" noting how the band aid approach to extreme situations is alienating; deaths like Evelyn's and Ivan's are never forgotten, nor will the systems in which these deaths happened. They are internalized in the "ignoble heroics of whole societies." M. Scott Peck, in *The Road Less Traveled*, a text we didn't read but I used as a guide, defines love as "the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth." He continues: "Love is as love does. Love is an act of will—namely, both an intention and an action. Will also implies choice. We do not have to love. We choose to love." We have a choice, then. But in higher education, as Gayle Greene tells us in *Immeasurable Outcomes*, administrators are interested in "result per dollar charged," so that it's "dollars in, dollars out, no more care about the development of a person or the public good." This is what Jeffrey Williams calls antihumanist in *How to Be an Intellectual: Essays on Criticism, Culture, and the University*. To move students, and us, "to that dimension of our core reality where mind, body, and spirit are one," as Gloria Watkins (aka bell hooks) says in all about love, the Humanities must sit at the heart of education. Facing a foreboding world, the Humanities, especially when engaged in reflective writing, can be an antidote for students, faculty, and staff—nothing else can afford society providence. The Humanities help us understand, appreciate, and navigate the complexities of the human experience; they cultivate deep learning, reflection, and skills that can be learned alongside empathy, care, and resonance, the prolongation of a feeling of worth and potential. But "with market values dominating every sphere of our existence," as Greene contends, I am not hopeful.

Students agreed that there is a deep malady in our society that brings about mental health challenges — bandaging a wound that won't stop bleeding is not care.

Letters to the editor

The Addison Independent encourages readers to write letters to the editor. We believe a newspaper should be a community forum for people to debate issues of the day. Because we believe that accountability makes for responsible debate, we will print signed letters only. Be sure to include an address and telephone number, too, so we can call to clear up any questions. If you have something to say, send it to: Letters to the Editor, Addison Independent, 58 Maple St., Middlebury, VT 05753. Or email to news@addisonindependent.com.

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Obituaries

Joshua Michael Gallagher, 47, of Salisbury

SALISBURY — Joshua Michael Gallagher, 47, passed away on Dec. 23, 2023. He was at home with family at the time of his passing.

Josh was born in Ticonderoga, N.Y., on Jan. 13, 1976, to Jeff Joiner and Cindy (French) Coogan.

Josh made friends wherever he went. He was a hard worker from a young age and spent time as a farm hand, small engine mechanic, cook, and carpenter. He worked many years at Connor Homes helping to build impressive custom homes.

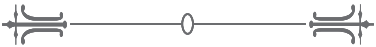
Josh was a loyal fan of the New York Yankees and the Chicago Bears. His favorite pastimes were playing music, fishing, and fireworks. One of his best adventures was a nation-wide tour with the band Crazyhearse.

Josh is survived by his son, Gage Gallagher; former wife, Cotey Gallagher; brother, Sean Gallagher (Madelynn); parents Art and Cindy



JOSHUA MICHAEL
GALLAGHER

Coogan, Brian Gallagher, and Jeff and Kathy Joiner; grandmothers Grace French and Donna Moon; many aunts and uncles; and many cousins. Our world is not the



Rachel Agnes (Sherman) Straw, 83, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Rachel Agnes (Sherman) Straw, beloved and devoted wife, mother, grandmother, sister and friend, passed away in Middlebury, Vt., on Dec. 31, 2023. She was 83.

Rachel was born Feb. 13, 1940, to Howard and Katherine Sherman of Duxbury, Vt., the second of their nine children. She graduated from Waterbury High School in 1958 and Johnson State College in 1962.

While in high school she spent a summer working at the Rutledge Inn in Bradford, where she met the love of her life Duane Straw. They were married on Aug. 25, 1962, in Waterbury, Vt.

They started their life together in Richmond, Vt., where they welcomed three children — Daryl in 1964, Doreen in 1965, and Anne in 1970. They moved to Ferrisburgh in 1974 and raised their family on a small farm. Rachel continued her teaching career at Ferrisburgh Central School. She taught there until her retirement in 1998, although she never really stopped working. She loved seeing her former students around town and reminiscing with them.

Family was everything to Rachel. She loved kids and was overjoyed when her grandchildren arrived, Samir, Jacob, and Gabriel Kadric, and Natalie Straw. There was nothing she wouldn't do for her children or grandchildren — cheering at numerous athletic events, piano recitals, skating shows, going on a 50-foot flume plunge at Sea World, sliding parties at her family



RACHEL AGNES (SHERMAN)
STRAW

home in Duxbury, baking hundreds of chocolate chip cookies, and homemade cinnamon rolls, all while keeping her cupboards stocked with Grandma snacks.

Rachel was up for any adventure her family and friends invited her to: trips to New York City with the Fresh Air Fund, book tours to California, shopping trips to North Conway, road trips to Florida, a cross county van trip with Duane to see Mount Rushmore and the Black Hills, visits to Canada to see relatives and Niagara Falls, and an Alaskan cruise and train trip to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in 2012.

She never met a stranger and was well known in Ferrisburgh and Vergennes. She loved talking to people whether at the bank, skating rink, soccer games or airports. She

same without him. He will also be missed by his many close friends.

Josh had great love for his family and friends. He would easily give what he had to help someone and expect nothing in return. He will be greatly missed and lovingly remembered always. He joins his brother Ian on the other side of the veil, where we will one day be reunited with him.

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.”

— 1 John 4:7

A committal service was held on Jan. 3, at 1 p.m. at Middlebury Cemetery on South Main Street in Middlebury, Vt.

In lieu of flowers please make a donation to the charity of your choice, or do something kind for someone, in honor of Josh. ♦

made people feel welcome and safe while sharing their stories. She was always there to help those who needed it because she truly wanted to — never for recognition. She was an excellent cook (especially baked goods) and gardener. She was proud that Duane could build or fix anything and often volunteered him to help family or friends with their projects.

Rachel and Duane had a family camp in Vershire, Vt., where years of fun were spent with their children, grandchildren and friends. The water in the brook is always cold but you could count on Mom to be knee deep in it repairing the dam and helping the kids fish.

Following their retirements, Rachel and Duane wintered in South Daytona, Fla., for 25 years. Their Florida home was a welcoming place for family and friends to visit. Mom loved to call and tease about the winter weather in Vermont while they were basking in the Florida sun.

Rachel is survived by her three children and their spouses: Daryl (Michele) Straw of South Burlington, Doreen (Mumin) Kadric of Ferrisburgh and Anne (Jeremy Gibson) Straw of Indianapolis, Ind.; four grandchildren, Natalie Straw, and Samir, Jacob, and Gabriel Kadric; eight siblings and their spouses, Rebecca (Burton) Green, of Duxbury, Rodney (Patricia) Sherman of Duxbury, Gladys (Albert) Noel of Middlesex, N.C., Constance Sherman Dolloff of Northfield, Ronald (Mary) Sherman of Duxbury, Theresa (Roy) Marshall of Waterbury Center, Kathryn (Robert) Grace of Waterbury, and Howard (Denise) Sherman of Myrtle Beach, S.C.; many loved nieces and nephews; and many treasured friends from a life well lived. She was predeceased by her parents; her aunt, Barbara McGrath; and by her husband, Duane.

The family would like to extend gratitude to Helen Porter Rehabilitation & Nursing Center for their loving care of Rachel during her final months, as well as Dr. Karen Fromhold, Marianne Potter, NP, Drs. Dana Barnard, Jenna Clough, and Taylor Zak from Palliative Care.

Visiting hours will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 8, at Brown-McClay Funeral Home in Vergennes. A graveside service will be held in the spring. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Rachel's name to the Alzheimer Association of Vermont. To send online condolences to her family, please visit www.brownmccclayfuneralhomes.com. ♦

Dr. Charles Edmund Callahan Jr., 72, of Orwell

ORWELL — Dr. Charles Edmund Callahan Jr., 72, died Christmas Day, December 25, 2023, at the University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington.

He was born September 27, 1951, in Cambridge, Mass., the son of Charles E. Callahan Sr. and Margaret Mary (Leary) Callahan.

Dr. Callahan was a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, Penn.; his graduate degrees are from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

He moved to Orwell in 1988. Dr. Callahan holds the Associate and Choirmaster certificates of the American Guild of Organists. In 2014 he was honored with the Distinguished Artist Award of the A.G.O. He was a member of the Cosmos Club of Washington, D.C.,

Dr. Callahan taught at Catholic University, Middlebury College, Baylor University, Rollins College and The Bermuda School of Music. He served as organist and music director for churches



DR. CHARLES CALLAHAN JR.

in Pennsylvania; Washington, D.C.; New York; Vermont; and his native Massachusetts.

He was often consulted on design of new organs, and restoration and improvements on existing instruments. His two books on American organ building history, “The American Classic Organ” and “Aeolian-Skinner

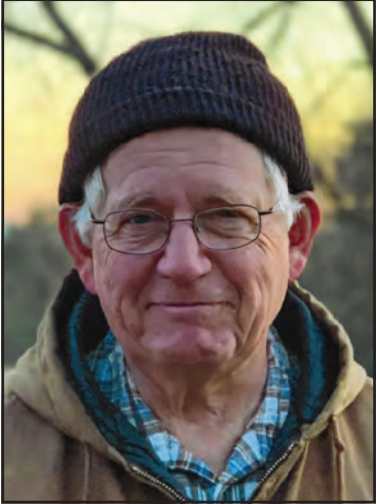


Lloyd Kenneth Dike, 77, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Lloyd Kenneth Dike, 77, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2023, at his home in Bristol.

He was born Nov. 24, 1946, in Barre, the son of Kenneth and Evelyn (Carpenter) Dike. The oldest of five, he grew up in Bristol on the property his family has owned for more than 120 years. This is where he lived with his wife, Lynn, for 31 years. He attended Bristol schools, VTC and UVM, where he received an Associate Degree in Agriculture and a B.S. in Animal Science. He served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War and was stationed in Thailand for 18 months.

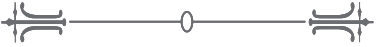
He began his working career on dairy farms and as a milk tester for the DHIA for several years. His main career was 30 years as a rural letter carrier for the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). He delivered mail in the towns of Bristol, Monkton, Starksboro, Lincoln, and New Haven. After



LYLOYD KENNETH DIKE

retirement from USPS, he worked on berry farms and at a winery picking grapes. In 2009 he became a Licensed Nursing Assistant and worked at Helen Porter Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center for a few years.

Lloyd is survived by his wife,



Penelope Plunkett Campbell, 85, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Penelope Plunkett Campbell passed away peacefully on Dec. 29, 2023, at the age of 85 in Middlebury, Vt., after her family had gathered. Penny was born in New Rochelle, N.Y., to Evelyn and Harold Plunkett on July 9, 1938. She was raised in Rye, N.Y., graduating from Rye Country Day School and Bradford Junior College before transferring to University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill to complete her degree in English.

Penny met the love of her life, Bob, on a ship returning from a trip to Europe with friends, a sea voyage they repeated in celebration of their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Penny and Bob married in 1961 and raised their four daughters in Greenwich, Conn., before retiring to Middlebury, Vt., and Vero Beach, Fla., in 2001.

Penny had a lifelong love of flowers, gardening, birds, and animals. While living in Greenwich, in addition to caring for her family and their often large menagerie of animals, she was a member of Hortulus Garden Club, a volunteer for National Audubon, a member of the Junior League, a volunteer at her daughter's schools, and a regular flower arranger for the sanctuary of First Presbyterian and later Round Hill Community Churches.

When she and Bob moved to Middlebury, Penny became involved in the early stages of the



PENELOPE PLUNKETT
CAMPBELL

creation of the Town Hall Theater, working on fundraising and planning and became a member of Congregational Church of Middlebury.

Penny had a beautiful singing voice and loved music. She would sing with her girls frequently in the kitchen or the car and would rally friends and family around the piano to sing carols at Christmas. She loved birds, flowers and interior design and generously shared her passions and knowledge with her family and friends.

Penny and Bob shared a sense of adventure and loved to travel. They loved nothing more than planning their next trip and explored the world together, visiting a great

Remembered,” have become standard reference works on 20th-century American Organ history.

Dr. Callahan was a prolific composer; his compositions include commissions for Papal visitations to the United States and for Harvard University. His four-movement orchestral work, “Mosaics,” premiered at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis, Mo., and other works have been performed at Harvard, Yale and Princeton universities.

Per his wishes, he will be laid to rest with his parents in Cambridge, Mass.

Memorial contribution in his memory may be made to the Music Programs at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 326 College St., Middlebury, VT 05753, or Cornwall Congregational Church Music Program at 2598 Route 30, Cornwall, VT 05753.

Arrangements are under the direction of the Sanderson-Ducharme Funeral Homes.

Online condolences at www.sandersonfuneralservice.com. ♦

Lynn; three stepchildren, Kelly Norris (Dan), Richard Gray Jr. and Matthew Gray (Jenn Ploeger); his grandchildren, Courtney Carr, Rhiana Carr, Adrienne Carr, Alexander Gray, Gabriel Clark and Asher Gray, who gave him his favorite name, “Papa”; and his siblings, Rebecca Johnson, Robert Dike, Jay (LeeAnn) Dike and Geoffrey (Lisa) Dike. He also had several nieces, nephews and cousins. He is predeceased by his parents and nephew Aaron Johnson.

Visiting hours were held from 2 to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 30, at Brown-McClay Funeral Home in Bristol. A celebration of life will be held in October during the family's annual Cider Weekend event. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Addison County Fair & Field Days: 1790 Field Days Rd, Vergennes, VT, 05491.

To send online condolences to his family please visit www.brownmccclayfuneralhomes.com. ♦

variety of places such as Greenland, New Zealand, and Peru.

More than anything, Penny was filled with joy for living and love for her family. Nothing made her happier than having her girls and their families visit. The house was always ready, the pantry always full and the door and her arms always open.

Penny was predeceased by her brother, John Plunkett, and is survived by her loving husband of 62 years, Milton “Bob” Campbell; her four daughters and their husbands, Kimberly and Wade Cobb of Middlebury, Vt.; Heather and Mark Leonard, of Winchester, Va., Catherine “Catie” and Phil Resor of Middle Haddam, Conn., and Sarah and Keith Baker of Chattanooga, Tenn.; her ten grandchildren, Helen Pampreen, James Cobb, Nathan Cobb, Meagan Carlone, Nicholas Leonard, Tucker Resor, Grayson Resor, Benjamin Resor, Sophie Baker, and Sam Baker; and her two great-grandchildren, Evelyn and Declan Pampreen.

The family would particularly like to thank Tom Caliendo for brightening her life in the past few years and the staff of Eastview for their loving care. In lieu of flowers, please send donations in Penny's name to Eastview Annual Giving Fund, which supports Eastview staff, at 100 Eastview Terrace Middlebury, VT 05753, or The National Audubon Society at www.audubon.org.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Jan. 13, at 11 a.m., at the Congregational Church of Middlebury in Middlebury, Vermont. ♦

Obituary Guidelines

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

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

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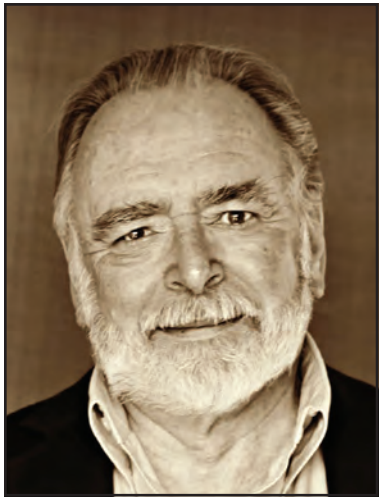
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DAVID BOLTON

David Bolton celebration of life

LINCOLN — For those who knew David Bolton, who died Nov. 8, 2023, please join his family on Jan. 13 from 1 to 3 p.m. at Burnham Hall, 52 East River Rd in Lincoln, Vt., to remember him, tell stories, laugh and celebrate his life. ☐

Paul L. Bushey, 79, of Vergennes

VERGENNES — Paul L. Bushey, 79, passed away Friday, Dec. 29, 2023, at his home in Vergennes. He was born Feb. 13, 1944, in Burlington, the son of Melvin and Bernice (Tricell) Bushey.

His hobbies were golf, bowling, playing cards, eating lunch at Rosie's, watching sports on TV, and going to basketball games at Vergennes High School. He served in the National Guard from 1964 to 1970.

Paul is survived by his brothers Anthony, Wayne, and Kyle; sisters Debbie and Lynn; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his brother Dale and sister Becky Laberge.

Visiting hours will be held 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 5, at Brown-McClay Funeral Home in Vergennes. A funeral service will be held 11 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 6, at Brown-McClay Funeral Home in Vergennes. Interment will be in Prospect Cemetery in

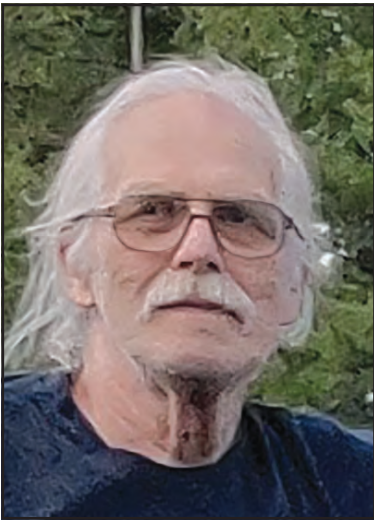


PAUL L. BUSHEY

Vergennes.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Vergennes Area Rescue Squad, PO Box 11, Vergennes, Vt., 05491. To send online condolences to his family, please visit www.brownmcclayfuneralhomes.com. ☐

A. Dale Davis, 80, of Middlebury



A. DALE DAVIS

MIDDLEBURY — Dale Davis leaves behind a legacy of art and love in all who knew him. Dale died suddenly of cardiac arrest on Dec. 13, 2023, in Middlebury. He had been struggling for many years with the effects of Lyme disease.

He was born Alvin Dale Davis, on Nov. 1, 1943, in Chicago, Ill., to Violet L. (Hill) Davis and Alvin W. Davis. Dale's family moved often, living in Ohio, Illinois, Florida and New Orleans. As a young man, he continued in this travel mode, living in Mexico for three years, California, and back to New Orleans before settling in Austin, Texas, in 1973. He had been learning the construction trade along the way and Austin was a perfect place to land. He met his wife, Pam Haefner, an artist, in the summer of 1976 at Spellman's, a dive bar with astounding music and people. The friends they made there, including David Bayless and Scott (Catfish) Stephenson, have been lifelong.

In 1977, Dale finished building a house on Lake Travis with partner Hal Chesner. He and Pam married that year at their friends Junius and Malia Johnson's house. The next year they lived on the bayou in Ocean Springs, Miss., where daughter Katherine Violet Davis was born in 1978. Dale worked for Covacevich Shipyards that year, building the fine woodwork in the galleys of their boats. He had a strong love for the ocean, but they missed Austin and moved back to live there. Pam visited Middlebury in 1977 with her stepfather. He had just bought land there, and she fell in love with Vermont. In May of

1981 they followed Pam's dream and moved to Middlebury. The move was just in time for the birth of their second child, Nathan Dale Davis.

While Dale was a skilled builder and lover of tools, he also had a passion for painting and sculpting. Pam and Dale's shared love of art erupted when they founded the Studio Arts Center in Middlebury (behind Greg's Market) in 1996. There they created a space for young people to tap into their creativity in an afterschool program. As a child of the 1940's and 1950's, Dale had struggled with undiagnosed dyslexia and ADHD. He and Pam had created the kind of safe harbor that he had needed as a child. The studio gave Dale an opportunity to develop his own art and he could be seen during that time sculpting marble pieces in downtown Middlebury on Main Street and near the falls

in Frog Hollow. His work was shown in locations throughout Vermont, but Dale often said that the Studio Arts Center was one of the accomplishments that he was most proud of.

He is survived by his wife, Pam Davis; his son, Nathan Davis, of Warren, Vt.; and daughter, Kate (Davis) Freeman and husband Lee, and his grandchildren, Max Freeman and Sam Freeman of South Burlington, Vt.; also his sister, Linda (Davis) Petrach and her husband Dan of Sarasota, Fla.; and cousin Mary Uhlig, of Spring Branch, Texas. He will be missed by family, Amy (Oliver) and Dan Beaupre of Middlebury, Jill (Oliver) and Mike Rose of California, and Susan Mock and Dan Freeman of Middlebury, as well as Pam's extended family in Louisiana, the Solars, the Andries, and the Haefners, along with the Bigners of North Carolina, and his many friends and former students.

Dale was predeceased by his parents, Vi and Al Davis.

Dale had a green burial, per his wishes, in Middlebury on a hill in the woods on Dec. 21, attended by family, friends, and a crew from the Art Studio days. The family would like to thank them all for their skills and help to make it happen despite the challenges created by the flood earlier that week.

There will be a celebration of life planned for the Summer Solstice. Details to come.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Turning Point Center in Middlebury or The Carving Studio & Sculpture Center in West Rutland, VT. ☐

Candace D. Swain, 79, of New Haven



CANDACE D. SWAIN

NEW HAVEN — Candace D. Swain, age 79, died peacefully at the University of Vermont Medical Center on Dec. 19, 2023, of AML (leukemia) surrounded by her loving immediate family members and her devoted partner.

She was a lifelong resident of New Haven, the oldest daughter of Winston Swain and Isabelle Allen, who predeceased her. She was proud of her lineage that connected her directly to the famous Green Mountain boy, Ethan Allen.

Born June 13, 1944, in Burlington, Vt., Candace grew up in New Haven attending Beeman Academy from kindergarten through 12th grade, graduating in 1962. She married Charlie Grennan that year and had two sons by him: Jeff and Kevin.

Candace loved books and reading. She consumed two or three volumes a week. Her favorite genre was mysteries. Her love of books led to a career as an assistant librarian, first at New Haven's local library and then at Middlebury Union High School (1979) and continuing her library work at Middlebury Union Middle School after it was built in the late 1990s. She retired from being a librarian in 2007. In her lifetime, she was also active in many community affairs including: the Ladies Union in New

Haven; the UVM Home Extension program; 4-H; and the auxiliary of the New Haven fire department.

Candace had a wide circle of friends who will miss her terribly. She had an outstanding ability to recall people's names. She knew every student at school by their first name and remembered them long after they had graduated. She made friends easily and was respected by many for her thoughtfulness, kindness and willingness to help others. She was appropriately named, as she had a sweet personality.

Candace is survived by a large

extended family. Her first husband, Charlie Grennon, predeceased her in 2020. Her current domestic partner, Bernie Noble, survives her. She has two surviving sons: Jeff Grennon and Kevin Grennon. Jeff and daughter-in-law Debora gave her six grandchildren: James Stafford (married to Allison); Whitney (partnered to Nichole); Hallie (married to Chase Caruso); Charles (married to Michelle); Miles Carlton (predeceased); and Cyrus (married to Kyleigh). Kevin (married to Michelle) gave Candace a 7th grandchild named Sarah (partnered to Tina). In addition, Candace has eleven grandchildren: Evelyn, Maisie, Mackenzie, Callan, Bentley, Lyric, Briar, Austin, Isla, Emerson and Anna. Also surviving Candace is her brother Allen Swain and daughter-in-law Susie, and sister Chrystal and her husband, Clyde. Her nephews Martin Swain, Brian Armell, Jason Armell and nieces Amanda Swain, Cyndi Armell and Becky Arbo survive her as well, along with many other great nieces and nephews.

Memorial services will be held for her family and close friends in the spring. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the New Haven library and/or the New Haven Historical Society. ☐

Cynthia Guild Kling, 91, of Starksboro

STARKSBORO — Cynthia Guild Kling of Starksboro, Vt., died on Dec. 28, 2023.

She was born on May 12, 1932, in Quincy, Mass., to L.W. Guild and Rhea Coleman Guild. She is survived by her sons, Kurt Kling

and wife Lin White of Starksboro, Vt., and P. Chase Kling of Orford, N.H.; daughters, Julie Kling of Holyoke, Mass., and Peer Kling of San Antonio, N.M. She was predeceased by her parents, her sister, Marcia Guild Gibbs; and

son-in-law, James Ruzicka.

Cynthia was best known as the first woman elected to FIS certification as a ski jump judge.

A family gathering is planned for spring.

3 Squares

(Continued from Page 2A)

"We're basically going to be building both things up at the same time."

But Birong, soon to be 47, said he was ready to leave the day-to-day grind of restaurant management after 17 years, and he had set a goal of moving on before he turned 50. Before coming to Vergennes, Birong worked in the restaurant business in Boston, New York City and Burlington, after having studied at NECI.

"I'm just kind of tired. I've just gotten to the point where I don't know what I've got left in the tank in this business. And I'm one of those personalities where if I'm not driven toward the next thing, I stagnate. And that's not good for me personally, and that's not good for the business, either," he said.

The extra strain of nursing 3 Squares through COVID cemented his decision to stick to his long-

range plan.

"I always felt like there was going to be something else for me to do. I don't know what it is yet," he said. "I'm just staying true to that."

Certainly, he has no regrets about buying the former Eat Good Food eatery a bit west on Main Street in January 2007, and about nine years later moving the business to the Ryan Block.

He said the decision proved to be a good investment in more ways than one.

"Professionally and personally, this has been a bigger life experience than I ever expected," Birong said.

Birong said things have "very much" gone well for 3Squares "even though we started the business in the financial collapse of 2008." A global pandemic dealt the hospitality sector another body blow in 2020.

But the 3 Squares game plan pulled through both, the same

approach that Collins and Hayes said they will take.

"We're a neighborhood café, right? We do a good job with anchor staples that people know, approachable sandwiches, approachable salads, approachable breakfast items. We play with flavors with the other half of the menu, so it's been able to offer a level of creativity," Birong said.

As for the community aspect, Birong said his efforts lobbying for small business in Montpelier, and then becoming a Bernie Sanders delegate at the 2016 Democratic National Convention, and being a multi-term a state representative, all can be traced back to their purchase of 3 Squares.

"I got so much more than just the ability and opportunity to run a business. I found a community. I knew there was a strong work community here, but the way my wife Danelle and I were welcomed in, were really quickly brought into the fold conversationally as operators of the business and residents of the town, and how we felt within the community dynamics beyond the business front, I never expected it," Birong said. "And it's been an amazing experience."

Vergennes

Police Log

Police cited Natalie Zilski, 28, for domestic assault, alleging she attacked a relative at an apartment at that address. Police said Zilski was also wanted on an outstanding Rutland County misdemeanor warrant, and they lodged her at the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility.

In other action in the final seven days of 2023, Vergennes police also conducted seven cruiser

patrols, three traffic stops and three property watches; fingerprinted two job applicants; responded to a false alarm; and:

- On Dec. 26 responded to a report of a suspicious person in a Bowman Road backyard, but found no one.
- On Dec. 27:
 - Were told an inspection sticker had been stolen from a vehicle on Walker Avenue.
 - Took a report that a sticker related to the ongoing war in Gaza had been stuck on a driveway post in Vergennes; police said given the owner of the property it could be an antisemitic act.
 - Backed up Vermont State

Police at a family fight in Waltham. On Dec. 28 took a report that gift items included clothes, sneakers and a camera were stolen from an unlocked car on Hillside Drive.

On Dec. 29 concluded a death at a Bombard Place residence was due to natural causes.

On Dec. 30:

- Helped New York State Police by contacting a relative of someone they had taken into custody to care for their children.

- Listened to a claim from an Illinois resident who said his ex-girlfriend had killed her mother's boyfriend while a student at Northlands Job Corps in 2011. Police said the caller blamed all his bad luck since then on that crime, but offered no evidence to support his report.

Clemmons

(Continued from Page 3A)

uses clips in its own fundraising, Clemmons doesn't get any royalties, he noted. "It's unfair," he said.

He was lavish in his thanks to those who have raised \$100,000 for his retirement.

The campaign will continue to be open awhile longer. And Clemmons observed that now that he uses a walker because of persistent physical disabilities, he one day will likely need to move into assisted living.

Check out the GoFundMe page at tinyurl.com/yexbft72.

— John S. McCright

Addison County Home Health and Hospice is hosting Grief Support Groups beginning on January 16th continuing for eight weeks on Tuesdays until March 5th.

These meetings will be held in person at the beautiful Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society located at 2 Duane Court in Middlebury from 3:00pm-4:30pm.

We welcome all community members whether or not they or a loved one have had care from us in the past. Thanks to generous donors, the groups are being offered free of charge. Rev. Stephen Payne, ACHHH Chaplain and Stephanie Corliss, LICSW, will lead the groups.

Healthy snacks and coffee will be provided.

Please call the ACHHH office at 388-7259 to complete a brief screening process and to sign up.

254 Ethan Allen Highway, New Haven (Route 7) | P.O. Box 754, Middlebury 05753 | 802-388-7259 | ACHHH.org



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Warm fall alters migration, raises bird count

By JIM ANDREWS

MIDDLEBURY — This year 46 field birders and 11 observers at feeders identified 17,697 birds of 75 species during the Middlebury Christmas Bird Count on Sunday, Dec. 17. The total of 75 species is eight higher than the average of 67 species over the last 35 years of the count.

Counters survey a 15-mile-diameter count circle centered on the Lemon Fair in eastern Bridport and covering from the A&W Root Beer stand on the east to New York State on the west and from Snake Mt. on the north to Richville Dam on the south. The Middlebury count is one of over 2,400 held throughout North and Central America.

One of the main reasons for the higher species count this year was the warm fall weather that kept the south end of Lake Champlain, Otter Creek, and our other major rivers open. As a result, we located 20 of the 44 water-related species found during our count over its history. This is eight above our average of 12 water-related species.

On the other hand, also as a result of the warm weather and open ground, we only had four of the count total of 17 northern raptors and passerines (perching birds) come down from the north to feed in the Lake Champlain Basin. Northern Shrike (1) and Saw Whet Owl (3) were the only northern raptors. Pine Siskins (37)

and Snow Buntings (60) were the only northern passerines we found visiting.

The teams found three species never seen on our count. The team of Sue Staats, Diane Burbank and Dick Harlow found a Gray Catbird for the first time during our count. Catbirds are common here in the summer but usually leave before our count begins.

The team of Barb Brosnan, John Chamberlain, Kate Kelly, and Cathy Christensen found the first Cackling Goose ever found on our count. Cackling Geese look like a miniature Canada Goose about the size of a Mallard.

Winning the prize for the most unusual bird of the count though, was an Ash-throated Flycatcher found by Dave Guertin and Natalia Perchemlides. This species is not only the first ever seen on our count, but the first ever seen in Vermont. This is a western flycatcher that has occasionally shown up on the east coast but not here in Vermont. It looks very similar to our Great Crested Flycatcher that is found here during our summers.

Over the 35 years of our count, we have found a total of 144 species. Thirty-one of these species were found on only one count. Twenty-eight species have been found on every count.

In addition to the species mentioned above, species found by only one team were the single Common Loon and Great Black-backed Gull found by the team of

Jim Andrews, Paul Wieczorek, Chris Slesar, and James Brady; the single Pied-billed Grebe found by the team of Sue Staats, Diane Burbank and Dick Harlow; the 45 Snow Geese, single Herring Gull and single Goshawk found by the team of Ethan Fenn and Anna and Jenn Megyesi.

Also, the four Hooded Mergansers and single Merlin found by the team of Kris and Birch Andrews, and Erin Talmage; the single Northern Shrike and Fish Crow found by Carol Ramsayer, Craig Zondag, and Jori and Jo Jacobeit; the three Saw-whet Owls heard by the team of Mike and Cedar Winslow and Ashley Cray; a single Brown-headed Cowbird found by the team of Kathy and Gary Starr, and Marcia and Jeremiah Parker; a Savannah Sparrow found by the team of Ron Payne, Justin Boyer, and Anie Sklar; a Red-winged Blackbird found by the team of Jim Graves, Kathy Doyle, Mary Droege, and Jeanne Albert; and a single Sharp-shinned Hawk found by Dave Guertin and Natalia Perchemlides.

Birds found in unusually high numbers were Canada Geese (4,798), American Kestrels (10), Brown Creepers (17), Eastern Bluebirds (259), and Swamp Sparrows (2). The 4,798 total for Canada Geese is over 2,000 above our previous high count for this species. The total of ten American Kestrels we found is seven above

our average for the entire 35 years of our count. These high numbers may be at least in part the result of unusually warm fall weather and the resulting open ground, open water, and increased food.

The only species found in unusually low numbers were Mourning Doves (137). Over the 35 years of the count, we have averaged 647 Mourning Doves per count, with an all-time high of 1,233 in 2014. We were unable to find any Ruffed Grouse this year. We have missed this species entirely in five of the last eleven years. Over the past 35 years our average for Ruffed Grouse has been 7.5 with a high of 31 found back in 1997. This is almost certainly the result of a loss of appropriate shrubby habitat for this species.

A Christmas Bird Count is a team effort between field teams and feeder watchers. Although our numbers of individuals on the field teams hit an all-time high this year, the number of people watching their feeders is declining. We need additional people who live within the count circle, can identify the birds they are seeing, and who are interested in reporting what they see at their feeders. We would also love to have more young birders join our field teams. Anyone under 40 looks young to most of us. If you are interested in reporting your feeder birds or participating on a field team next year, contact Jim or Kris Andrews at 802-352-



THIS BALD EAGLE was captured on film during this year's Christmas Bird Count.

Photo by Paul Wieczorek

4734. Thanks again to all the volunteers and landowners.

Final results of our count have been entered online and made available for casual browsing or scientific study at the National Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) website. Those results are available at tinyurl.com/Bird-count-midd.



LINCOLN PHOTOGRAPHER DALE Cockrell will give a slide presentation on Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. of wildlife he has captured on film near his home on Downingsville Road, including this bear.

Photo by Dale Cockrell

Lincoln Library to host slide show

LINCOLN — Dale Cockrell is a common sight along stretches of Downingsville Road, where he walks with his dog Gillie leashed in his hand and a camera and telephoto lens slung over his back. That camera is always ready for him to snap whatever he finds interesting.

Over several years, “interesting” has led to many thousands of images of Lincoln’s wildlife. By special request, Cockrell has selected some of his favorite shots — all taken within easy walking distance of his home — and organized them into a Lincoln Library slide presentation on Thursday Jan. 11, at 7 p.m. Images range from butterflies to bears, hummers to herons, mice to moose, spiders to snakes, and much, much more.

Male-Riordan

(Continued from Page 2A)

“The last job that I left (in New York), I had dealt a lot with having to close the facility down and work within different levels of reopening the building and ensuring the safety of staff and patrons,” Male-Riordan recalled. “I really felt ready to help them through that path of opening up the building while keeping staff safe and patrons safe and being flexible and inventive with the types of programs that we’d be able to offer during that very fluid time.”

As COVID protocols were lifted, Male-Riordan’s focus at the New Haven library shifted toward expanding programming for patrons. She worked with organizations like the Town Events Committee and New Haven Neighbors to explore ways to contribute to ongoing events and organize new activities in town, such as a series of events in the fall of 2022 aimed at listening to and celebrating the local migrant community.

In the past year, Male-Riordan has also worked to develop new programs at the library, such as a cookbook book club and a crochet workshop for youth. Those efforts have seemingly paid off, as the library’s programming numbers jumped from just over 300 participants in 2022 to more than 800 participants throughout 2023.

“I’ve really worked on growing

that (programming) part, and hopefully people are starting to see the library as a place to come and gather, meet their neighbors and also learn new skills or find enjoyment through shared interests,” Male-Riordan said.

Looking back on her time at the New Haven Community Library, Male-Riordan said she’s enjoyed getting to know the organization’s patrons.

“The thing that I love most about working in small community libraries is getting to know the community; it truly is the best part,” Male-Riordan said. “So much of my conversations with the community help inform my work greatly, from what I’m buying for the collection, to what services we might plan to offer, to what programs I might plan for the community. I really appreciate those conversations that I have at the front circulation desk and the ways that we can build relationships together and help build a better community.”

Male-Riordan is looking forward to getting to know another part of the 5-town community later this month, when she takes over the reins of the Lawrence Memorial Library.

The Bristol library began its search for a new fulltime director this past fall, following the departure of former director Coco Moseley, who in October

was hired as executive director of Middlebury’s Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History.

“I can’t wait to get in there and listen and hear more about what peoples’ interests are, what the community looks like, what the culture of Bristol itself feels like so that can inform the work that we’ll be doing at Bristol,” Male-Riordan said of her new position.

Lawrence Memorial Library officials are happy to welcome Male-Riordan to the organization.

“We are all excited to have Katie as our new library director and look forward to working with her,” Lawrence Memorial Library Board of Trustees Treasurer Betsy Almeter told the *Independent*.

Male-Riordan will start training at the Lawrence on Jan. 8 and officially begin leading the organization on Jan. 22. She noted that her first couple months on the job will be spent listening and learning about the inner workings of the Bristol library, though she’s excited to eventually explore ways to expand the library’s programming.

“I know that when Coco left, there had been a flourish of programming and offerings for the community,” Male-Riordan said. “I really look forward to picking up that torch and carrying it on and seeing what opportunities we can bring forth for the community.”

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.

Just the tree! No wreaths, ornaments, garlands, tinsel, wire, or other decorations.

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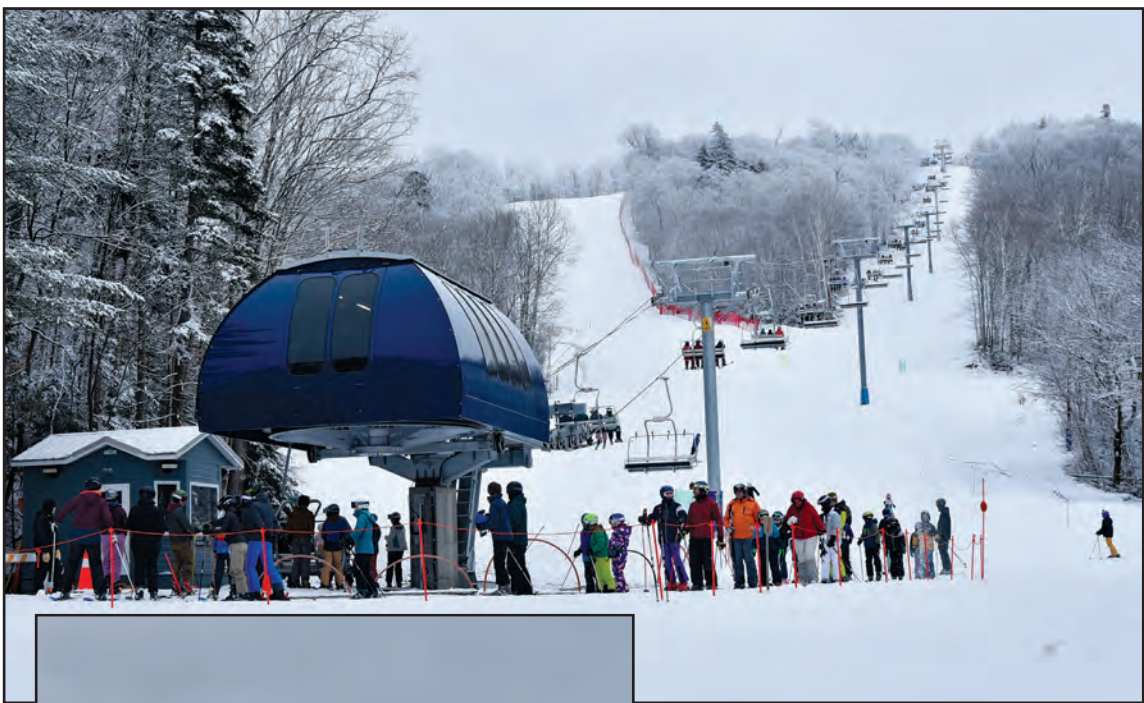
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The Outside Story

Thundersnow: A Rare Type of Winter Storm

By COLBY GALLIHER

It's deep in winter, and a nor'easter is dumping snow outside. In between the howling winds you hear a boom! Maybe a heap of snow fell from the roof, you think, or a giant icicle crashed from the eaves. A few minutes later, another boom pounds through the blizzard's gales. It's closer this time, and it seems to resound from the sky. This booming may be a rare wintertime phenomenon: thundersnow.

While most of us equate thunderstorms with hot, humid summer weather, they can also happen during the winter. Thundersnow is, simply, a type of thunderstorm where precipitation falls as snow rather than rain. The thunder and lightning of a thundersnow storm result from the same factors that cause rainy thunderstorms. Regardless of the season, lightning in any storm requires electrical charge separation, explains Peter Banacos, science and operations officer at the National Weather Service in Burlington, Vt.

"Charge separation comes about when you have what is called a 'mixed-phase' region within a cloud and strong vertical motions — think updrafts and downdrafts — in tall, cumulonimbus clouds," Banacos says. "The mixed-phase would be a combination of rain droplets, graupel, and snow within a portion of the cloud." The winds of a powerful winter storm smash those condensates together, he explains, "stripping electrons and charging those particles positive or negative." The storm cloud, now stratified into positively and negatively charged regions, may

emit an electrical discharge in the form of lightning, which then generates a thunderclap.

Thundersnow, unlike the thunderstorms typical of spring and summer in the Northeast, is uncommon. It owes its rarity to the general meteorological conditions of winter. "Air temperatures are colder, the sun angle is low, and moisture is more limited" in winter, Banacos notes. "Without that instability in the atmosphere, you don't get the magnitude of vertical motion necessary to develop the charge separation within a cloud." No charge separation means no lightning — and no thundersnow.

That's why you're most likely to experience thundersnow during the Northeast's strongest storms. Only the meteorological chaos of a nor'easter — when gale force winds gust from the northeast, often coupled with heavy precipitation — is powerful enough to introduce the necessary atmospheric instability for thundersnow, when temperatures are cold enough for snow, rather than rain, to fall. Banacos says that the same instability favorable to thundersnow's formation is associated with heavy snowfall rates of up to two inches per hour.

But not every nor'easter or other powerful winter storm produces thundersnow. Very specific criteria must align for thundersnow to arise. Banacos estimates that thundersnow occurs in northern New England only once every year or two. He recalls two recent days when his office tracked thundersnow in Vermont: across the northern portions of the state on Nov. 15, 2019, and again on March 29, 2023. Even as a meteorologist,

he has only witnessed thundersnow firsthand twice in his life, in instances two decades apart.

Thundersnow bears another characteristic that distinguishes it from warm-weather thunderstorms. Because thundersnow usually occurs during high-intensity snowstorms, falling snow often acts as an acoustic dampener. Rather than the distinct clap of summer thunder, which may be heard from miles away, thundersnow is more muffled; its boom is often only detectable within a mile or two of the storm's eye.

Despite thundersnow's muffled acoustics, these winter events can be dangerous. Accounts collected by the *Washington Post*, for example, describe people being struck by lightning during thundersnow. One details thundersnow lightning blasting a hole in the side of a house in Rhode Island, while another describes one strike injuring several people at a bus stop in Illinois.

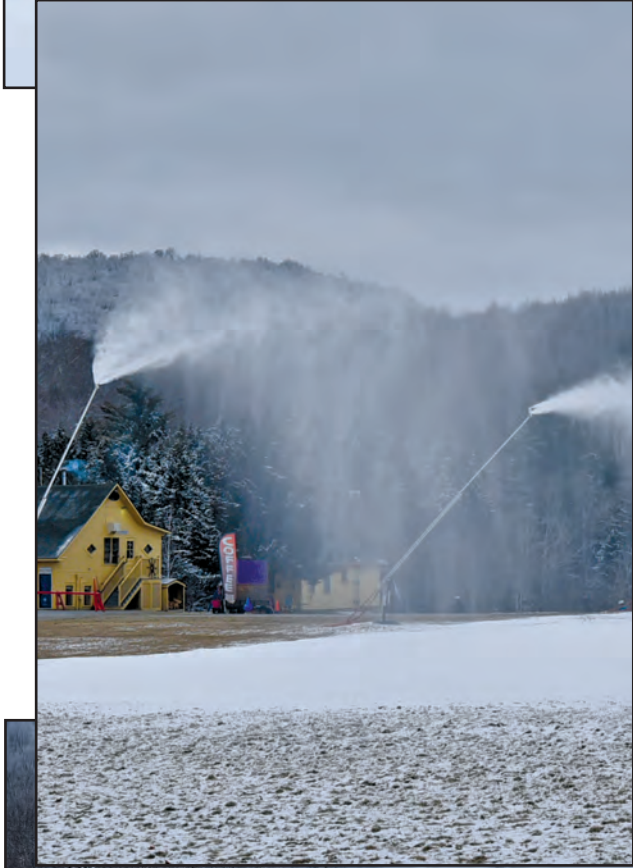
Just like a nor'easter, thundersnow is most safely and prudently enjoyed from the refuge of your home. If you hear a thunderous boom while a nor'easter blows outside, take heed: you may bear witness to an exceedingly rare meteorological phenomenon.

Colby Galliher is a writer who calls the woods, meadows, and rivers of New England home. To learn more about his work, visit colbygalliher.com. 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.

There's snow up high

WHILE THE CHAMPLAIN Valley has been snowless this past couple of weeks, there's ample snow higher up. The Middlebury Snowbowl has been running the Sheehan lift (above) since early December, including Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights, thanks to temperatures that have recently been cold enough for snowmaking. The Snowbowl hopes to open the Worth Mountain chairlift later this week, if conditions allow. Over at Rikert Outdoor Center (below), fat bikers took to the trails without adequate snow for skiing, while skiers were able to complete a complete loop on part of the 5K racing track last weekend, and the full race loop will be open by this weekend.

Independent photos/Angelo Lynn



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NEWS

FERRISBURGH — Rokeby is continuing with its series of Winter Book Discussions. These events will be held monthly, January through March, at no charge and will use a virtual format. Registration in advance is required and the participants will receive the virtual link at that time. Attendance at all three discussions is not required to register. The first of these discussions will be on Tuesday, Jan. 30, at 6:30 p.m., on the book “A History of the Village of North Ferrisburgh.”

The discussion will be led by the author, Jean Richardson. Dr. Richardson, a long-time community member of North Ferrisburgh, is a well-known historian and Professor Emerita of natural resources, environmental studies and geography at UVM. The book is a meticulously researched narrative containing previously unpublished original documents, photographs, diaries and interviews. It was written with the assistance of local historian Silas Towler and many Ferrisburgh families.

The next Ferrisburgh Central School PTO meeting will be held in the FCS Library on Tuesday, Jan. 9, at 6:30 p.m., with an option to join virtually. There will be updates about this year’s Circus Artist in Residence Program and a proposal for a spring event for students. Ideas for further projects and events for the PTO are welcome, as they help increase support and strengthen programming. For more details, visit the PTO Facebook page.

The Ferrisburgh Skating Rink is preparing for its winter opening. Let’s hope for some colder weather and good ice so we can all enjoy this great local recreational resource. At present, the Ferrisburgh Recreation

Committee is preparing for opening the rink and asks that people don’t skate on any forming ice until the rink is ready. Updates will be on Front Porch Forum and the Facebook page of the Ferrisburgh Skating Rink and Recreation Committee.

The Ferrisburgh Union Meeting Hall welcomes community members to assist with event planning for 2024. The meeting of the Friends of the Union Meeting Hall Programming Committee will be held virtually on Wednesday, Jan. 10 at 7 p.m. The meeting link is at www.fumh.org and more information is available by email to unionmeetinghall@gmail.com.

Ferrisburgh Grange King Pede card parties are scheduled for the Saturdays of Jan. 6 and 20. These get-togethers are held at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall and Community Center and will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a sandwich supper and then on to an evening of fun and games. King Pede is a game that involves “trick-taking” such as in Hearts and Spades or Pitch. This is a game of fun and skill so come prepared to use your strategic thinking!

Bixby Memorial Library is hosting a series of workshops that will introduce writing as a companion to grief. What can our writing tell us about our journey with loss? Can it help with a healing process and the discovery of a new paradigm as we discover who we are now in a world that has changed us? The structure of the workshop will provide time for writing and an invitation to share our stories. Workshop leader Diana Raphael was a literacy teacher in Addison Northwest as well as an instructor at Champlain College. Two years ago, she lost her husband

of almost 50 years and has found solace in a daily writing practice. The series of four workshops will take place every Wednesday from Jan. 10-31, from 5:30-6:45 p.m. Space is limited; please email [cedar.winslow@bixbylibrary.org](mailto:winslow@bixbylibrary.org) to sign up and indicate any accommodation you may require.

It may be only January, but the summer camps at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum are starting to fill up. The Museum offers its usual excellent variety of camps for children and youth during this upcoming summer season. The day camps and expeditions specialize in topics such as rowing skills, archeology, boating, kayaking, and more. The famous kayak and rowing expeditions will be offered for teens again this year. For children ages 6-14, there will be metalworking, watershed ecology, archeology, fishing, and underwater exploration. All camps are managed by the knowledgeable and experienced museum staff. For more information on dates and pay-as-you-can options, visit www.lcmm.org. Noting that the museum supports all children and youth who want to participate in these summer opportunities; to help make this happen the public is invited to financially support these camps. Further information about donations is on the Museum’s website.

Note: We are always interested in including a variety of Ferrisburgh-related event announcement in this column, so if you have events that would be of interest, contact Sally Kerschner at smwkersch@comcast.net. You are also able to access these columns and other information about Ferrisburgh news and events by viewing the Ferrisburgh Town Website at www.ferrisburghvt.org.

Audubon to host talk and walk

MIDDLEBURY — The Otter Creek Audubon Society will host a talk and then a walk in Middlebury next week.

First, at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 11, is the latest in the Cabin Fever Lecture Series with a talk titled “Beautiful Colombia.”

World-traveling birder Hank Kaestner, with over 7,000 birds on his life list, will give a travelogue of birding in Colombia with his brother Peter during the early pandemic. Expect beautiful pictures of Colombian birds and entertaining stories.

This talk will begin at 7 p.m. at the Ilsley Public Library Meeting Room.

Then, on Saturday, Jan. 13, at 8 a.m. is the Monthly Wildlife Walk. Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust

invite community members to help survey birds and other wildlife at Otter View Park and the nearby Hurd Grassland. Meet at the parking area of Otter View Park at the intersection of Weybridge Street and Pulp Mill Bridge Road in Middlebury. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome.

For more information call 802-388-6019.

For a complete list of our upcoming events, see the calendar on the Audubon website: wp.me/Pt0Pq-70.

PHOTOGRAPHER GARY STARR spotted this yellow-rumped warbler on the Otter Creek Audubon Society's First Day Walk at Button Bay State Park on Monday.

Photo by Gary Starr



Haiku contest ready for 2024 entries

Annual Weybridge competition open to all in state

WEYBRIDGE — In recent years, Weybridge’s annual haiku contest has asked writers to open their hearts and imaginations and address the challenging world around them. For this year’s Sixth Annual Contest, that prompt is more important than ever.

Julia Alvarez, Weybridge’s co-poet laureate and founder of the contest, best expresses that importance, “In dire and bleak times, there is even more of a need to find and create moments of connection and hope. Sometimes the ‘hope’ lies in accurate seeing and naming. A haiku can give us a way to frame and contain that darkness, and by sharing it with others we create community and connection, which might be the path forward.”

Like previous contests, judges note that writers have a blank slate to consider questions big and small, to write seriously or humorously.

“I would be sad if all the haikus were gloom and doom. In the past, we have had delightful haikus on the lives of squirrels, the joys of mud season, and playful ruminations on bears, bees, and

birds,” said Martha Winant, a past contest winner and judge of this year’s contest.

“Winning” is secondary say the contest’s three judges: Gwen Nagy-Benson, Susie Davis, and Winant, all past contest winners. The contest’s purpose is to celebrate the joys of poetry for everyone, especially during April, National Poetry Month.

Begun in 2018, the contest was originally limited to Weybridge residents or writers with a Weybridge connection. Nine writers submitted 70 haikus that year. The contest is now open to all Vermonters and submissions have steadily increased. In 2023, 53 writers submitted 326 haikus.

HAIKU

The poem should be in the haiku form — either the traditional form of three lines no more than seventeen syllables total (5-7-5) or a short three lines that captures the spirit of the haiku. There are no limits on the number of haikus a writer can submit.

ELIGIBILITY

Participants of all ages are encouraged to submit. There is

a youth division, through high school, and an adult division. You do not have to be a Weybridge resident but must be a Vermonter. No experience needed. Give it a try!

DEADLINE

Submit haikus to George Bellerose, contest administrator, by February 23. Email georgebellerose@gmavt.net or 80 Meetinghouse Lane, Weybridge, VT 05753. He will forward them to the three judges. Winners will be announced at the end of March to celebrate Poetry Month in April.

AWARDS

Judges select three youth winners, both Weybridge and Vermont, and three adult winners, Weybridge and Vermont.

Winners can choose from books by Weybridge’s co-poet laureates, Julia Alvarez and novelist Jay Parini, as well from books by Weybridge novelist Chris Bohjalian.

Everyone is way above average in this contest, with each writer receiving a Certificate of Participation and a playful Best of Honorific.

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

Middlebury Union High School

Maura Connelly



Maura Connelly
MUHS

Maura Connelly, the daughter of Billy Connelly and Lisa Bailey, is Middlebury Union High School’s latest Student of the Week. She has an older brother, Owen, who is enrolled at the University of Vermont. The family resides in Middlebury with their goldendoodle, Fergus.

As Maura reflects on her time at MUHS she expresses gratitude for her teachers and the staff who have “helped me along the way.” She has enjoyed her classes, most notably Spanish, Environmental Systems and Societies, and Visual Art. In Visual Art, she is currently preparing with her classmates for their show in late March. Maura is focused on earning certificates in the International Baccalaureate program and is looking forward to graduation in June, but says that her time at MUHS has “flown!”

Maura is active in a wide range of activities at MUHS and in the local community. She’s been playing the piano for 10 years and works as a server in the dining room at Eastview. Maura has also enjoyed working at Elmer Farm, an organic vegetable farm in Middlebury, in the summer months. She is the co-president of MUHS’s Student Coalition on Human Rights (SCOHR), a group that has focused its attention on issues such as homelessness and migrant justice. Maura valued her time in the fall as a Peer Leader with a group of ninth-graders. She loved “Bread Loaf Day” when they headed to Ripton for a series of activities centered on inclusion and connection.

The Vermont Agency of Education recently announced that Maura was one of two MUHS students selected as a Vermont Presidential Scholar. She will attend a special ceremony at the Statehouse in Montpelier, in January where she will be recognized for her contributions to our school and community.

As Maura looks ahead to college, she is searching for a small, four-year liberal arts institution in the Northeast where she can explore a variety of academic interests. She is excited to make the most of her final months at MUHS and we look forward to hearing about her bright future!

Vergennes Union High School

Tyerell Lavoie



Tyerell Lavoie
VUHS

Tyerell Lavoie of Ferrisburgh is Vergennes Union High School’s Student of the Week. He is the son of Arlene Lavoie, grandson to Victor and Barbara Lavoie, and brother to Payton and Devin. The family and their Maine coon cat, Sprinkles, live on a 15-acre country property where they raise their own livestock and produce.

Tyerell has thoroughly enjoyed his time at VUHS. He likes walking into the building each morning surrounded by people who want to see him be successful in whatever it is he wants to accomplish, and then help him to achieve that goal. His favorite part of school is being able to see his friends and make memories with them. His favorite classes have always been in the sciences. Science clicks for Tyerell, and he enjoys learning new subjects, using his hands, and running experiments. Tyerell was a Boys State delegate last summer.

Tyerell has been wrestling for VUHS since his sophomore year. Coach Eugene Stearns was able to work around Tyerell’s private boxing lessons so that he could join the team, and he has found it a very rewarding one, helping him to grow as a person.

Since 2021 Tyerell has spent his summers as a junior counselor for the Green Mountain Conservation Camp, where kids come to Camp Kehoe or Buck Lake locations for a week and learn about hunting, fishing and trapping.

In his spare time, he boxes at a private club. He has been training for more than three years. He has won several fights, has the tri-state golden gloves title, and recently placed 2nd in the New England tournament. When he has opportunities between training he likes to spend time with his friends and family doing various activities like hiking, riding dirt bikes, hunting and exploring new places.

Tyerell says high school has taught him to always respect the people around you, regardless of the situation. “People will see and remember small acts like this,” he says. “Eventually the respect you give comes back around.” His advice to underclassmen? “What you put into school is what you’re going to get out of it. That doesn’t just pertain to academics.”

Tyerell plans to attend UVM, Castleton or Keene State University this coming fall. The VUHS community wishes him all the best for his promising future.

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Trains

(Continued from Page 1A)

Slager is one of around 10 members of the Midd-Vermont Train Club (MVTC) who each year set up and run the holiday trains extravaganza that blends history, locomotion and nostalgia to capture the collective imagination of spectators ages 3 to 93.

He has just as much fun watching visitors’ reactions as he does the trains.

“Look at those faces,” he told the interviewer, nodding toward the crowd of gleeful onlookers who had assembled at the exhibit on Dec. 28. “How can you get bored with that?”

While children get a special kick out of the seasonal railroad paradise, the adult conductors and contributors get just as much joy bringing the trains out of hibernation each winter.

In the summer of 1992, Middlebury resident Peter White approached the Sheldon Museum about showcasing an antique train collection too vast to operate at his home.

“The (Sheldon) board originally hesitated to accommodate Peter’s wishes because the collection did not fit into 19th-century Vermont,” reads a history of the train exhibit, written by the MVTC.

But the board ultimately decided to give the trains a try.

It was a smart move. More than one 1,000 visitors and residents trekked through the museum that first year, and a tradition was born, according to MVTC officials.

Area model train collectors dipped into their stashes, while local artisans and artists brought realism to the rail props. For example, the late builder Dana Myrick donated a four-foot-long replica of the Richville covered railroad bridge in East Shoreham.

Key to the exhibit is the huge mountain through which the trains travel. Constructed with Hydrocal — a dry powder that, when mixed with warm water and spread onto paper towels, dries quickly into a very strong shell. The shell was overlaid with texturing materials and painted.

“At the end of the holiday season, the original mountain had to be cut into two sections,” reads the MVTC history. “A surgeon was recruited because he had a surgical saw to do the job before it was carefully placed on large boards for storage.”

ROTH “T” TALL

If the Sheldon holiday train exhibit has a “senior conductor,” it’s Roth “T” Tall. He’s the last surviving charter member of the Midd-Vermont Train Club that launched the Lionel layout three decades ago. The other founding members were Peter White, Ron Nimblett, Dana Myrick and Bobby Andrews. Warren Frost and Chip Stokes were also early members.

Trains were truly a family affair for the Talls.

“As a boy, I had a Lionel train set, which passed from cousin to cousin, originating in Rhode Island, then Baltimore where I grew up, and migrating to California,” he said. “It finally came here to Cornwall in the early 1990s, so my sons could enjoy the same experience.”

It’s Tall’s love of antique toy trains and his wish to honor the memory of Peter White (who died in 1994) that have kept him involved with the Sheldon exhibit.

BILL FRANK

Bill Frank got his first train set when he was around 6 years old. It was a Lionel setup that probably came from a Sears Department Store, according to Frank.

“It was an oval, or inner-oval layout, and my dad put it on a sheet of plywood,” he said. “It had to go under my bed. I’d come home from school, pull it out and play with it until I went to bed.”

As boys are wont to do, Frank remained enthusiastic about his new toy until “the next thing” came along. And for him, it was an erector set. Still, he’d occasionally take his trusty Lionel out of the closet.

Years went by, he and his siblings left the nest and went on to careers, and Frank’s Lionel train set seemed destined to become just a sweet memory.

Until a family reunion in Michigan around 20 years ago.

“We were sitting in my parents’ room and my sisters started talking about my train. And of course, they reminded me, ‘You never let us play with it,’” Frank recalled.

That’s when his dad went to his



GERRY SLAGER, 78, and his granddaughter Delilah take turns at the controls of the Sheldon Museum’s annual model train display this past Thursday. It has become one of the museum’s most popular winter exhibits, featuring three train sets rolling through and along a mountain landscape strewn with a gondola ski lift, skiers, snowboarders, rock climbers, cyclists, animals, buses, vans, and many other sights.

Independent photo/John Flowers

garage and brought out the Lionel train set, perfectly intact, in its original box.

“Putting that train together was all I could think about during that 13-hour drive (from Michigan to Vermont),” Frank said.

His dad’s foresight and frugality had allowed his son to revisit his youth.

“It goes under the Christmas tree every year,” Frank said with a huge grin. “I can lay there, just like I did as a kid, and watch the train go around and around.”

Around six years ago, Frank and his spouse visited the Lionel train layout at the Sheldon Museum. Once again, he was a kid among kids, mesmerized by the righteous rail scene unfolding before him.

Members of the Midd-Vermont Train Club encouraged him to join the fold, and he didn’t have to be asked twice. He signed up, and each year gladly makes eight roundtrips between Underhill and Middlebury to help make sure the Sheldon train exhibit keeps chugging along during the holiday season.

GERRY SLAGER

Gerry Slager has served as

one of the Sheldon’s Lionel train conductors for five years.

Like Frank, he was bit by the train bug as a child and has never looked back. Some of his fondest memories are of he and his dad setting up their train on a section of plywood at their home. It was an American Flyer train dating back to around 1950.

“Anywhere there’s a train. I’ve always wanted to be around the excitement and fun of trains,” Slager said.

He’s passing that passion along to his granddaughter, Delilah, who was at his side this past Thursday, Dec. 28, as he and Frank darted around the Lionel layout to troubleshoot any problems and impart train trivia to the enthusiastic onlookers.

Slager proudly pointed out the many features of the Sheldon’s Lionel layout, including miniature, antique villages made in Germany; milk trucks; a new drawbridge feature (that was temporarily out of commission last week) and the rotating gondola.

“Every time you look at it, you find something new, Slager

said. “And we’re always trying to increase and improve it,” he said.

You’ll understand if he’s particularly fond of the miniature Vermont Bicycle Touring van. He worked for that Bristol company for 40 years.

ED MCGUIRE

Continuing the common thread among the Sheldon’s dedicated conductors, Ed McGuire was also given a Lionel as a child — a freight train, in 1950, when he was around 8 years old.

“Right now there is a nearly identical Lionel set up around our Christmas tree for the enjoyment of our visiting grandchildren (youngest is 13) and me,” he told the *Independent*.

McGuire spent many fun hours as a youngster piloting his own train. And while many of today’s teens and adults seem hypnotized by computer and iPhone screens, there’s something about a toy train in motion that captures people’s attention, according to McGuire. Toy trains never seem to get old, no matter how many times you see them hum and clack around an oval track.

A U.S. Coast Guard veteran and former Mount Abraham Union High School teacher, McGuire is in his 10th year as a Sheldon train conductor. T Tall was responsible for his involvement.

A brief history of Sheldon model trains

MIDDLEBURY — During the summer of 1992 Middlebury resident Peter White approached the Sheldon Museum because he and his friends had an antique train collection they wanted others to see and because he had no exhibition space at his home. White assembled a group of eight to 10 toy train enthusiasts to construct the platforms and assemble the layout.

The museum moved the train layout to its present location on the second floor in 2005. The Midd-Vermont Train Club spent that summer building the expanded layout in the basement of a Cornwall home under the watchful eye of Bob Rand, a veteran architect. If he noticed that the builders had failed to follow his design to within a quarter of an inch, he’d make them tear it apart and start over.

HILLS AND VALLEYS

One major feature is a huge mountain through which the trains would travel. At the end of the holiday season, the original mountain had to be cut into two sections and was placed on large boards for storage. Most of the hillsides separating the levels are made of lightweight insulating foam board, also textured and painted. In some places real Vermont slate has been added for realism.

In 2008 the “Changing Seasons” theme was inaugurated. Instead of “all winter” it starts with “summer” on the left side and progresses to “winter” on the right. The mural and backgrounds

were painted by Cornwall artist Gayle Braisted.

LOWER LEVEL

The layout is divided into several levels to add to the excitement of the viewer. Its track, locomotives and cars are “O” Gauge, sturdy equipment designed for year-round layouts. Several different locomotives take their turns running on this level: The Santa Fe #2343 and the New York Central #2344 are twin-engine diesels, issued by Lionel between 1950 and 1952. With their superior engineering and “Magna-Traction,” one of these locomotives can easily pull 20 to 30 cars, even today. The most popular train set ever sold by Lionel included the Santa Fe, 4 passenger cars, track and transformer, and sold for \$59.95. Today, in mint condition with their original boxes, such a set can bring as much as \$1,500 at auction.

The Pennsylvania Railroad #681 was modeled after the PRR’s S-2 No. 6200, an Experimental Steam Turbine locomotive built in 1944. Economical at high speed, No. 6200 was used on the PRR’s “Lines East,” often pulling the famous Broadway Limited. Too complicated and expensive to maintain, the real turbine locomotive was retired by 1949, while simpler steam locomotives continued in use for several more years.

The Baltimore & Ohio diesel #8662 is a modern GP-7, a type still in use today. This model has (See *Train history*, Page 13A)

Maple Landmark of Middlebury, a major manufacturer of wooden toys, is doing its part to make sure trains remain in children’s toy rotations. The company recently donated a toddler table for tiny tots to train in trains. McGuire and his colleagues hope those toddlers become lifeline train enthusiasts, perhaps someday taking their place as stewards of the Sheldon Lionel setup.

LARRY MAIER

Larry Maier has served as lead technician for the Sheldon holiday trains since 2015.

He caught his first train — a Lionel — under the Christmas tree during the early 1950s and has never disembarked.

Maier’s dad was as much of a train enthusiast as he is.

“My dad and I built a layout in the basement that could run several trains, and included some basic scenery,” he recalled.

His interest in locomotives and rail cars took him to lofty career heights. Larry would become an accomplished aerospace engineer. He designed systems for most Boeing commercial aircraft, for the C130 military aircraft, and four systems for the Space Shuttle.

But these days, in retirement, he remains grounded in trains. His interest in those vehicles runs the gamut from their construction to

their exterior paint scheme.

Maier was happy to lend his expertise to the Midd-Vermont Train Club. He also helps maintain the train layout for the Shelburne Museum.

Folks entering the Sheldon Museum are lucky to see as well-oiled railroad exhibit. But Maier noted that Midd-Vermont Train Club volunteers put in dozens of hours of setup work before the toy trains can leave the station. He estimates he spent around 60 hours helping with the exhibit setup this year and is a go-to guy for repairs.

“It is a lot of time and effort, but it is all worth it watching the faces of people as they walk into the room and see the trains,” he stressed. “To a person, they break into wide smiles and happy faces. My favorite is the little kids who get so excited that they have to bounce up and down. Addison County is a great place to live and has given me much. Giving back to the community and making it a better place gives me immense pleasure.”

Catch “Holiday Trains: 30 Years Rolling Down the Tracks” at the Sheldon Museum Wednesday through Saturday, from 1-3:30 p.m. The exhibit concludes on Saturday, Jan. 13.



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Projects

(Continued from Page 1A)
host a residence for Marble Trail Financial owner Don Devost and his spouse.

Plans call for wood-framed construction, but will include cement elements and metal cladding “to ensure it presents as well-maintained and stately for a good long time,” reads the project narrative for 150 S. Pleasant St. “The building graciously bows to the Town Hall Theater and the larger buildings across the street, all of which are significantly taller. We believe this building is of its time and place while respecting the fact that it is part of a larger urban fabric.”

Also included in the plan is a new parking lot on the Otter Creek side of the site that would be accessed by an existing shared driveway. The DRB has granted the applicants a parking waiver for additional spots, agreeing that employees and customers will be able to find enough nearby off-street parking downtown during business hours.

Andrea Murray of Vermont Integrated Architecture noted the building will be “all electric,” with

no fossil fuels serving the structure. The below-grade area will include a two-car garage, storage and utility space, she told the DRB. She told the panel she believed the building design fits the character of Middlebury.

The applicants, in their project narrative, described the challenges of the building site and efforts to make the structure compatible with its surroundings:

“The project site is extremely tight and constrained. It is also on a steep hillside with over 18 feet of grade change front to back. In designing to the context of downtown Middlebury and South Pleasant Street, the design team considered many factors, including site density, views, accessibility, historic character, form, scale, massing and materials. The building takes cues from the historic Town Hall Theater down the street, by referencing the horizontal marble banding. It also references window patterns and proportions of windows in buildings on both sides of the street.”

Longtime residents will fondly recall 150 S. Pleasant St. as the



THE FORMER SITE of Cole's Flowers on South Pleasant Street could soon see a four-level, mixed-use building that will host offices and a penthouse residence.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

former site of Cole's Flowers — a business that now operates at 21 MacIntyre Lane. Coincidentally, former Middlebury Fire Chief Rick Cole (who ran the shop for years) and his family were Devost's first neighbors.

Marble Trail Financial, or MTF, is currently based in the former Addison County courthouse on Court Square. Middlebury College owns the building and is looking to sell it.

“The impetus for doing this was the fact the college was putting the (old courthouse) up for sale,” Devost acknowledged. “And as happy as we are here, and not terribly eager to move... (staying put) didn't seem like something that made sense for us to invest in.”

MTF won't gain a lot of new square footage with the new building, but it will be able to add offices because the space will be tailor-made for the company's needs, he noted.

The building plan doesn't signal an impending growth spurt for MTF, though the company remains on solid footing. The firm's

workforce has doubled during the past six years, according to Devost. Marble Valley Financial currently counts 15 full- and part-time workers.

Devost isn't exactly sure when work will begin on the new MTF building. Construction costs have gone up 60% since the company began planning for its new home, he said.

WEYBRIDGE STREET DEVELOPMENT

Meanwhile, the DRB is getting set to review another proposed development not far from downtown. This one calls for a four-lot subdivision on a 1.68-acre parcel at 368 Weybridge St.

The plan, proposed by Hackamore Partners LP, calls for the existing four-bedroom, single-family home on the property to be renovated, with removal of

its detached garage. Hackamore Partners wants to build three-bedroom duplexes on lots 2 and 3, and a four-bedroom, single-family home on lot 4. A new driveway off Weybridge Street is being proposed to serve the development.

Middlebury's DRB is slated to review the Hackamore Partners proposal at its Monday, Jan. 8, meeting, slated for 7 p.m. at the town offices.

Middlebury Director of Planning & Zoning Jennifer Murray said that based on her preliminary observations, the Hackamore Partners plan dovetails with a major goal in the community's Downtown Master Plan: Increase housing options in the village center.

She noted Middlebury's downtown neighborhoods are now

largely made up of single-family homes.

“There are empty nesters who'd be happy to move to smaller units, if there were some available,” she explained.

The availability of more townhomes, duplexes and triplexes would provide landing spots for older residents ready to downsize, thus freeing up more single-family dwellings for families looking to settle in the shire town, she said.

“And smaller units can accommodate potential workers, who could walk to jobs at Porter Hospital, the college and service-sector jobs,” she noted.

It also should be noted that Middlebury recently revised its zoning rules to encourage more housing development. Among those changes: A reduction in minimum lot sizes from 10,000 to 8,000 square feet in the downtown, and reduced setback requirements that now allow some garages to be more easily repurposed as accessory dwellings.

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

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History

(Continued from Page 11A)
only one motor, and is much lighter in weight than the other diesel models because Lionel built the cab in plastic instead of cast metal, but it still can still pull a lot of weight.

While the “Village” doesn’t represent any specific town, the replicas of the Sheldon Museum (also built by Gayl Braisted), the Middlebury Inn and the Middlebury Railroad Station (constructed by Maple Landmark owner Mike Rainville) add local interest. Crazy Charlie’s “Castle” is a replica of a home built in the San Bernardino Valley as a protest of the Vietnam War.

MIDDLE LEVEL

The track is “O-27,” the same gauge and width as “O,” yet lighter weight and with tighter radius curves. This system was introduced by Lionel in the mid-1930s, for use around Christmas trees. Most of the structures on this level are also built in “O” scale, but some background buildings are in the smaller “HO” scale, to give an illusion of distance.

Locomotive #8632 is a 4-4-2 “Atlantic” type, a design widely used in the early 20th century. Lionel still manufactures this model. When a few drops of a special liquid are placed in its stack, the heat of the headlight generates smoke. Locomotive #2037 is a Lionel 2-6-4. The wheel arrangement suggests a medium-duty freight engine. Locomotive #224 is a 2-6-2 “Prairie” type, a light-duty freight engine. Any of these engines may appear with a “Rutland” tender. Although the Rutland, which built the rail line that runs through Middlebury, never used any of these wheel arrangements, we re-lettered the tender for local interest. Many of the freight cars are from private collections.



THE TRAINS IN the Sheldon Museum holiday display run through a village that includes replicas of the Sheldon Museum, Middlebury Inn and Middlebury Railroad Station. Other tidbits that make the scene more interesting are a bonfire with glowing lights, small animals and frozen pond for skaters. Engineer Gerry Slager and his granddaughter Delilah enjoy the diorama during a recent visit.
Independent photo/John Flowers

UPPER LEVEL

The railroad and buildings are “HO” scale; 1/87 full size, again to appear more distant. Note also that this scale runs on a more realistic two-rail track. At times two trains may run on the same track! The trolley car and Ferris wheel were donated to the club.

The skating pond is simply a mirror. Sheldon Trustee Henry Prickitt remembered that as a boy, he had a collection of miniature German figure skaters made of lead and hand painted around 1905. Each year until his death, he would lend them to the Club. Following his demise, his daughter Sally inherited the collection and each Christmas they are Fed-Ex’d to Middlebury from St. Louis as a memorial to him.

OTHER FEATURES

Small animals and people are interspersed throughout the layout. Most of these cannot be purchased in the U.S. because of the danger of being swallowed by children. As luck would have it, one member of the club happened to be Christmas shopping in Montreal and found a ready supply.

The bonfire simply consists of two small intermittent Christmas lights buried beneath some twigs and branches found behind the museum.

The transformers used to supply the power to the entire layout are modern, although the famous 275W Lionel ZW transformer has been used as a backup many years.

— *Courtesy of Midd-Vermont Train Club*

By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)
a letter to the community from President Laurie Patton, “Aria” Kamal was described as a brilliant student and an amazing singer who was beloved by members of the college choir. According to the Boston Globe she had a history of community service. The Globe also reported her parents were experiencing financial problems, including foreclosure on their expensive Dover home.

The Marquis Theater at 65 Main St. in Middlebury is back open after a short closure due to a construction issue at the building, which will be 105 years old later this year. Theater owner Ben Wells said it was on Saturday, Dec. 30, that the overhang structure (designed to afford shelter to customers waiting outside) had become partially detached from the building. Wells, with input from local public safety officials, decided to temporarily close the theater out of an abundance of caution. The past few days have seen Silver Maple Construction tend to the problem. The overhang will be removed and Wells is unsure at this point if a new one will go up. The theater officially reopened on Thursday, Jan. 4.

That Christmas tree in your living room is probably starting to lose some of its green hue and its piney scent. While’s it’s been a symbol of joy, hope and family togetherness, it’s probably time to retire it. But don’t just discard it. Addison County Solid Waste Management District officials

remind us there’s a “Merry Mulch” program through which your yule trees can give even more of themselves. In the program the trees are turned into fragrant pine mulch that’ll be available this spring. And this requires little effort on your part, thanks to volunteers from the Vergennes Lions Club and the Middlebury Rotary Club, who will be collecting trees from the curb in both communities on the morning of Saturday, Jan. 6. Be sure to put your tree out the night before, as collection starts early. And please remove any and all decorations from the trees, including ornaments, tinsel, wire and garlands. And this collection is only for trees, so please do not put wreaths out.

The Salisbury Conservation Commission (SCC) is compiling a list of citizens interested in helping maintain the community’s public trails. Among those amenities is the Pitch Pine Trail, parking area and kiosk, created during the COVID pandemic. The Pitch Pine Trail area doesn’t require much regular maintenance beyond mowing and weed-whacking every month. The trail itself only needs to have branches removed and trimmed back and views cleared about once a year, according to commission members. Trail maintenance volunteers will get an e-mail when work needs to be done. Along with Pitch Pine, other town trails requiring occasional work include the Mills Trail, and those around the town’s elementary school. Volunteers willing to be

added to the commission’s email list should email Jim Andrews at jandrews@vtherpatlas.org. Please specify the kinds of jobs you’re able to do — such as picking up branches, pruning, chain saw work, mowing, string-trimming, carpentry, and/or operating heavy equipment.

Gov. Phil Scott earlier this week announced two leadership appointments: Nate Formalarie as deputy commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Heather Pembroke as deputy commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation. Folks in Addison County might recognize Formalarie as the former communications director at Middlebury’s Vermont Hard Cider Company. Formalarie has been with the DHCD since 2018, most recently as the director of communications and strategic initiatives, and prior to that in the Department of Tourism and Marketing.

Average gasoline prices in Vermont have fallen 2.8 cents per gallon during the past week to \$3.27, according to GasBuddy’s survey of 626 stations. Prices in Vermont are 16.4 cents lower than a month ago and 8.1 cents lower than a year ago. The cheapest gas in Vermont was \$2.89 this week; the most expensive was \$3.49. Meanwhile, the national average price of gasoline fell 1.6 cents to \$3.06.

Community

(Continued from Page 1A)
“We got a big response on learning about history, technology, along with cooking and gardening,” Steponaitis said.

The department also plans to use its 15-passenger van to get the group out into the community, ideally organizing one field trip a month for the Elder Eagles, Steponaitis said.

“We’re very excited to be offering chances for the people who come to the Elder Eagles to go out into the community,” she said. “My goal is to have at least one outing a month with the van and that we’re going to keep the cost of those trips as minimal as possible for the people who are participating.”

The Elder Eagles program has been in the works for a little over

a year now. Steponaitis is excited to finally have the group up and running.

“We have a lot of programs that reach out to the youth and the young adults of our community and the surrounding towns, but we also don’t want to ignore a very critical part of the population. We want to offer opportunities for all ages and all abilities,” she explained.

While Steponaitis has some ideas for future Elder Eagles activities, she hopes upcoming gatherings will evolve into what the group’s participants are most interested in.

“We want them to know that this program is built to support them and support what they want to do,” she said. “Everybody will have a say in the things that we do.”

As the program gets underway, Steponaitis is excited to start

connecting with the program’s participants.

“I’m looking forward to talking with the members of this community, especially this particular age group, because there’s so much to learn from them and there’s so much history and stories that can be shared,” she said. “It’s so critical, I feel, for my generation and the younger generation that they hear these stories and spend time with this part of their history and realize that we’re more connected than we think.”

The first Elder Eagles meeting is scheduled for Friday, Jan. 5, at 10 a.m. in Bristol’s Holley Hall. Those interested in learning more about the program can contact Steponaitis and the department at beebristolvt@gmail.com.

Middlebury

(Continued from Page 1A)
to pull that down a little bit if we can, but there might be some tough choices to make to do that.”

Ramsay identified nine “major drivers” as being chiefly responsible for the \$688,000 spending increase outlined in the overall FY25 draft budget. They include:

- A \$135,661 bump in municipal employees’ wages, from the current \$4,200,750, to \$4,336,411. These salary increases are in large part governed by a collective bargaining agreement.
- A \$60,500 surge in employee benefits, with health insurance costs being a major culprit.
- An \$83,305 increase in equipment maintenance and replacement expenses. Ramsay cited inflation as a major factor in this category.
- A \$34,016 bump (from the current \$84,960 to \$118,976) in the town’s service contract with Middlebury Regional Emergency Medical Services (MREMS).

As previously reported by the *Independent*, MREMS wants to eliminate its annual Town Meeting Day funding requests in the 10 communities it serves in favor of multi-year contracts that will, in the short term, reflect some sizable per-capita rate increases to allow the nonprofit to recruit and retain rescue personnel, as well as more promptly replace ambulances and equipment when they become outdated.

The new contract will result in a \$3 increase in MREMS’s per-capita assessments (from the current \$10 to \$13) to the towns it covers: Middlebury, Salisbury, Ripton,

Orwell, Shoreham, Whiting, Bridport, Cornwall, Weybridge and part of New Haven.

• A \$257,066 surge (from the current \$1,653,455, to \$1,910,521) in capital improvement investments. Some of that increase would be used to lay the groundwork for future construction projects.

“We’re being pushed for an even greater investment in capital improvements,” Ramsay said. “Part of that is not only our shovel-in-the-ground projects, it’s getting projects in the pipeline — in engineering, in project development — so we’re poised to apply for grants and leverage outside funds, which we’ve been very successful at.”

A sampling of proposed FY25 capital improvement projects include paving work on Peterson Terrace, East and Springside roads, Valley View Drive, Forbes Circle, Gambrel Court, Methodist Lane, and the Mister Ups parking lot; culvert replacement on Halladay Road; water and sewer line replacement on Gorham Lane; and wastewater pump station upgrades on Rogers Road.

• A \$70,000 hike (from the current \$50,000, to \$120,000) to improve local gravel roads. Gravel roads have been particularly battered by this year’s wet weather.

Middlebury officials are proposing to tap two major revenue sources to hold the municipal tax rate increase to 4.3 cents:

- 1) Application of \$434,462 in FY23 surplus funds.
- 2) Use of \$1,040,700 in local option tax surplus.

It was in 2008 that Middlebury

launched its local option tax to help pay off debt on the \$16 million Cross Street Bridge. But the 1% taxes on rooms, meals, sales and alcohol routinely generates considerably more than is needed to pay debt service and maintenance for the bridge. For example, the town targeted \$1,050,000 for bridge payback and maintenance during FY23, while receipts came in at 1,338,251 — creating a surplus of 288,251. The town’s local option tax has recorded a surplus in each year since it was enacted.

A 4.3-cent increase in Middlebury’s municipal tax rate would add around \$130 to the property tax bill of the owner of a \$300,000 homestead. Municipal taxes are only a part of the property tax bill; education taxes are usually a bigger portion of the local property tax bill.

The town of Middlebury has done a good job in recent years of containing increases in its municipal tax rate. That rate was 80.3 cents in FY21, 79.7 cents in FY22, 82.3 cents in FY 23, and 86.48 cents in FY24. If the FY25 budget draft is endorsed by the selectboard and passed by voters in March, the new municipal rate would be 90.8 cents.

The selectboard’s schedule calls for finalizing an FY25 budget by Jan. 23. Local voters will field the proposed spending plan at their annual town meeting on Monday, March 4.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

(Continued from Page 1A)
effort, the school wasn’t be ready for the scheduled Tuesday, Jan. 2, resumption of classes. Thus, MUMS students were welcomed back on Wednesday, Jan. 3.

Here’s the full text of Wisell’s message:

“I am writing to notify you that

we experienced a break in our water line that feeds our fire suppression system last Saturday evening, substantially impacting some instructional spaces here at school. We have had ServPro, ACSD custodians, and construction crews here all week in hopes of opening school on Tuesday.

“Regrettably, our building will not be ready to safely open for students on Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024. We look forward to welcoming MUMS students back to school on Wednesday, Jan. 3. Please note, this issue only affects MUMS students. All other ACSD schools will open as scheduled.”

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Stykos spent her first summer

Artists who want to fully immerse themselves in the Lincoln landscape can opt to stay in one of two Airbnb lodgings on the property. A one-bedroom cottage and a rustic yurt are available to visiting musicians throughout the year.

Stykos has worked on a handful of projects since reopening her studio this past spring. Recent collaborations include working with Abenaki singer-songwriter



Stykos said she's connected with a variety of other musicians since moving to Addison County, including studio assistant and singer-songwriter Lutalo Jones, a fellow Lincoln resident who has started recording music at

“We’ve run a yoga class, we’ve done movie nights for the neighborhood,” Stykos said. “We have such a great neighborhood, and it’s just a nice space for people to come and do things together.”

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— MATT DICKERSON —

Reflections for
a new year

“People learn best when information enters through their peripheral vision, out of the corner of their eye ... through stories.”

These are words I could imagine coming from many of the novelists I know. Or perhaps from a playwright, or poet, or even any visual artist who values imagery, metaphor and imagination. But the words were written by the scientist Kurt Fausch, one of country’s eminent stream



ecologists, fisheries biologists, and cutthroat trout specialists over the past several decades. He penned these words late in his career as a research scientist and professor at Colorado State University, in his wonderful book “For the Love of Rivers: A Scientist’s Journey.”

A thread running through much of Fausch’s work is the importance of preserving native fish and the waters where they live, as he writes about the surrounding ecosystems that have coevolved and coadapted with this fish for millennia. His work on stream ecology has repeatedly revealed how tightly interconnected ecosystems are: how streams impact forests and forests impact streams, and rivers are dependent on oceans and oceans on terrestrial ecosystems. How (to speak metaphorically) every small stone dropped in a pond ripples outward in complex and far-reaching waves and webs — how, for example, the introduction of a non-native fish in a water can impact the emergence of aquatic insects such as caddisflies, which impact the density of spiders along the riparian corridor, which in turn impacts the population of song birds. In short, put non-native brook trout in some Rocky Mountain stream and bird population will decline.

I began 2024 with a new holiday tradition: I went canoeing with my wife on New Year’s Day. We paddled the northern end of the small mountain lake where we often gather with family. Although two little coves had thin skims of ice, for the most part open water still covered the lake.

I call this a “new holiday tradition,” but in fact it is a tradition I have no desire to

(See Dickerson, Page 4B)

Score
BOARD

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Girls’ Hockey

12/27 MUHS vs U-32.....2-1
12/28 BBA vs MUHS.....6-1

Boys’ Hockey

12/27 MUHS vs Stowe.....9-0
12/28 MUHS vs Brookline.....5-2

Boys’ Basketball

12/27 OV vs Brattleboro.....64-52
12/27 VUHS vs Twinfield.....54-51
12/27 Mt Anthony vs Mt Abe.....59-57 OT
12/29 Mt Abe vs OV.....54-39
12/29 Harwood vs MUHS.....58-37
1/3 VUHS at OVUHS.....Late
1/3 Mt Abe at Randolph.....Late
1/3 MUHS at Fair Haven.....Late

Girls’ Basketball

12/27 Mt Abe vs Burr & Burton.....32-24
12/27 Fair Haven vs OV.....71-21
12/28 VUHS vs Northfield.....44-16
12/29 Burr & Burton vs OV.....55-32
12/29 Fair Haven vs Mt Abe.....43-28
12/29 St. Albans vs MUHS.....54-36
1/3 VUHS at Mill River.....Late

COLLEGE SPORTS

Women’s Basketball

12/29 Midd vs Stevens.....65-42
12/30 SUNY New Paltz vs Midd.....54-51
1/3 Wellesley at Midd.....Late

Men’s Basketball

12/29 Brandeis vs Midd.....65-60

Men’s Hockey

12/31 Hobart vs Midd.....8-1
1/2 Midd vs NEC.....4-1

(See Schedule, Page 4B)



EAGLE 150-POUND WRESTLER Lincoln Painter does battle with a Colchester opponent in one of his matches at last week’s Middlebury tournament; Painter prevailed in two of them.

Independent photos/Angelo Lynn



EAGLE WRESTLER MASON Atkins goes for the takedown in one of his 157-pound matches at Middlebury’s annual holiday tournament last week. Atkins won twice in the competitive weight class.

Eagles roll late, top visiting OV boys’ hoop

Mt. Abe gels in
upset of Otters

By ANDY KIRKALDY

BRISTOL — Probably even more so than usual, the two teams involved in the Friday, Dec. 29, boys’ basketball game at Mount Abraham Union High School viewed the result — a 54-39 win for the host Eagles over Otter Valley — through different lenses.

Mount Abe Coach Martin Clark saw the win, which moved his team to 2-4, as a potential turning point. The Eagles, who

return only two players who were major parts of last year’s regular rotation, were arguably better than their record entering Friday’s game — three of their four losses came by four points or fewer, one in overtime.

And on Friday Clark said when it mattered, the Eagles finished the game strong, closing with a 14-2 run in which they controlled the boards and made nine free throws.

Clark said he thought the Eagles took a step forward with offensive execution and shot selection. He also pointed to the

team’s reasonable number of 14 turnovers, a good total for a high school team, and the Eagles’ effort in both the man-to-man defense that checked the Otters in the first half and the zone defense that frustrated them in the second.

OV Coach Mike Stark, on the other hand, brought a veteran group to Bristol with a 4-1 record after entering the season with high expectations. The Otters were also coming off a 64-52 victory at Division I Brattleboro. He said he was unhappy with what he called a lack of focus that Friday night from his experienced team.

Boys’ hockey claims tournament crown

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School boys’ hockey team won its own holiday tournament last week in what Coach Jordan Stearns called “the first time in a long time,” defeating Brookline, Mass., 5-2 in the final on Dec. 28.

The Tigers also thumped a shorthanded Stowe team, 9-0, in the first round on Dec. 27. Harwood topped Stowe, 9-5, in the Dec. 28 consolation game, and Brookline defeated Harwood

in the first round.

In the Thursday final, Brookline’s Owen Lacy gave his team the lead 6:27 after the puck drop. Stearns said the visitors controlled play early.

“Brookline came out hot, but once we got our legs under us it was an even match,” he said.

A minute and a half after Brookline took the early lead, Gavin McNulty equalized for the Tigers with an unassisted strike, and the teams were tied after one period.

Then the Tigers scored three unanswered goals in the second period. At 5:52 Kellan Bartlett gave MUHS the lead, with assists from Quinn Collins and Iver Anderson. Just 23 seconds later, Toby Draper made it 3-1, with an assist from Gus Hodde. Hodde gave the Tigers a three-goal lead at 12:06, with a feed from Draper.

“We had an explosive second period, with 15 shots,” Stearns said.

Brookline’s Grady Ames got one back for his team early in



TIGER 138-POUND WRESTLER Jordan Couture listens to instructions from MUHS Head Coach Ethan Raymond during one of his matches at Middlebury’s annual Hubie Wagner Invitational last week. Couture compiled a 3-2 record.

Tigers rock mats

MUHS wrestlers 2nd at own
event; other locals take titles

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — The young Middlebury Union High School wrestling team not only posted the best finish among the four local squads at its own annual Hubie Wagner Invitational on Dec. 27 and

28, the Tigers fell just 12.5 points short of winning team Bow, N.H., (190.5 points to 178) in taking second place.

Otter Valley (124.5 points) took sixth among the 18 teams that

(See Wrestling, Page 2B)



MOUNT ABE’S WESLEY Husk appears in this match to be well on the way to one of his three 165-pound wins during Middlebury’s annual Hubie Wager Invitational last week.

Tiger girls’
hockey
splits pair

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School girls’ hockey team split two games at its holiday tournament last week, defeating U-32, 2-1, in the first round on Dec. 27 before falling to Burr & Burton in the final.

The Tigers will carry a 3-2 record into their next game, scheduled for Saturday at Stowe.

On Dec. 27, U-32 took the lead in the opening period on Hannah Drury’s unassisted strike. The Tigers equalized late in the second period, when Erin Mulcahy found the net with an assist from Kenyon Connors.

Lia Calzini netted the game-winner at 3:17 of the third period, with Mulcahy providing the helper.

Tiger goalie Ruby Hubbell made 17 saves, and Raider netminder Adelaide Croteau stopped 16 shots.

On Dec. 28, Burr & Burton pulled away with three third-period goals in a 6-1 victory. Calzini scored in the first minute of the third period to make it 3-1, but Bulldog Mia Paligo scored the first of her two third-period goals in the second minute to send BBA on its way.

Mai Liis Edwards also scored twice for BBA and set up two goals, and Abby Kopeck and Katie Brownlee each contributed a goal and an assist. Bulldog goalie Cyra Pacher made nine saves.

Michaela Charbonneau (22 saves) and Heaven Ross (nine saves) shared time in the MUHS goal.

Panthers see mixed results in return to play

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — As the second semester got underway for Middlebury College sports teams, women’s basketball split a pair of games at a holiday tournament, men’s hoop dropped a tight road contest, and men’s hockey lost an away game and won at home. Women’s hockey was idle and will resume play this Saturday with a non-league game at Endicott.

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

The Panther women’s hoop

squad returned to

action at a four-team tournament hosted by Stevens Institute, coasting in the first round over Stevens on Dec. 29, but being edged by SUNY-New Paltz in the final the next day.

Middlebury (6-5) was to host Wellesley on Wednesday after deadline for this issue. The Panthers will visit Hamilton and

Amherst this weekend as their NESCAC slate opens.

On Dec. 29 the Panthers rolled past Stevens, 65-42, dropping their host’s record to 5-5.

Stevens was up by 13-12 late in the first period before the Panthers scored the final five points of that quarter and the first 10 points of the second quarter to lead by 14.



PANTHER
SPORTS WRAP

Wrestling

(Continued from Page 1B)
competed, Mount Abraham (155.5) was eighth, and Vergennes (105) was ninth in a two-day competition that offers wrestlers more matches than most tournaments.

The MUHS event features a round-robin format in each weight class, rather than the more typical tournament that eliminates wrestlers after two losses. All competitors had at least four matches, and some as many as eight if they advanced out of the round-robin stages to the finals.

Wrestlers earned points for their team for each individual victory, plus extra points for pins and technical falls, which are matches awarded to a wrestler leading by at least 15 points.

The Tigers were sparked by first-place finishes by veterans Alex Sperry at 126 pounds and Avery Carl at 144. They combined for 11 pins and four technical falls.

Freshman Tucker Wright also did plenty of damage, pinning six foes in finishing second at 150, while sophomores Steven Lackard at 190 and Kameron Raymond at 285 each earned fourth-place finishes.

For the sixth-place Otters, Isaac Whitney cruised to a win at 175 pounds, Drake Felkl took second at 165, and Thomas Givens was third at 113.

For Mount Abe, Kaden White at 120 and Isayah Isham at 138 both racked up wins in finishing second, as did Zackery Montgomery and Owen Larrow in finishing third at 103 and 157, respectively. Mason White added a fourth-place finish at 132 for the Eagles.

VUHS competed well at the upper middle and heavier weights, placing in the top four at every weight between 165 and 215 and getting dominant wins from Isaac Preston at 190 and Jamison Couture at 215. Tyerelle Lavoie was third at 165 and Payton Lavoie fourth at 175 to round out the VUHS placers.

The full team standings were: 1 Bow, N.H., 190.5; 2. MUHS, 178; 3, Colchester, 166.5; 4. Granville, N.Y., 149.5; 5. Winnisquam, N.H., 140; 6. OV, 124.5; 7. Springfield, 121.5; 8. Mount Abe, 115.5; 9. VUHS, 105; 10. Fair Haven, 67.5; 11. Burr & Burton, 64.5; 12. Randolph, 60; 13. St. Johnsbury, 48; 14. Essex, 39; 15. Harwood, 35; 16. Mill River, 25; 17. CVU, 18. Mt. Anthony B, 10.5.

The tournament's coaches voted for Trey Lee, Fair Haven's 132-pound champion, as its Outstanding Wrestler, although respectable cases maybe could have been made for Sperry, Carl, Cram, Preston, Whitney and Couture.

By weight class, local wrestlers' results were:

- 106 pounds: Eagle Zackery

Montgomery took third with a 5-1 record.

- 113: Thomas Givens, OV, was fourth with a 3-3 mark. Also competing: Thales Artis, Mt. Abe (3-2).

- 120: Eagle Kaden White rolled to second place with a 5-2 record; both his losses were to 120-pound champion Adler Moura of Bow. Also competing were Stephen Kittredge of VUHS and Ethan Ross of OV, both 3-3.

- 126: Tiger Alex Sperry's 6-0 record included five pins and one technical fall on the way to his win. Also competing: OV's Maisa Allen (2-2).
- 132: Fair Haven's Lee rolled to victory with six pins and two technical falls to go 8-0. Eagle Mason White was fourth with a 4-2 record that included four pins. Also competing, two MUHS wrestlers: Parker Carl (4-2) and Connor Gordon (0-6).
- 138: Isayah Isham of Mt. Abe took second with a 5-1 record; he

lost to Granville's Nathan Barker in the final. Also competing: Jordan Couture, MUHS (3-2), Kegan Stone, MUHS (2-2), and Hailey Isham, Mt. Abe (1-3).

- 144: In winning here, Tiger Avery Carl equaled Lee with a tournament-best 8-0 record, racking up five pins and two tech falls, while winning once by forfeit. Also competing: Tiger Colton Murray (3-3).

- 150: Tiger Tucker Wright took second with a 6-1 record and every win by pin; he lost to Granville's Jason Torres in the final. Also: Lincoln Painter, Mt. Abe (2-3).

- 157: This was a successful weight class for local teams, especially OV: Otter Chase Cram prevailed with a 6-0 record (five pins and one tech fall), and pinned teammate Blake Allen in the final. In finishing second, Allen went 5-1, as did Mount Abe's Owen Larrow, who finished third and whose only loss in six outings was to Cram. Also, Eagle Mason Atkins (2-2).

- 165: In finishing second, OV's Drake Felkl (5-1) lost only to Colchester's Skylar Lamphere in the final. Commodore Tyerelle Lavoie (5-2) settled for third after a 6-4 loss to Lamphere in a semifinal. Also: Wesley Husk, Mt. Abe, 3-2; John Deering, MUHS, 2-3; and Otter Max Potter and Tiger Wyatt Kennett each 1-4.

- 175: OV's Isaac Whitney went 7-0 with six pins to dominate here. Commodore Payton Lavoie went 5-2 to finish fourth. Also, OV's Ayden Larocque (0-4).

- 190: Commodore Isaac Preston ruled this class with six pins in six outings. Tiger Steve Lackard was fourth (3-3). Also, Keagan Reid, OV (3-2).

- 215: Jamison Couture made it back-to-back for VUHS with wins in the finals with a 5-0 record and five pins. Also, Steve Martin, OV (0-4).

- 285. Kameron Raymond, MUHS, scored points with a 4-3 record and his fourth-place effort. Also, Commodore Izaak Wolnievick (0-4).



TIGER WRESTLER AVERY Carl waits for the referee to confirm one of his five pins on the way to winning the 144-pound weight class at the annual MUHS holiday wrestling tournament.

Independent photos/Angelo Lynn



COMMODORE STEPHEN KITTREDGE is well on his way to one of his three wins at 120 pounds at last week's Hubie Wagner Invitational tournament at MUHS.



TIGER 150-POUND WRESTLER Tucker Wright goes for the pin against Mill River's Matthew Serafin at Middlebury's annual holiday tournament last Wednesday. Wright finished second in his weight class.



Upcoming Events

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

Saturday January 6:
2:45 - 4:15 AM Public Skating

Sunday January 7:
2:30 - 4:00 PM Public Skating

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

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

Saturday January 13:
3:00 - 4:30 AM Public Skating

Sunday January 14:
2:30 - 4:00 PM Public Skating

Tuesday, January 16:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Thursday, January 18:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

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VUHS, Eagle wins highlight girls' hoop

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — In high school girls' basketball action late last week, Mount Abraham split two games at Fair Haven's annual holiday tournament, losing to Fair Haven in the final in a battle of the unbeatens; Vergennes won its only outing; Middlebury lost once at home; and Otter Valley lost twice in Fair Haven's tournament.

EAGLES

On Dec. 27 in the opening round of the Slaters' tournament, Mount Abe prevailed in a defensive battle with Burr & Burton, 32-24. **Piper Guilmette's** 10 points led the Eagles, **Morgan Barnard** scored seven points and added seven rebounds, and **Mackenzie Griner** grabbed 11 rebounds. BBA dropped to 1-5 against a tough schedule, with two losses to Mount Abe. Piper Morgan and Julia Decker each scored seven points for the Bulldogs.

On Friday, Fair Haven used a big second half to deal the Eagles their first defeat, 43-28. Mount Abe trailed by just 19-18 at the break, but then managed just 10 points in the final two quarters.

Tournament MVP **Kate Hadwen** paced the 5-0 Slaters with 13 points.

Griner's six points paced the 4-1 Eagles, and Eagle **Abba Parker** was named to the all-tournament team.

OTTERS

On Dec. 27, the host Slaters had little trouble with the young OV team in the first round of the Slaters' tournament, winning 71-21. **Izzy Cole** scored 22 points for Fair Haven. Hadwen was next with 19, and **Lily Briggs** tossed in 17.

Breanna Bovey paced the Otters with 10 points.

On Friday, Burr & Burton defeated the Otters, 55-32. OV trailed by just seven at the break, 30-23, but the Bulldogs pulled away. Julia Decker's 26 points were pivotal for the 2-5 Bulldogs.

Matelin LaPorte led the 1-4 Otters with 16 points and was named to the all-tournament team.

COMMODORES

On Dec. 28, the Commodores breezed past host Northfield, 44-16. **Ashtin Stearns** (10 points) and **Amelia Giroux** (nine points) led a balanced VUHS offense. The Commodores improved to 4-1 heading into a scheduled visit to Mill River on Wednesday after the deadline for this issue.

TIGERS

On Dec. 29, visiting St. Albans defeated the Tigers, 54-36. Ruby Dasaro (18 points) and Laurn Johnson (10) scored in double figures for the Comets.

The Tigers fell to 1-4 despite 26 points from **Solstice Binder**.



Mat battles

IN ACTION AT last week's Hubie Wagner Invitational in Middlebury, above, Mt. Abe's Hailey Isham gains the upper hand in one of her 138-pound matches. She won once in four outings. Right, Tiger Jordan Couture begins on top in a restart at 138. Couture won three times in five tries in the weight class.

Independent photos/
Angelo Lynn



OV, VUHS prevail in boys' basketball

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — In high school boys' basketball play last week, Otter Valley and Vergennes picked up road victories, Mount Abraham suffered another home heartbreaker, and Middlebury lost on the road.

This past Friday, the Otters also visited Mount Abe; see separate story on Page 1B.

The Otters were also scheduled to host the Commodores on Wednesday, one of several games played on that evening after the deadline for this edition.

OTTERS

On Dec. 27, the Division II Otters knocked off host D-I Brattleboro, 64-52, as **Connor Denis** (18 points) and **Logan Letourneau** (14) combined for half their points, and **Lucas Politano** added 10.

The Otters carried a 4-1 record into their Friday matchup with Mount Abe.

COMMODORES

On Dec. 27, the Commodores rallied from a 25-20 halftime deficit to defeat host Twinfield-Cabot, 54-51. **Oakley Francis** sparked VUHS with 25 points, and **Spencer Gebo** chipped in nine points and seven rebounds as the Commodores improved to 4-1. Tej Stewart scored 15 points for the host squad.

EAGLES

On Dec. 27, visiting Mt. Anthony dealt the Eagles another in a series of close losses, 59-57, in overtime. The Eagles dropped to 1-4. That loss was their second by two points, and another setback was by four points.

Against the Patriots, the Eagles led at the half, 30-26, but Patriot Carter Thompson scored 10 of his 25 points in the third quarter to help Mt. Anthony take a 48-41 lead entering the fourth quarter. Mount Abe dug in on defense, and **Ian Funke** scored six of his 26 points in the fourth quarter, which ended in a 52-52 tie.

The teams traded hoops in overtime, with Thompson's layup with 16 seconds to go proving decisive after the Eagles missed a shot as time expired.

Hayden Lutz added 14 points for the Eagles, who had a visit to Randolph on tap on Wednesday.

TIGERS

On Dec. 29, host Harwood defeated MUHS, 58-37, as Tucker Buffum led four Highlanders in double figures with 15 points.

Colton Odell scored a game-high 17 points for Middlebury, but it wasn't enough, as the Tigers dropped to 0-5.

The Tigers were also set to visit Fair Haven on Wednesday.

Panthers

(Continued from Page 1B)

Lucy Alberici scored 18 for the Ducks.

On Saturday New Paltz prevailed in the championship game, 54-51 as the Panthers' rally from down 48-40 with 4:11 to go came up just short. Four buckets by Mustafaj, a hoop by Calie Messina, and a Dixon free throw sliced the New Paltz lead — one of Mustafaj's jumpers made it 53-51 with 17 seconds to go.

The Panthers fouled, and New Paltz made one free throw with 11 seconds to go. But Mustafaj's three-point bid with three seconds left wouldn't drop, and New Paltz escaped with a win that pushed its record to 8-2.

Mustafaj finished with 16 points, Bethany Lucey scored 11, and Dixon added nine. Brianna Fitzgerald was a force for New Paltz with 25 points and 13 rebounds.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

On Dec. 29 host Brandeis improved to 8-2 by edging the Panther men's hoop team, 65-60. Middlebury dropped to 5-7 heading into this weekend, when the team's

NESCAC schedule begins with home games against Hamilton on Friday and Amherst on Saturday.

The Panthers led by as many as 10 (29-19) in the first half before settling for a 31-25 lead at the break. The Judges tied the game at 34-34 early in the second half, and the teams went back-and-forth from there.

The Panthers took a 47-39 lead at 10:27, and they still led, 55-52 with 4:54 remaining. Brandeis then ran off eight straight points to lead by five, but Middlebury got a jumper from Evan Flaks and a three-pointer from Jaden Bobbett to knot the score at 60-60 with 1:19 on the clock.

Jake Bender's tip-in at 0:34 restored the Judges' lead, and they iced the win from the free-throw line.

Noah Osher scored 20 points to lead Middlebury, Sam Stevens added nine, David Brennan contributed nine points and 10 rebounds, and Charley Moore grabbed nine boards.

Gilbert Otoo (18 points) and Sam Adusei (16) led Brandeis, and Bender added 11.

MEN'S HOCKEY

On Dec. 31 host Hobart, NCAA Division III's top-ranked men's hockey team, topped the Panthers, 8-1, outshooting them by 45-30. Seven Hobart players scored as the Statesmen improved to 11-2, led by Tanner Daniels' two goals. Hobart goalie Damon Beaver made 29 saves.

Jin Lee scored for Middlebury, netting an unassisted shorthanded strike in the third period; it was his third straight game with a goal. Goalies Jake Horoho (14 saves, six goals against) and Andrew Heinze (23 saves, two goals against) split time roughly evenly for Middlebury.

On Tuesday the Panthers scored four unanswered goals over the final two periods, including two shorthanded strikes, to defeat visiting New England College, 4-1. The Panthers improved to 2-6-2 at the expense of the 2-11-1 Pilgrims.

NEC opened the scoring with 3:25 to go in the first period, when Shane Adler netted his own rebound. That was the only goal Heinze allowed, as he stopped

34 shots to earn his first college victory.

Middlebury answered with Zach Whitehead's power-play goal 4:44 into the second period. Jackson Morehouse fed Whitehead, who trusted a shot into the top left corner to knot the contest.

Less than a minute later the Panthers jumped in front while shorthanded: Wyatt Pastor finished off a two-on-one rush with Matt Myers. Pastor won the loose puck in the neutral zone and bolted past a defender before working a give-and-go Matt Myers and tapping the return pass home. The 2-1 lead held up into the third period.

With 2:14 to go in the game Chris Garbe made it 3-1. Andrej Hromic carried into the offensive zone and centered for Garbe, who ripped his shot top shelf. Lee added a shorthanded empty-netter with 22 seconds remaining to extend his scoring streak to four games.

Middlebury plays NESCAC games at Wesleyan and Trinity this weekend.

Basketball

(Continued from Page 1B)

on a 12-0 run that erased an 3-0 OV lead and spanned almost five minutes of the first quarter. A drive by OV junior Drew Pelkey in the first minute and a sophomore Connor Denis free throw at 6:57 gave the visitors that quick lead, but the Otters did not score again until Denis hit another free throw at 2:02.

In the meantime, Eagle senior big man Ian Funke hit two free throws and a three-pointer, junior guard Hayden Lutz nailed a three and a free throw, and senior guard Jacob Prouty converted a three-point play on the break on a Funke feed.

After Denis's free throw broke the OV drought, Eagle sophomore forward Cooper Cook sank one, and then Denis beat the buzzer with a jumper to make it 13-6, Mount Abe, after the first period.

The Otters' hustle paid off in the second period as they forced

five of the Eagles' turnovers to slow the Mount Abe attack, and OV's zone defense was effective. A few OV shots also began to fall, and a 9-0 run between 2:30 and 0:33 gave them a 22-21 lead. Denis hit two threes in that surge, Mark Jackson added one, and Pelkey drove for a bucket and added a point from the line.

Funke, who kept the Eagles afloat in the quarter with seven points, beat the buzzer with a three, however, and Mount Abe led at the half, 24-22. A jumper by junior Chase Atkins and a Cook putback were the only other Eagle points of the period.

Denis opened the second half with a three-pointer on the first OV possession, but the Eagle zone began to flummox the Otters, and over the next four minutes they failed to score. In the meantime Mount Abe ran off eight points, two each from Lutz and Funke (two free throws apiece), and

two each from Prouty and fellow senior guard Noah Ladeau (both on drives against what was now an OV man defense). The run put the Eagles up, 32-25, with 4:10 to go in the quarter.

Both teams also ran into foul trouble, as Funke and Pelkey both picked up their third fouls in the period; OV senior starter Aiden Decker had picked up his second back in the first period and sat the rest of the half. Their coaches elected to keep Funke and Pelkey in the game in the third quarter, however.

Those decisions paid off in the final 2:30 of the period, when Pelkey scored twice in the lane for OV, and Funke scored in the post, assisted a Prouty bucket inside, and blocked Pelkey's three-point bid at the buzzer. The Eagles led after three periods, 36-29.

The Otters made a run to open in the fourth sparked by their defense. Over the first 3:58 they

The Otters made a run to open in the fourth sparked by their defense. Over the first 3:58 they outscored the Eagles by 8-4 and pulled to within 40-37, and it was anyone's game, especially considering Ian Funke picked up his fourth foul.

outscored the Eagles by 8-4 and pulled to within 40-37, and it was anyone's game, especially considering Funke picked up his fourth foul.

While the Eagles managed only a Ladeau runner in the lane and a Funke bucket in the post, OV got a hoop off the bench from Lucas Politano, a three-pointer from

Denis, and a three-point play from Denis, which drew Funke's foul at 4:02 and cut the Eagle lead to three.

But with Funke sitting out, his backcourt classmates stepped up: At 3:20 Prouty attacked the paint for two, and 50 seconds later Ladeau connected on a three from the left flank, and the lead was back to eight at 45-37.

The Otters continued to misfire from long range and managed only two Pelkey free throws the rest of the way, while the Eagles locked in on defense and added their nine free throws, seven of them by Lutz, to pull away.

Denis tossed in a game-high 21 points, and Pelkey added 11 for OV. Normally reliable contributors such as Decker, senior guard Owen Thomas and junior guard Logan Letourneau defended well, but were off the mark offensively, Stark noted, while also citing foul trouble.

Stark said he believes the Otters will bounce back and show more mental toughness in future outings, starting with their home game vs. Vergennes scheduled for Wednesday after deadline for this issue. Next up for the Otters is a Saturday visit to Bellows Falls.

Funke led the Eagles with 19 points, added seven rebounds, plus a couple blocked shots and several assists. Lutz (13 points, five rebounds), Prouty (nine points, five rebounds) and Ladeau (eight points, five rebounds) also contributed on the scoresheet. Cook nabbed four rebounds and scored three points in useful minutes off the bench.

Clark said he was happy with the Eagles' ability to respond when the Otters made runs at them, and believes the quality win should give them a boost going forward, starting with a Friday night home game vs. Mount St. Joseph.

BBA tops gymnastics despite individual efforts

By **ANDY KIRKALDY**
MIDDLEBURY — Visiting Burr & Burton defeated the Middlebury gymnastics team, 110.5-60.95, on Dec. 27, but Tiger gymnasts Alixis Williams, Nataly Johnson and Emily Johnson all posted top-six finishes in at least one event, as did Vergennes independent Bella Audy.

The winner in each event and the local placers were:
VAULT: 1. Mia Harrington, BBA, 8.10; 3. Bella Audy, VUHS, 7.80; 4. Alixis Williams, MUHS, 7.20; 6. Nataly Johnson, MUHS, 6.20.
BARS. 1. Alexis Bedard, BBA, 7.60; 3. Williams, MUHS, 5.80.

BEAM: 1. Bedard, BBA, 9.05; 3. Williams, MUHS, 7.60; 4. Audy, VUHS, 7.00.
FLOOR: 1. Bedard, BBA, 8.20; 2. Audy, VUHS, 7.90; 4. Williams, MUHS, 7.05; 5. Emily Johnson, MUHS, 6.40.
ALL-AROUND: 1. Bedard, BBA, 32.85; 3. Williams, MUHS, 27.65.

Tiger Coach Natalia Little said she was pleased that both Emily and Nataly Johnson, even though they did not place in the event, had progressed in the vault to the point that they were able to compete on the apparatus.

“It is always great to see new gymnasts gain new skills and be able to show them in a meet,” Little said.

Hockey

(Continued from Page 1B)
A high-paced game that was exciting throughout.”

Stowe was missing both its goalies for the Tigers’ first-round game, and Stearns said the Raiders found a volunteer among their skaters to fill in and get peppered by the Tiger offense, which scored three times in the first period, twice in the second, and four times in the third.

Draper led the attack with three goals and an assist; Bartlett, Eliot Heminway, and Eyon Tembruell finished with a goal and an assist apiece; Anderson, Collins and Joe Sullivan each added a goal; McNulty picked up three assists; and Hodde, Sutton Rubright, Gabriel Quesnel, Brady McDonough and Reed Grant contributed assists.



Tied up
MUHS 165-POUND WRESTLER John Deering has the upper hand here against Mill River’s Toby Putlik, but eventually lost the match at the Tigers’ annual holiday tournament last week. Deering won two bouts at the event to score points for the second-place Tigers.

Independent photo/Angelo Lynn

Dickerson

(Continued from Page 1B)
continue. And not merely because my hands got cold paddling around in 30-degree temperatures. (Despite the chilled digits, and the lack of turtle sightings, it was a beautiful little paddle.) For more than 40 years, my tradition has been to begin each new year ice fishing on that lake: chopping or drilling a hole through something between four and eight inches of ice, rigging up my tip-ups, and dropping live bait down through the hole, and ideally bringing in a fresh trout or two — or maybe even a salmon — for the first lunch of the new year.

Ice fishing, however, requires ice. And ice requires cold. Climate change is taking that away. In the half-century that our family has been gathering at this lake, the average time between ice in and ice out has decreased by more than a month according to the careful records of one of our neighbors on the lake.

...

Among many human behaviors whose wide-ranging negative impacts Fausch explored in his book, are the destructive practices regarding water use, such as draining underground aquifers or withdrawing water from rivers. Late in his book, after making arguments for the importance of preserving native fish, Fausch notes, “Native trout can return to their streams only when people view their existence as essential to their lives. And this can only happen if we see and touch these

amazing creatures for ourselves.”

I think about these words often. Although there may be rare exceptions, by and large I’m convinced that Fausch is right. We humans are not often moved by abstract ideas. We may intellectually understand the importance of conservation, the value of the Clean Water Act, or the threat of climate change. But it is as we experience both the goodness and beauty of the world, and also the impacts of harm, that most folks are motivated to act. (The floods and wildfire smoke of 2023 should have been a very visceral warning for Vermonters).

There are challenges, of course. On the one hand, it would be a gross understatement to say that access to natural ecosystems and opportunities to experience the wonder of nature (such as most Vermonters enjoy) are not evenly distributed. And when efforts are made to break down barriers of privilege, we often find ourselves loving nature to death.

...

In July, my good friend Dave visited Vermont. Dave teaches environmental philosophy at a small university. He has a passion for clean water. He teaches courses entirely about water, and its importance.

Dave spent about a decade living in Vermont in the late 1980s and 1990s. For quite some time, though, he has been living in eastern South Dakota. He misses mountains, forests

and clean cold streams. Between washed out roads, disrupted fish and high muddy water, that month’s flooding made it hard for us to find a river to fish together. However we eventually found our way to a beautiful little backcountry stream high up in the undeveloped lands of the Green Mountain National Forest — a stream that, though flowing higher than usual for that time of year, was not completely blown out by the floods.

Less than 10 minutes on the water, and Dave was holding in his hand just below the surface of the stream a beautiful little wild native brook trout.

...

Last fall, I briefly got caught up in the excitement surrounding the new developments in machine learning and large language models (such as ChatGPT). Over the course of several weeks, I experimented with a variety of text prompts trying to create some concept art for a novel of speculative fiction I have been working on for the past few years. It was a fun experiment.

Until I read an article about both the carbon footprint and the water cost of those models. Having just a single relatively short “conversation” with one of those systems has an energy demand that requires almost a liter of water for cooling of the computer chips. Generating a single image — such as I was doing — demands up to several liters of water, which must be withdrawn from somewhere. Of course, the energy has a high carbon footprint also. And this is just the cost of one use; it doesn’t even count the high costs of training those models.

Not long after reading that, I stopped generating images. I’ve held wild brook trout in my hand. I have grandchildren and I hope they can ice fish with me some day when they are older.

Disturbed man keeps police busy

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police spent a lot of time on Christmas Day with David K. Ricklefs. They cited the 53-year-old Middlebury resident for several offenses — including what police described as “hate-motivated crimes” — following a report of a man allegedly harassing a family at a Maple Street home area on Dec. 25.

Police allege Ricklefs resisted arrest and assaulted an officer while being taken into custody. Police said they then took Ricklefs to Porter Hospital for a medical evaluation. While there, police allege Ricklefs caused a disturbance and made racially charged statements toward a staff member.

After being released from the hospital, Ricklefs was taken to the Middlebury Police Department for processing. While in a holding cell, Ricklefs damaged the sprinkler system, causing flooding and water damage within the police headquarters, according to authorities.

Police said they placed Ricklefs in a cruiser while Middlebury firefighters helped shut off the

Middlebury Police Log

building’s sprinkler system and remove standing water from inside of the building.

At this point, police said, Ricklefs again requested a medical evaluation. When Middlebury Regional EMS officials arrived and began to evaluate him, he allegedly spit into the face of one of the EMTs, according to police.

Police ultimately charged Ricklefs with three counts of simple assault, four counts of aggravated disorderly conduct, two counts of assault on a protected professional, resisting arrest, hate-motivated crimes, tampering with facilities, and unlawful mischief. Police took Ricklefs to the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility in Rutland, where he was held for lack of \$10,000 bail.

A couple days later, Ricklefs came to the attention of Middlebury police again.

On Behalf of Rutland police, Middlebury officers on Dec. 29 cited Ricklefs for three counts of assault on a protected person. A couple hours later, they cited Ricklefs for violations of a no stalking order, violating his conditions of release, and disorderly conduct, following what police called “an investigation into multiple incidents that occurred in town.”

In addition to making daily checks on houseless people who’ve been camping off Bakery Lane, Middlebury police last week:

- Distributed donated toys on Christmas Day.
- Received a report of a man showing “erratic behavior” in the downtown on Dec. 25.
- Cited Robert D. Rheame, 50, of Middlebury for unlawful trespass on Dec. 26, after he had allegedly entered a Washington Street business after having been issued a no-trespass order.
- Took into protective custody a drunken man who had been walking along North Pleasant Street during the evening of Dec. 27. Police ultimately released the man to a sober party.
- Helped Charter House Emergency Shelter officials remove a man from the property on Dec. 27.
- On Dec. 27, helped a Mill Street business owner assess security issues following a recent theft.
- Investigated a single-vehicle crash with injuries near the intersection of Quarry Road and Foote Street on Dec. 28 at around 9:25 p.m.

- Received a report about a stranger inside a Seminary Street Extension residence on Dec. 28. Police said the man had left when confronted by the complainant and could not be found in the area.
- Investigated a report of a vehicle leaving the scene of a crash in the Elm Street area on Dec. 28.
- Were informed that someone had broken into St. Stephen’s Church on Dec. 28 and had stolen a set of keys.
- Received a complaint about gunfire heard in the Halladay Road area on Dec. 28.
- Enforced the winter overnight parking ban downtown on Dec. 28.
- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS with a woman who’d been experiencing a mental health crisis in the Otterside Court area on Dec. 29.
- Received a report that a streetlight near Rosie’s Restaurant on Route 7 South had been damaged by a driver who had left the scene on Dec. 29.
- Assisted a man who was having a mental health episode in the Court Street area on Dec. 29.
- Removed a discharged patient from Porter Hospital’s property after he had become unruly on Dec. 29.
- Gave a ride home to an elderly patient who was stranded at Porter Hospital on Dec. 30.
- Investigated a report of a vehicle leaving the site of a crash on Bakery Lane on Dec. 30.
- Responded to a report pf a woman yelling and creating a disturbance in the downtown area on Dec. 30.
- Closed a portion of the Main Street sidewalk in front of the Marquis Theater on Dec. 30, due to “part of the building cracking and separating,” according to police.
- Received a complaint from a Valley View resident who said someone had left “kiss prints” on her window on Dec. 30.
- Responded to a report of an angry guest at Gather on Merchants Row on Dec. 31. Police said they de-escalated the situation.
- Investigated a report of two people drinking alcohol in public off Court Street on Dec. 31.
- Responded to an argument between people at the Middlebury Inn on Dec. 31. Police said those involved were separated for the night.
- Searched in vain for an intoxicated driver who had reportedly stopped at the McDonald’s Restaurant drive-through at around 10:50 p.m. on Dec. 31.
- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS with a drunken man at a Route 7 South home at around Dec. 11:15 p.m. on Dec. 31.

Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS	
Girls' Hockey	
1/6 MUHS at Stowe.....	4:15 PM
1/10 MUHS at Brattleboro.....	4:45 PM
1/13 Rutland at MUHS.....	7 PM
Boys' Hockey	
1/6 Hartford at MUHS.....	7 PM
1/10 Burr & Burton at MUHS.....	7 PM
1/13 MUHS at Mt. Mansfield.....	7:15 PM
Boys' Basketball	
1/5 MSJ at Mt Abe.....	7 PM
1/6 OV at Bellows Falls.....	1 PM
1/9 OV at MUHS.....	7 PM
1/9 Peoples at VUHS.....	7 PM
1/9 Fair Haven at Mt Abe.....	7 PM
1/11 OV at Mill River.....	7 PM
1/12 Milton at VUHS.....	7 PM
1/12 Rutland at MUHS.....	7 PM
1/13 Mt Abe at OV.....	2:30 PM
Girls' Basketball	
1/5 Fair Haven at MUHS.....	7 PM
1/5 Mt Abe at OV.....	7 PM
1/9 OV at BBA.....	6:30 PM
1/10 Milton at MUHS.....	7 PM
1/10 Fair Haven at Mt Abe.....	7 PM
1/10 Missisquoi at VUHS.....	7 PM
1/13 Mt Abe at Enosburg.....	2:30 PM
1/13 VUHS at MUHS.....	12:30 PM
1/13 Rutland at OV.....	6:30 PM
Dance	
1/6 MUHS Hosts.....	1 PM
Wrestling	
1/12&13.....	Essex Tournament
Gymnastics	
1/12 Burlington+ at MUHS.....	6 PM
COLLEGE SPORTS	
Women's Basketball	
1/5 Midd at Hamilton.....	7 PM
1/6 Midd at Amherst.....	3 PM
1/9 St. Lawrence at Midd.....	5:30 PM
1/12 Bowdoin at Midd.....	7 PM
1/13 Colby at Midd.....	3 PM
Men's Basketball	
1/5 Hamilton at Midd.....	7 PM
1/6 Amherst at Midd.....	3 PM
1/12 Midd at Bowdoin.....	7 PM
1/13 Midd at Colby.....	3 PM
Men's Hockey	
1/5 Midd at Wesleyan.....	7 PM
1/6 Midd at Trinity.....	4 PM
1/12 Midd at Plattsburgh.....	7 PM
Women's Hockey	
1/6 Endicott at Midd.....	3 PM
1/12 Colby at Midd.....	7 PM

Bristol man cited for DUI after traffic stop

BRISTOL — Bristol police on Dec. 9 cited Trevor Fisher, 30, of Bristol for driving under the influence, following a traffic stop on East Street.

Between Dec. 3 and 16 Bristol police completed 43 foot patrols, conducted 15 traffic stops, and checked security at Mount Abraham Union High School 12 times, at Bristol Elementary School 12 times and at local businesses 12

Bristol Police Log

times.

Police also processed nine fingerprint requests, responded to one 911 hang-up call that proved

(See Bristol police, Page 5B)

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community calendar

jan
5

FRIDAY

First Friday Age Well meal in Middlebury. Friday, Jan. 5, 11 a.m., VFW, 530 Exchange St. Doors open at 11 a.m. Meal served at noon of glazed ham patty, sweet potatoes, green bean blend, birthday cake and milk. \$5 suggested donation. Advanced tickets required — order by Tuesday, Jan. 2, at 802-377-1419. Bring your own place setting. Open to anyone age 60 and up and their spouse of any age. Free ride may be provided. Call Tri-Valley Transit at 802-388-2287 to inquire.

Knights In Italy spaghetti dinner in Bristol. Friday, Jan. 5, 5-7 p.m., St. Ambrose Parish, 11 School St. Meals available for dine-in or take-out menu includes spaghetti with sauce, garlic bread, salad and dessert. Cost: \$12 adults/\$6 children 12 and under/\$30 family. No pre-order necessary. All proceeds will go toward furthering the Knights' mission of aiding the community in a variety of ways, including a donation of winter coats to 5-town schools.

jan
6

SATURDAY

American Red Cross blood drive in New Haven. Saturday, Jan. 6, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., town gym, 78 North St. All will be entered for a chance at a trip for 2 to Super Bowl LVIII in Vegas. For an appointment, please visit redcrossblood.org and enter NEWHAVENVT, or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

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
7

SUNDAY

Pancake breakfast in Middlebury. Sunday, Jan. 7, 8-10 a.m., VFW 530 Exchange St. Menu includes pancakes, sausage gravy/biscuits, bacon, hash, sausage, hash browns eggs to order, scrambled eggs, toast, coffee and orange juice. Adults \$12/children \$6. Open to the public. All proceeds benefit Veterans' programs.

"Lincoln Critter Pics" presentation in Lincoln. Thursday, Jan. 7, 7 p.m., Lincoln Library, River Rd. Lincoln resident and photographer Dale Cockrell will give a slideshow presentation of photos of wildlife taken within a mile of his home.

jan
10

WEDNESDAY

"Final Gifts- What can we do for those we love before we go" in Middlebury. Wednesday, Jan. 10, 1-3 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. An educational panel of five speakers, both by community and for community on the following topics: Financial, Organizing/ Downsizing, Palliative Care & Hospice, Green Burial and Death with Dignity Law. Short time for Q & A will follow each speaker. Refreshments. No childcare Parking at MUHS lot.

Writing Through Grief Series in Vergennes. Wednesday, Jan. 10, 5:30-6:45 p.m. Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. The first in a series of four evening workshops will introduce writing as a companion to grief. What can our writing tell us about our journey. The series of four workshops will take place every Wednesday night from Jan. 10- 31. Space is limited. Email cedar.winslow@bixbylibrary.org to sign up.

Ferrisburgh Union Meeting Hall event planning meeting online. Wednesday, Jan. 10, 7 p.m. Ferrisburgh Union Meeting Hall programming committee welcomes community members to assist with event planning for 2024. The meeting link is at www.fumh.org and more information is available by email to unionmeetinghall@gmail.com.

jan
12

FRIDAY

Death Café in Vergennes. Friday, Jan. 12, 9:30 a.m., Maple Cafe, Kennedy Brothers 11 Main St. Death Café is an international movement started in Europe where people gather to eat cake, drink tea, and discuss death in a relaxed, open setting with no agenda, objective, or themes. It is a discussion group, rather than a grief support or counseling session. Space is limited as the Café will be open to the public. Tickets at tinyurl.com/Death-cafe-Jan-12. More info contact Louella Richer at lricher@portermedical.org.

"Community Remembrance Ceremony" in Middlebury. Friday Jan. 12, 7 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. Come join Rev.Christina and leaders of Champlain Valley UU Society for a contemplative service of honoring and remembering loved ones we have lost, including Rev. Marin Luther King Jr. Through photos, naming, music, candle lighting, and silence we will honor family, friends, and loved ones who have died. No childcare. Parking at MUHS lot. All are welcome.

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 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.



The process of grief

MULTIPLE TALKS, GATHERINGS and workshops will be held in Addison County in the coming weeks to address those who have passed and how to prepare for losing a loved one — from writing workshops at Bixby Memorial Library in Vergennes beginning Jan. 10, to lectures at the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society on Jan. 10, 12 and 14, to a Death Café in Vergennes on Jan. 12. See this print calendar and the Addison Independent's online calendar for more information and details.

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.

"Practicing Death" in Middlebury. Sunday, Jan. 14, 10 a.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. We know that there's one thing we can count on in this life: that it will end. Through looking at religious and cultural perceptions of death and our personal relationship with death, we will explore what it means to practice dying so we can truly live. Childcare provided. Parking ant MUHS lot. All are welcome.

jan
17

WEDNESDAY

Learn and Play: Labyrinth in Vergennes. Wednesday, Jan. 17, 4:30-6:30 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Be the first to collect all your treasures by shifting the walls of the labyrinth to create a clear path. Players take turns to search the Labyrinth for their magical objects and characters by carefully moving through the constantly changing maze. More info at bixbylibrary.org.

Writing Through Grief Series in Vergennes. Wednesday, Jan. 17, 5:30-6:45 p.m. Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. The first in a series of four evening workshops will introduce writing as a companion to grief. What can our writing tell us about our journey. The series of four workshops will take place every Wednesday night from Jan. 10- 31. Space is limited. Email cedar.winslow@bixbylibrary.org to sign up.

jan
18

THURSDAY

Homelessness Awareness Day honk-and-wave in Bristol, Middlebury and Vergennes. Thursday, Jan. 18, 7:30-11 a.m., town greens. Part of a statewide day of action that combines awareness-raising events in local communities with state policy work in the legislature, and more. The Addison County Housing Coalition is holding three simultaneous honk-and-wave events in Middlebury, Vergennes and Bristol We hope you can join us, and spread the word.

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 vergennessoperahouse.org.

CALENDAR **ONLINE**
addisonindependent.com

Bristol police

(Continued from Page 4B)

to be a misdial, conducted two welfare checks, completed five sex offender registry checks, verified one vehicle identification number and helped one person get into a locked vehicle.

In other recent activity, Bristol police:

- On Dec. 5 enforced the winter parking ban throughout the village.
- On Dec. 6 investigated a harassment complaint on Airport Drive. Police determined the action did not rise to the level of an offense.
- On Dec. 7 received a necklace found on Taylor Avenue.
- On Dec. 7 were told of a citizen dispute that occurred at the Watershed Center. An investigation is ongoing.
- On Dec. 8 received a report of intentional damage done to a Halloween decoration on South Street. An investigation is ongoing.

• On Dec. 8 responded to a report of an assault on Mountain Street and forwarded information to the Addison County State's Attorney's Office for review.

• On Dec. 9 responded to a citizen dispute on Main Street. An investigation is ongoing.

• On Dec. 10 received information regarding drug use on West Street. Police found there was not enough information or evidence to determine a crime had occurred.

• On Dec. 11 were told of a scooter being stolen from a yard on West Street. An investigation is ongoing.

• On Dec. 11 took a report of a violation of a restraining order. An investigation is ongoing.

• On Dec. 13 investigated a motor vehicle complaint on Mountain Street.

• On Dec. 16 completed a report of a two-car crash on Route 116 South.

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Free in-home consultations!



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Call 802-388-4944 or email advertising@addisonindependent.com for details.

CLASSIFIEDS

Public Meetings

AL-ANON OFFERS HELP and hope to anyone who has been affected by a loved one's drinking. Middlebury hosts an online meeting Sunday night 7:15pm and a face to face one Wednesday at 1:30pm at CVUUS (2 Duane Court Middlebury near the high school) that you can also access by Zoom. Visit vermontalananonlateen.org for links and list of other meetings in the region. If you'd like to speak to an Al-Anon member, call our answering service (866-972-5266) and an Al-Anon member will call you back.

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

THE TURNING POINT CENTER of Addison County is open for in-person services, Monday through Friday, 10am-4pm, 54A Creek Road, Middlebury. We are available by phone 24/7 at 802-388-4249.

Public Meetings

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

Public Meetings

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.

MELISSA'S QUALITY CLEANING Services. Residential and commercial. Fully insured. Great rates. Reliable and thorough cleaning. 802-345-6257.

Services

ODD JOBS; PROPERTY clean up, junk removal, brush cutting, lawn work. Call us today, we do other jobs too! 802-999-2194, John.

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

Help Wanted

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.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted



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**

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

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)
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- 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!



Our schools need substitute teachers. You can help!

Substitute Teachers


- Are essential to our schools!
- Help our schools operate at their full potential during staff vacancies and illness.
- Ensure consistency and support for all students.

This could be a great fit if you:

- Love supporting kids!
- Have and want a flexible schedule.
- Are energetic, curious, inclusive, and kind.
- Are considering a career as a teacher or paraprofessional.
- Want to get involved and support our community!

To apply: acsdvt.org/Pages/4418 or scan the QR Code

Questions: 802-362-1281



Payscale:

Your rate of pay increases if you commit to consecutive days in a week. Substitutes are paid on half/full day basis.


Licensed Substitute Teachers and ACSD retirees:

- \$160 per day for 5 days
- \$150/day for 4 days
- \$140/day for 3 days
- \$130/day for 2 days
- \$120/day for 1 day

Unlicensed Substitute Teachers:

- \$150 per day for 5 days
- \$140/day for 4 days
- \$130/day for 3 days
- \$120/day for 2 days
- \$110/day for 1 day

School Nurse substitutes begin at \$140/day



People Caring for People

Come Join Our Team!

At Elderwood, our Mission is People Caring for People. Our values of Integrity, Collaboration, Accountability, Respect & Excellence are at the core of everything we do. We strive to not only be the partner of choice for our residents, their families and community players – but also for our employees.

Elderwood at Ticonderoga is actively seeking a kind and collaborative CLINICAL RN EDUCATOR who embodies these core values.

ABOUT ELDERWOOD AT TICONDEROGA:
Known for a Revolutionary War-era fort along the western shores of Lake Champlain, Ticonderoga, NY, is also home to Elderwood at Ticonderoga. The senior care community in the heart of the Adirondacks offers scenic mountain views and a home-like atmosphere for long-term skilled nursing care residents and patients requiring short-term subacute rehabilitation. Part of the Medical Village of Ticonderoga, the facility benefits from its proximity to an emergency department, medical office building and laboratory services on campus.

ADDITIONAL ELDERWOOD BENEFITS FOR RNS:
Gas Allowance Stipend - We'll make the drive worth your while!
Pay-In-Lieu-of-Benefits Program - Earn 16% more ON TOP OF base rate.
Tuition Reimbursement Program
Employee Referral Bonus (up to \$2,000)
401K with Employer Matching
PTO & Holiday Package
Full Suite of Health Benefits - Medical, Dental, Vision
Salary: \$77,200 - \$111,540 / Year

CLINICAL RN EDUCATOR - POSITION OVERVIEW:
Responsible for orientation and in-service education for all levels of personnel, and for coordination of in-service programs for all departments; serves as the Primary Instructor for the Nursing Assistant 100-Hour Training Program and Program Coordinator for the Tuition Assistance Program.

CLINICAL RN EDUCATOR QUALIFICATIONS:
Credentials of a Registered Professional nurse with a current NYS license required.
Baccalaureate degree preferred.
Experience in in-service education or skills in teaching; at least one year experience in a long-term health care facility required.
Ability to work cooperatively with personnel at all levels required.
Ability to communicate well verbally and in writing required.
Personal qualities of enthusiasm; interest in needs of residents, and quality assurance desirable.
Ability to perform tasks to established standards of excellence required.

DON'T DELAY — APPLY TODAY!
www.elderwoodcareers.com



Green Mountain Foster Grandparent Program

The Foster Grandparent Program is seeking classroom aides to assist in educational settings throughout Addison County. The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) is a federally funded program that has successfully placed thousands of volunteers in educational settings nationwide. Individuals must be at least 55 and willing to work a minimum of 10 hours per week. Participants receive travel reimbursement, fifty paid vacation/sick days, and a tax-free hourly stipend if they are income eligible.

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact RSVF at 802-468-7056.



AmeriCorps Seniors

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 (Mondays & Thursdays) is run 4th time free!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

RATES

DEADLINES: Thurs. noon for Mon. paper
Mon. 5 p.m. for Thurs. paper

- 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
58 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT 05753
802-388-4944
www.addisonindependent.com • email: classifieds@addisonindependent.com

Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

PART TIME PERSONAL CARE assistant wanted for 75 year old man, in Addison. To work for 3 hours/

Help Wanted

day, every other weekend, Saturday and Sunday. There is also a possibility of working one weekday

Help Wanted

Help with light housekeeping, cooking, and chores. \$25/hour. Contact Ellen at: eresnik@rcn.com.

Executive Assistant

Elderly Services is a non-profit organization providing services to our area elders and their families in a caring and collaborative environment. We are looking for someone with a positive attitude who works well as a member of a team of colleagues.

The Executive Assistant reports directly to the Executive Director of Elderly Services and supports her in a variety of ways to manage the day-to-day activities of the organization.

This part-time position involves both office and administrative duties, coordinating our ESI College program, as well as direct service. A full-time position with additional responsibilities is a future possibility.

To apply, please visit our website or send your resume and cover letter to:

Elderly Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 581, Middlebury, VT 05753



112 Exchange St., Middlebury
802-388-3983 | elderlyservices.org

For Sale

8 MONTH OLD LABRADOODLE with curly black hair. Very playful and affectionate. Responds to commands. Please call 802-453-2287.

For Rent

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

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.

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.

Help Wanted

For Rent

MIDDLEBURY, OFF CAMPUS HOUSING available. 802-388-4831, AJ Neri Property Rentals.



SPACIOUS 2 BEDROOM apartment in historic 1860's farmhouse located 15 minutes from Middlebury. Completely renovated with new windows, washer, dryer, dishwasher, etc. Original wide plank flooring and tall ceilings. \$2500/month plus electric, heat, & 1 month deposit. Non-smoking, cats considered. 802-897-5447

Help Wanted

For Rent

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." 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.

Want to Rent

QUIET, NON-SMOKING, non-pet-owning, retired couple seeks 2BR house or apartment starting May 1st. First preference Bristol village, 2nd preference Vergennes. References available. Call 419-347-3337 (no texts).

Wood Heat

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

Att. Farmers

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

WHITNEY'S CUSTOM FARM WORK Pond agitating, liquid manure hauling, drag line aerating. Call for price. 462-2755, John Whitney.

Wanted

OLD & USED GUNS WANTED
Rifles, Hand guns, Shot guns
Top prices paid.
P: 802-775-2859
C: 802-236-7213

Public Notices

can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT
on **Pages 9B and 10B.**

**STATE OF VERMONT
SUPERIOR COURT
PROBATE DIVISION
ADDISON UNIT
CASE NO. 23-PR-07050
IN RE ESTATE OF:
LINDA REYNOLDS**

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Linda Reynolds, Late of Monkton, Vermont. I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.
Dated: December 29, 2023

Signature of Fiduciary:

/s/ Perry Seiffert

Executor/Administrator:

Perry Seiffert, Fiduciary

c/o Wick & Maddocks, 1 Grove St,

Essex Junction, VT 05452

Phone: (917) 282-5256,

Email: jeff@wickandmaddocks.com

Publication: Addison Independent

Publication Date: 1/4/24

Address of Probate Court:

7 Mahady Court

Middlebury, VT 05753

INVITATION TO BID TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY BID NUMBER # 20240105-3

Sealed competitive bids for a **Class 3 Regular Cab/Flatbed Truck** will be received at the office of the Town Manager, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, VT 05753 until **11:00 AM, January 31, 2024.**

The Town of Middlebury, VT reserves the right to waive any informalities, reject any and all bids, or to accept any bid deemed to be in the best interest of the Town.

Information for Bidders, Specifications and Bid Forms may be obtained by contacting the Department of Public Works at 1020 Route 7 South by phone at (802) 388-4045, via email at pkirby@townofmiddlebury.org, or on the Town's webpage at www.townofmiddlebury.org.

INVITATION TO BID TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY BID NUMBER # 20240105-1

Sealed competitive bids for a **Single Axle Class 6, 4x4 Dump Truck** will be received at the office of the Town Manager, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, VT 05753 until **11:00 AM, January 26, 2024.**

The Town of Middlebury, VT reserves the right to waive any informalities, reject any and all bids, or to accept any bid deemed to be in the best interest of the Town.

Information for Bidders, Specifications and Bid Forms may be obtained free of charge at the Municipal Building at 77 Main Street, the Department of Public Works at 1020 Route 7 South or on the Town's webpage at www.townofmiddlebury.org. Questions may be addressed to Patti Kirby via email at pkirby@townofmiddlebury.org or by phone at (802) 388-4045.

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM 116 – LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM TOWN OFFICES – 77 MAIN STREET TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2024 - 7:00 P.M.

Also available via Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85048188093>
By Phone: +1 646-558-8656 (not toll-free)
Webinar ID: 850 4818 8093

For those wishing to watch but not participate:
Selectboard meetings are livestreamed to MCTV's YouTube Channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/MCTV_Vermont
and also broadcast live on Comcast Channel 1071

AGENDA

- 7:00 1. **Call to Order
2. *Approval of Agenda
3. *Approval of Consent Agenda
3.a. Approval of Minutes of the December 19, 2023 Selectboard Meeting
3.b. Acceptance of Selectboard Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
3.c. Applications for Liquor Licenses, Outside Consumption Permits, and Entertainment
3.d. Approval of Grant Agreements and Subgrant Agreements for State Wastewater Pretreatment Grants to WhistlePig and AgriMark
3.e. Consent Agenda Placeholder
3.f. Town Manager's Report
- Town of Middlebury Wastewater Superintendent Robert Wells named 2023 Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator of the Year by the US EPA Region 1 Office
- 7:05 4. **Citizen Comments [Opportunity to raise or address issues not otherwise included on this agenda]
- 7:10 5. **Agenda Placeholder
- 7:25 6. *Nomination of Candidates for appointment to Means Woods Board of Trustees
- 7:50 7. *Public Hearing - Town FY25 General Fund Budget
- 8:10 8. **Continued Review of Draft FY25 General Fund Budget
8.a. Discussion of Input from Public Meeting
8.b. Overall List of Non-Profit & Regional Agency Fundings Requests to Town
8.c. Charter House Coalition
- 8:20 9. **Kate Rothwell, Executive Director, Middlebury Regional EMS
10. *Sarah Hurlburt & Mukhtar A. Amin, 2 Forest Lane, Request to Purchase Property associated with Garage Easement from the Town
- 8:40 11. **Dana Hart, Library Director, and Chris Huston, ReArch Project Manager, regarding Ilsey Public Library Renovation/Expansion Construction Budget and Timeline Update
- 8:50 12. *David Sophrin, Assistant Town Manager, Brief Update from First Meeting of the Policy Review Committee
- 8:55 13. **State of Vermont - 2023 Equalization Study Results
14. **Agenda Placeholder
15. **Agenda Placeholder
16. *Approval of Check Warrants
17. **Board Member Concerns
18. **Executive Session - Contracts
19. **Action on Matters Discussed in Executive Session
- 9:10 20. *Adjourn

* Decision Item ** Possible Decision



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




Water Treatment & Distribution System Operator

The Vergennes Panton Water District is seeking an individual for the full-time position of Water System Operator.

Job Description: This position requires the ability to operate the water treatment facility, read water meters, and maintain and repair the transmission and distribution system. Must be willing to work on a rotating on-call basis. Must have or be able to obtain a 4C State of Vermont Operator's Certificate.

To Apply:
Please email resume and cover letter to Jon Deming at vpwd.main1@gmail.com



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.

TOWN OF BRIDPORT PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Bridport Zoning Board of Adjustments will hold a public hearing on January 17th at 6pm in the Bridport Town Office, at 82 Crown Point Road, on each and to consider each of the following application(s):

1. At 6:05 PM on Application (#23-47) by Jay Nadeau requesting a Variance to build a 10' X 12' out-building within 50' of property lines. Tax ID# 06-002 owned by Jay Nadeau. The property is located at 147 Stone Ln. (PVT) Bridport, VT 05734.

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 Bridport Zoning Board of Adjustments proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal on any decision of it on an application.

Dinah Bain (chair)
Cindy Myrick (secretary)
Michael Wojciechowski (zoning administrator)



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Your local newspaper is your **BEST RESOURCE** for local job opportunities!

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ADDISON COUNTY
INDEPENDENT

ANWSD BOARD MEETING NOTICES
FOR JANUARY 2024

Monday, Jan 8

4:45 PM
* (new date & time)

Facilities Committee Meeting
ANWSD Conference Room

6:00 PM

ANWSD Board Meeting
VUMHS Library

Wednesday, Jan 17

6:00 PM
* (date change due to MLK Holiday on Monday)

ANWSD Board Meeting
VUMHS Library

Monday, Jan 29

6:00 PM

ANWSD Board Meeting
(if needed)
VUMHS Library

INVITATION TO BID
TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
BID NUMBER # 20240105-2

Sealed competitive bids for a **Single Axle Class 6, 4x4 Body Build** will be received at the office of the Town Manager, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, VT 05753 until **11:00 AM, January 26, 2024.**

The Town of Middlebury, VT reserves the right to waive any informalities, reject any and all bids, or to accept any bid deemed to be in the best interest of the Town.

Information for Bidders, Specifications and Bid Forms may be obtained free of charge at the Municipal Building at 77 Main Street, the Department of Public Works at 1020 Route 7 South or on the Town's webpage at www.townofmiddlebury.org. Questions may be addressed to Patti Kirby – pkirby@townofmiddlebury.org or by phone at (802) 388-4045.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
BRISTOL SELECTBOARD
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
TO UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS

January 22, 2024, 7:00pm

The Bristol Selectboard will hold a hybrid public hearing on Monday, January 22, 2024, 7:00pm, on the proposed amendments to the Bristol Unified Development Regulations (UDR) as proposed by the Bristol Planning Commission pursuant to 24 V.S.A. 4442.

The principal purpose of the proposed development bylaw amendments is to make revisions that would enable the creation of more housing in the Village Planning Area, traditionally the village and some outlying areas, consistent with the Town Plan using aspects detailed in “Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods” published by the Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development. Additionally, the proposed amendments will implement reforms required by S.100 (Act 47) known as the “Housing Opportunities Made for Everyone (HOPE).

The Selectboard proposes the following adjustments to the Planning Commission’s proposed amendments:

- Adjusted ADU dimensional standards in HDR;
- Added dimensional standards in VM to match RA-1;
- Adjusted “Business Yard” definition;
- Adjusted language in Section 808 to clarify floodplain review process; and
- Adjustments throughout for gender-neutral references.

Copies of the proposed Bristol Unified Development Regulations are available on Bristol’s Web site at www.bristolvt.org and can be viewed or obtained at the Bristol Town Office Monday–Thursday, 8:00am -4:30pm.

To join the Zoom meeting:
Meeting ID: 879 1281 0018
Passcode: 619003

Join meeting by phone: 1 (646) 558-8656

For more information, please contact Zoning Administrator Kris Perlee at zoning@bristolvt.org, Town Administrator Valerie Capels at townadmin@bristolvt.org, or by leaving a message at the Town Office at (802) 453-2410.

IMPORTANT ANNUAL NOTICE REGARDING HERBICIDE USE IN THE MAINTENANCE
OF ELECTRIC UTILITY RIGHTS-OF-WAY

The Vermont Public Utility Commission has set forth rules under PUC Rule 3.600 pertaining to the use of herbicides in the maintenance of electric utility rights-of-way (ROW). Each spring, herbicide applications may begin on or after April 1st. These rules afford you important rights and duties. Vermont electric utilities maintain electric line rights-of-way with several methods, including the selective use of herbicides on trees and brush. They also encourage low-growing shrubs and trees which will crowd tall-growing species and, thus, minimize the use of herbicides. Methods of herbicide applications may include stump, stem injection, basal, soil, and foliar. Only electric utility rights-of-way that have tall-growing tree species with the potential of threatening the electric utility system are treated.

If you reside on or own property in Vermont within 1000’ of an electric utility right-of-way:

1. **Sign up to receive written notification** from your local electric utility of plans to apply herbicide on any ROW within 1000’ of your property or the property where you reside. Check nearby poles for tags identifying the utility and/or pole number, complete the form below and submit it to your local electric utility by mail before February 15th, 2024 to be added to the notification list. If determined to be qualified, you will receive notification from the utility at least 30 days prior to scheduled herbicide application.
2. **You are responsible to make your local electric utility aware** of the location of any potentially affected water supply, and of any other environmentally sensitive area where herbicide application ought to be avoided.
3. **Watch and listen for public service announcements** in newspapers and radio ads noting upcoming herbicide applications.
4. **Check with your local electric utility** regarding the vegetation management cycle near your particular line.
5. **You have the right** to request, in writing, that the utility refrain from applying herbicides in the process of clearing the right-of-way, and the utility may offer alternatives such as herbicide stump treatment or herbicide stem injections.
6. **You have the right** to refuse, in writing, the use of herbicides whatsoever at no cost to you if the type of lines in the right-of-way are distribution lines, bringing electric service directly to individual customers.
7. **You have the right** to refuse, in writing, the use of herbicides whatsoever by paying a \$30 administration fee if the type of lines in the right-of-way are **transmission lines** or sub-transmission lines, bringing electricity to or between substations.

For more details, or to ask additional questions, please contact your local electric utility, or one of the following:

(leave blank for local electric co. mailing address and phone)	Agency of Agriculture Public Health & Ag. Resource Mgmt 116 State St., Montpelier, VT 05602 1-802-828-2431	Department of Public Service Consumer Affairs & Public Information 112 State St., Montpelier, VT 05620 1-800-622-4496
---	---	--

Based on the information above, if you believe you qualify to be notified in advance of pending herbicide applications in the rights-of-way, mail the request below to your local electric company before February 15th, 20

Resident/Property Owner Request to be Added to Herbicide Treatment Notification Mailing List

Name

Home Phone Number

Street Address

Work Phone Number

Town

O.K. to use work number?

Yes

No

State

Zip Code

(circle one)

Electric Utility Account Number

Best time to contact you

Affected Property:

Year-Round Residence

Summer Residence

Commercial Property

Water Supply

Organic Farm

Land

Other

Line/Pole Identification:

Utility Initials

Pole Numbers

Please fill out this request completely to help us determine if you qualify for herbicide treatment notification.

MAIL THIS REQUEST TO YOUR LOCAL ELECTRIC UTILITY AT THE ADDRESS LISTED ABOVE BEFORE
FEBRUARY 15TH, 2024

Public Notices can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on **Pages 9B and 10B.**

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
SELECTBOARD

Tuesday, January 9, 2024, 7:10 p.m.

Town Office Conference Room
77 Main Street, Middlebury, Vermont 05753
(Videoconference information provided below)

PUBLIC HEARING and INFORMATION MEETING on
PRELIMINARY PROPOSED TOWN GENERAL FUND BUDGET
(Includes capital project funds) for FY25 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

Your comments, suggestions and input are important and appreciated. If you can't make the meeting on the 9th, we invite you to submit your input via e-mail, kramsay@townofmiddlebury.org, or mail, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, Vermont 05753.

Copies of the proposed budget may be obtained from the Town's website, www.townofmiddlebury.org, at the Town Manager's office, 77 Main Street, or by calling 802-458-8000.

If you need special accommodation to attend this meeting, please contact the Town Manager's Office as early as possible.

Please visit the link below to join the webinar:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85048188093>

Or Telephone: Dial+1 646 558 8656, Webinar ID: 850 4818 8093

CITY OF VERGENNES
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on January 22, 2024, as the first order of new business, for the following purpose:

To consider site plan and conditional use review for application #2023-47 by Matthew Wagner for a change of use of a portion of 10 Green Street from retail to restaurant. Reviews will consider Article VII, Article VIII, and Section 1608.

Please note that the hearing will be held as a “hybrid meeting”, with participation either in person, by ZOOM, or by phone. The in-person meeting will be held in the conference room at City Hall.

Join by computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84252901890>, meeting password: 689859.

Join by phone: Dial 1 (929) 205-6099; Meeting ID: 842-5290-1890; Meeting Passcode: 689859.

For participants joining by phone: To raise your hand during the meeting, press *9. To mute/unmute during the meeting, press *6

If you experience any difficulty in accessing this meeting, contact the City of Vergennes Zoning Administrator at 802-877-3637

You must participate in the public hearing either in person or in writing, in order to take any subsequent appeal. The City of Vergennes is an “on the record” appeal municipality with regard to appeals to Environmental Court from Development Review Board decisions. This means that the Environmental Court shall only consider testimony or information provided during public hearings on the application. Interested parties should therefore assure that their participation in the public hearing proceedings is complete and represents the totality of their desired considerations.

A copy of the application is available for public review by contacting Peter Garon at pgaron@vergennes.org.

December 22, 2023
Peter Garon, Administrative Officer

TOWN OF NEW HAVEN DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §4464, a public hearing before the Development Review Board of the Town of New Haven will be held at the Town Clerk's Office, 78 North Street, New Haven, VT on Monday, January 22, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. to consider the following:

- Conditional use application #2024-DRB-01-CU submitted by Addison County Fair & Field Days, Inc., 1790 Field Days Road for a conditional use permit for commercial outdoor recreation in the RA-2/RA-10 zoning district, per New Haven Zoning Bylaws Section 341.
- Conditional use application #2024-DRB-02-CU submitted by Steve and Lisa Dupoise for a conditional use permit to operate an automotive repair and auto body repair shop at 7407 Ethan Allen Highway located in the Highway Commercial zoning district, per New Haven Zoning Bylaws Section 341.

Please note that participation in the local proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal. The hearing will be held as a hybrid meeting, either in person at the Town Clerk's office or by remote:

<https://zoom.us/j/98142119190?pwd=U0pFdDQ2a1ZRZzVCRkN4ZGcyYUF3dzo9>

Meeting ID: 981 4211 9190

Passcode: 4jYbTA

Meeting ID: 981 4211 9190

Passcode: 274146

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/98142119190>

Electronic copies of the applications may be obtained by emailing the zoning administrator at: newhavenzoning@gmavt.net; hard copies are available at the Town Clerk's office during normal business hours, or on the Town's website: www.newhavenvt.com.

New Haven Zoning Administrator (802) 453-3516

WARNING
COUNTY OF ADDISON ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A Section 133(3)(a), the taxpayers of the County of Addison are hereby given notice that the annual meeting to discuss the final budget for 2024-2025 will be held at 10:00 am on Friday, January 19, 2024. The meeting will be held in the County Clerk's office at the Frank Mahady Courthouse in Middlebury. More information and extra copies of the budget may be obtained by contacting the Addison County Clerk at 802-388-1966 or addisoncountyclerk@gmail.com.

Patricia Ross, Assistant Judge & Nicole Wilkerson, Assistant Judge

REVENUE	2024-2025	EXPENSES CONTINUED	
County Tax 0.00511115 Estimate	\$307,219.00	Sheriff's Building	
Interest Earned	\$130.00	Bldg & Grounds	\$11,500.00
Miscellaneous Income	\$15.00	Capital Improvements	\$2,500.00
Passports	\$7,000.00	Custodial	\$2,500.00
Wills for Safekeeping	\$8,000.00	Inspections	\$1,500.00
Total Income	\$322,364.00	Insurance	\$6,500.00
		Utilities	\$18,500.00
EXPENSES		Sheriff's Building Subtotal	\$43,000.00
Court			
Contingency	\$200.00	Sheriff's Department	
Contracted Services	\$5,900.00	Insurance/Bonds	\$20,000.00
Dues & Membership	\$1,350.00	Radio	\$1,000.00
Insurance	\$2,715.00	Office Supplies	\$600.00
Passport/Budget Advertising	\$1,800.00	Telephone	\$4,200.00
Offices Expenses	\$2,400.00	Training	\$30,000.00
Court Personnel		Valcour/Spillman	\$3,500.00
Benefits	\$6,338.00	Personnel	
Salaries	\$73,954.00	Total Benefits	\$12,537.00
Audit	\$8,000.00	Total Salaries	\$83,720.00
Court Subtotal	\$102,657.00	Subtotal	\$155,557.00
Probate Court		Sheriff Capital Reserve	\$20,000.00
Contingency	\$470.00		
Dues	\$235.00		
Training & Education	\$420.00		
Supplies/Equipment	\$25.00	Total Expenses	\$322,364.00
Probate Court Subtotal	\$1,150.00		

Vt. State Police Log

ADDISON COUNTY — The last few days of 2023 and start of 2024 were quiet days for the local officers of the Vermont State Police, though a two-car crash just outside Vergennes on New Year's Eve netted an Addison woman a traffic ticket.

Troopers from the New Haven barracks of the state police responded to a two-vehicle crash at the intersection of Route 7 and New Haven Road in Ferrisburgh at a little after 11:30 a.m. on Dec. 31. Police report that Ellen Pratt, 67, of Addison was stopped while behind the wheel of a 2015 Toyota RAV4, facing east on New Haven Road at the intersection's only stop sign. At the same time, a 2020 Toyota Prius driven by Scott Hudnor, 51, of Dallas, Texas, was southbound on Route 7 at a reasonable speed when the RAV4 entered the intersection without yielding the right of way.

The front end of RAV4 struck the driver's side of the Prius, and both vehicles came to positions of uncontrolled rest. No major injuries resulted from this crash, police reported. They called the Prius a total loss.

Police said they would issue a traffic ticket for failing to stop or yield at an intersection.

Troopers were assisted on scene by the Ferrisburgh Fire Department and Vergennes Area Rescue Squad.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
RIPTON TOWN PLAN

The Town of Ripton Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at 7:00 PM January 23, 2024 in the Ripton Community House, 1283 VT Rte 125, to review and hear comments on the proposed 2023 Ripton Town Plan. The proposed plan addresses the following topics: Land Use; Natural, Historic, Scenic and Natural Resources; Population; Transportation; Energy; Education; Housing; Employment and Economic Development; Relationship of the Plan to Neighboring Towns; Implementation. The proposed plan is available for review from the Ripton Town Clerk. This notice is given pursuant to the requirements of 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, §4384.

TOWN OF ADDISON
PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town of Addison Development Review Board will convene a public hearing on Monday, January 22, 2024 at 7:00PM at the Addison Fire Station to consider the following application:

1. Application (#24-01) Thomas and John Spencer requesting approval for subdividing 5 +/- acre parcel from 83 acres parcel of property located at 3345 VT RTE 22A and requesting a Variance/Waiver since they can't meet the 400' road frontage due to a previous result of State Highway Development. This had been surveyed previously with 400' road frontage therefore causing this hardship.

The applications are available for inspection at the Town Clerk's Office during normal office hours. Interested parties who wish to appeal or to be heard must attend the hearing or may be represented by an agent or an attorney. Communications relating to the application may be filed in writing with the Board either before or during the hearings.

N.B.: Participation in a hearing is necessary to establish status as an "interested party" and the right to appeal a decision rendered in that hearing, according to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. 117 S.S.4464 (a) (1) (C), 4465(b) and 4471 (a). Participation consists of offering through oral or written testimony, evidence or a statement of concern directly related to the subject of the hearing.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Spencer, Chair
Starr Phillips, Board Secretary
Michael Wojciechowski,
Zoning Administrator

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

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The Addison Independent

January 4, 2024

RIPTON MUSICIAN RAISES
FUNDS FOR NEW ALBUM

WHEN IT ALL GOES
DOWN

SEE STORY
PAGE 2

Ripton-based musician Sarah King is facing her all-or-nothing crowdfunding deadline on Jan. 10. Her goal is to raise \$15,000 to professionally release her new full-length album.

GROW EXPLORE PHOTOGRAPHY

Sarah King raises funds for new full-length album

It's been a tense few weeks for independent musician Sarah King. No, it's not the holidays. It's not the start of the New Year, or the darkness that suffuses this time of year either. Now, King has been stressed because \$15-grand is on the line for her new full-length album.

BY **ELSIE**
LYNN PARINI

The Ripton musical artist's Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign runs up to Jan. 10 at 11:59 p.m.

And it's an all-or-nothing game; that means, if she doesn't reach her \$15,000 goal, she doesn't get a penny of the \$6,099 pledged by 63 backers (just eight days before the deadline).

"If I don't hit that goal, I'll be really sad," King said in an interview last week. "The biggest disappointment will be I can't give the rewards — no vinyl, no merch, no new designs... And I'll have to pay for a few pieces already in the works with my credit card... I've gotta hit that goal."

King completed the recording of her latest album with producer David Baron, who's also worked with fellow Vermont musician — and current musical superstar — Noah Kahan, over the last two years. Featuring a roundup of talented musicians from both Vermont and Nashville, the 12-song album (titled "When It All Goes Down") has "a little bit of something for everyone," said King.

"None of us are one-dimensional," she said. "We all have an angel and a devil on our shoulder. We've all had our hearts broken, and been the one doing the breaking. We know how it feels to go hard on the weekend and have to put our head down for work again on Monday morning. This dynamic range within all of us is worth celebrating, exploring, and yes — feeling. Life isn't either/or — it's all the in-betweens, and this record explores everything from hope and grief to anger and strength. In 12 songs, I've got soul-influenced piano pop ballads, southern-rock-tinged bangers, toe-tapping blues, and folk heartbreakers."

The album will be released digitally and to radio in March. So why does King need to raise this extra cash?

"Recording is just one part of releasing music," King explains on her Kickstarter page, which was just selected by Kickstarter as a "Project We Love." "In order to get my music out into the world in front of as many listeners and potential fans as possible to continue growing a sustainable career, I need to assemble a



"NONE OF
US ARE ONE-
DIMENSIONAL...
**WE ALL HAVE
AN ANGEL AND
A DEVIL ON OUR
SHOULDER.**

— Sarah King

Ripton's Sarah King is looking to raise \$15,000 to help get her new album professionally distributed. Support her before Jan. 10 at 11:59 p.m. on Kickstarter.

GROW EXPLORE PHOTOGRAPHY

team to help."

That team includes: publicity, radio promotion, graphic design, CD duplication, merch, postage, video and content creation, advertising, touring expenses, vinyl pressing and more.

Funding is a major hurdle for many independent musicians, and King has been vocal about the economic realities of being a full-time touring musician recently. She started sharing her personal experience as a solo touring artist after conversations with listeners who were surprised when she explained why she was traveling so much — she only gets paid when she's on stage and thus it was important to spend as much time on stage as possible over the summer. The posts quickly morphed into a series where she breaks down how much it takes to make minimum wage as a performer, and alternative options artists have to seek funding offstage, including crowdfunding.

King credits the Vermont Arts Council for two grants she received: the 2022 Artist Development Grant and a 2023 Creation Grant.

"The Vermont Arts Council has been incredibly supportive," King said with great praise. "Last winter was tough financially. On a whim I applied for the Creation Grant because I was starting to feel down on the finances of making this new album. When the grant came through six months later, I just cried. With that, my personal savings and one anonymous donor I was able to cover the recording."

King is no stranger to musical success. Her

2021 five-song EP "The Hour" reached No. 60 on the Americana Radio Charts and landed her the distinction of Songwriter of the Year at the 2021 New England Music Awards. Flowing with that high, King logged 20,000 miles on the road in 2023, including performances at Montana's Red Ants Pants Music Festival, two appearances at The Acorn in Three Oaks, Mich., and a winning set in the Great River Folk Festival Singer/Songwriter Competition.

But still, King said she feels like she's at a "sink or swim moment with her music."

"How am I going to sustain this career?" asked the musician who left her day-job at the Middlebury College Book Store in fall of 2021 to go full-time with her music. "I know there are people in the community who are listening — we saw them during the Women in Music series held at Lincoln Peak Vineyard."

Now King needs to see those supporters come through with this crowdfunding campaign.

"If you get me to my \$15,000 goal, you get to hear the album sooner!" she encouraged. "Check out my song 'The Longest Night' — that's the direction my music is going. It's a little less heavy; a little less badass. It's about somebody who wants to do better for themselves. I want to start highlighting some beauty in the world."

"When it all goes down, these songs will be right here for you, whatever you're going through today, and whatever may come your way," King promised. "Will you help me share them with the world, so they'll be there when it all goes down for someone else?"

FILM SCREENING

Gripping real-life espionage thriller screens in Middlebury on Jan. 7

No doubt many of you have seen Christopher Nolan's epic biographical feature film "Oppenheimer" and are aware of the complex entity that was The Manhattan Project. Among the many high level scientists who were part of Robert Oppenheimer's esteemed coterie was one Theodore [Ted] Hall, the youngest of them all, who joined the Los Alamos team at age 18 and infamously provided nuclear secrets to the Soviet Union. "A Compassionate Spy" is his story and offers a potent counterpoint to the better known historical narrative.

Brilliantly directed by the acclaimed Steve James, three time Emmy winner, two time Oscar nominee and a 2017 MNFF Honoree, "A Compassionate Spy" is a gripping real-life espionage thriller. The story is told through the perspective of Ted Hall's loving wife Joan, who protected his secret for decades. Recruited in 1944 as an 18-year-old Harvard undergraduate to help Robert Oppenheimer and his team create a bomb, Hall was the youngest physicist on the Manhattan Project and didn't share his colleagues' elation after the successful detonation of the world's first atomic bomb. Concerned that a U.S. post-war monopoly on such a powerful weapon could lead to nuclear catastrophe, Hall began passing key information about the bomb's construction to the Soviet Union. After the war, he met, fell in love with and

married Joan, a fellow student with whom he shared a passion for classical music and socialist causes — and the explosive secret of his espionage. The pair raised a family while living under a cloud of suspicion and years of FBI surveillance and intimidation. James' nuanced and ever-relevant documentary reveals the twists and turns of this real-life spy story, its profound impact on nuclear history and the couple's remarkable love and life together during more than 50 years of marriage.

Join Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival for the Vermont premiere of "A Compassionate Spy" on Sunday, Jan. 7, at 2 p.m., at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury.

Following the screening, Rebecca Mitchell, Associate Professor of History at Middlebury College, will lead a discussion about the film and its significant historical context. Originally from Saskatchewan, Canada, Professor Mitchell received her Ph.D. in Russian and Soviet History at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She teaches a wide range of courses at Middlebury on the history of Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union, including an upper level seminar on U.S.-Soviet relations in the nuclear era. You will want to stay for this conversation.

Tickets available at townhalltheater.org.



"A Compassionate Spy" will screen at the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury on Sunday, Jan. 7, at 2 p.m.



MIDDLEBURY
PERFORMING ARTS SERIES

WINTER/SPRING 2024 SEASON



January 19 ■ 7:30 PM
January 21 ■ 2:00 PM

Takács Quartet

\$25/20/10/5

February 22 ■ 7:30 PM

Le Consort

\$25/20/10/5

February 29 & March 1 ■ 7:30 PM

**Your SEXTs Are Sh*t:
Older Better Letters**

\$25/20/10/5

March 2 ■ 7:30 PM

VOCES8

\$25/20/10/5

March 8 ■ 7:30 PM

Small Island Big Song

\$25/20/10/5

March 29 ■ 7:30 PM

Sophie Shao and Friends

\$25/20/10/5

April 28 ■ 7:30 PM

Heath Quartet

Free. Live and streaming.

Tickets on sale now

802-443-MIDD (6433)

go.middlebury.edu/pas



A NEW PATH: Paintings in oil and watercolor by Dr. Munschauer

Tom Munschauer has a new avocation, but to call it a hobby would be understating the time and dedication he devotes to his art. The same attributes of focus and dedication made Dr. Munschauer the quiet healer to thousands of local pets in the Addison County area. He joined Middlebury Animal Hospital as a young veterinarian in 1986 and bought the business two years later. Never one to shine a spotlight on himself, Munschauer has also volunteered his spare time to local arts organizations like Middlebury's Festival-on-the-Green and Town Hall Theater.

Now in retirement, Munschauer is making time to bring his artwork to the front burner.

For decades he has created small paintings for family and friends in the form of Christmas cards. Now he is experimenting with larger format paintings in oil and watercolor. His strong sense of graphic design and composition are evident in his approach to painting. His imagery includes flora and fauna, landscapes, and anything that might spark his interest. The Jackson Gallery welcomes the opportunity to introduce Munschauer's work to the community.

The exhibit runs from Jan. 12-Feb. 17 at the

Jackson Gallery in the lower level of Town Hall Theater on Merchants Row in downtown Middlebury. All are invited to a reception for the artist on Friday, Jan. 12, from 5-7 p.m. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday noon to five, and when performances are taking place.



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The Addison Independent



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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, 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 through Jan. 9.

EDGEWATER ON THE GREEN

6 Merchants Row, Middlebury
Visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-989-7419 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com for more info.

"Winter Compositions" featuring new work by Jim Westphalen and Dale Najarian. Vermont photographer Jim Westphalen studies the unique quality of light, and the contrasting tones of the built landscape against the natural one, that comes with the winter season. Dale Najarian's Shadow series merges the realistic quality of a photograph with the abstract translation of a scene. She explores the perspective that shadows create, and uses figures in motion to capture the ever shifting relationship between light and dark. On view Jan. 9-Feb. 17.

JACKSON GALLERY

68 S Pleasant St, Middlebury
Visit townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery or call 802-382-9222 for more info.

"A New Path: Paintings in oil and watercolor" features a solo show of work by retired veterinarian Dr. Tom Munschauer. His exhibit shows larger format paintings in oil and watercolor. His strong sense of graphic design and composition are evident in his approach to painting. His imagery includes flora and fauna, landscapes, and anything that might spark his interest. On view Jan. 12-Feb. 17, with an opening reception on Friday, Jan. 12, from 5-7 p.m.

PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street, Middlebury
For more info visit photoplacegallery.com.

"Portals: Windows, Mirrors and Doors." A portal can be an architectural feature (gate, window, doorway, mirror, tunnel) that frames or isolates or

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 14

Cosmic Forecast

ARIES: March 21/April 20. Aries, watch out because you are hot stuff this week. Coming off the excitement of the holidays, you're still in the mood to socialize. The invitations to various social events will still flow.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Hopefully you've made progress on the various organizational projects that you have had in mind, Taurus. Now is the time to get those resolutions moving.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. Gemini, how is your to-do list coming along? If you haven't yet gotten moving, a coming slowdown could make the perfect time to get cracking.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Cancer, right now you may be feeling like hibernating, especially if the weather is changing. Don't burrow under the covers just yet. Find a way to stay busy and socialize.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. Leo, even if it seems the way to be the most productive, burning the candle at both ends is only going to make you tired and less efficient. Ask for help if you need it.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, your innate humility means you're often content with being behind the scenes and not in the limelight. However, this week you may want a little extra fanfare.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Libra, after a season of partying and letting other tasks fall by the wayside, it is time to get back to focus. You must take out your financial account records and track spending right now.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Take an inventory of the things you want to change about yourself, Scorpio. There is always room for improvement, especially if you feel you have not been your best self lately.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. Hopefully you have met your quota of parties and social events because now is the time to take a break, Sagittarius. The invitations will cease, but that can be a good thing for you.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. It's often business as usual for you to burn the midnight oil, Capricorn. But scale back on those late-night interludes. That's a recipe for burnout that can derail your bigger plans.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Aquarius, you are the zodiac's team player, so you may have to give the troops a pep talk to get everyone working together this week. Smooth down any ruffled feathers as needed.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. If you have any unfinished business that needs to get wrapped up, Pisces, the clock is ticking. Make a strong attempt to finish by Wednesday or Thursday.

New Year -
New Ewe!

Tues-Thurs 11am-5pm
Fri 11-7pm, Sat 10am-5pm
Sun 12-4pm • Closed Mon

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&
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260 Court Street, Middlebury, Vt. 05753
802-388-3559 www.middleburysewnvac.com
OPEN: M-F 10-5 and Saturday 9:30-4

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

JAN. 5— Hayao Miyazaki, filmmaker (82)
JAN. 6 — Joan of Arc, heroine of France (d)
JAN. 7 — Zora Neale Hurston, writer, anthropologist (d)

JAN. 8 — Cynthia Erivo, actor (36)
JAN. 9 — Paul Cezanne, artist (d)
JAN. 10 — Rod Stewart, singer (78)
JAN. 11 — Naomi Judd, singer (d)

CALENDAR

JANUARY 4-31
2024



SATURDAY, JAN. 6

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB SNOWSHOE IN RIPTON. Saturday, Jan. 6, 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.

TWIST OF WOOL GUILD MONTHLY GATHERING IN MONKTON. Saturday, Jan. 6, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Monkton Town Hall, 280 Monkton Ridge. The guild's first meeting of 2024 will have materials and instructions on how to crochet granny squares, and those who want to try can apply their new (or not-so-new) skills to making granny triangles to spruce up the bunting that decorates the organization's tent at Field Days. Snacks and refreshments provided, but feel free to bring a packed lunch.

"NABUCCO" LIVE IN HD IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Jan. 6, 1 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Ancient Babylon comes to life in this classic Met staging of biblical proportions. Baritone George Gagnidze stars as the imperious king Nabucco, alongside soprano Liudmyla Monastyrska reprising her thrilling turn as his vengeful daughter Abigaille. Pre-show talk with Opera Company of Middlebury

board member Richard Isenberg beginning at 12:15 p.m. Tickets adult \$26/student \$12, available at townhalltheater.org, 802-382-9222 or tickets@townhalltheater.org.

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."

KING PEDE CARD PARTY IN FERRISBURGH. Saturday, Jan. 6, 6:30 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall and Community Center, Route 7. A sandwich supper and then on to an evening of fun and games. King Pede is a game that involves "trick-taking" such as in Hearts and Spades or Pitch. This is a game of fun and skill so come prepared to use your strategic thinking.

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.

BIXBY BOOK CLUB IN VERGENNES. Tuesday, Jan. 9, 6-7 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. This month the book club will read and discuss "The Souls of Black Folk" by W. E. B. DuBois, one of the most influential books ever published in America. It is an eloquent collection

of 14 essays that describe the life, the ambitions, the struggles, and the passions of African Americans at the transition from the 19th to the 20th century. Didn't read or finish the book? No worries! This is a no-judgment book club.

FRIDAY, JAN. 12

ARTISTS' OPENING RECEPTION IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Jan. 12, 5-7 p.m., Jackson Gallery, Town Hall theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Come see painting is watercolor and oils by Thomas Munschauer in his exhibit, "A New Path." Exhibit runs through Feb. 17.

SATURDAY, JAN. 13

KNITTING 101 IN VERGENNES. Saturday, Jan. 13, 11 a.m.-noon, Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Join fiber artist Lief Temple as she teaches the basics of knitting. This program is designed for beginner knitters. Feel free to stick around after the lesson for our Fiber Arts Circle, where you can practice what you learn.

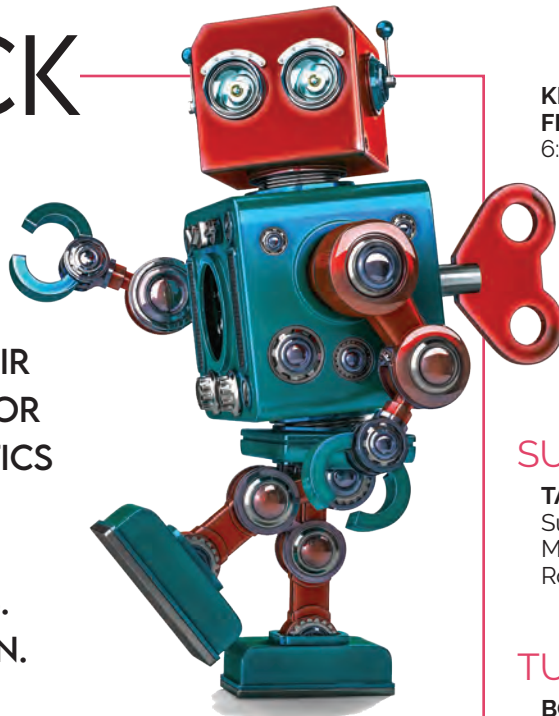
BANJO WITH JIM SHAW IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Jan. 13, 1 p.m., Ilsey Public Library, 75 Main St. Jim Shaw, retired professor of physics and astronomy, will give a talk about the history, types, playing styles of banjos, along with a demonstration of three different banjos. He will treat us

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, January 5 Through the Night: Public Affairs 7:30 a.m. Congregational Church Service 9 a.m. Abled and On-Air 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 3 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Church Service 5:30 p.m. Special Programs, Public Affairs Saturday, January 6 Through the Night: Public Affairs 5:30 a.m. Special Programs, Public Affairs 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, January 7 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. Special Programs, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Congregational Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Special Programs, Public Affairs Monday, January 8 Through the Night: From the Archives		5 a.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10 p.m. Special Programs, Public Affairs Tuesday, January 9 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 Church Services 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs Wednesday, January 10 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, January 11 Through the Night: Public Affairs 5 a.m. Selectboard 8 a.m. Congregational Services 12 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 8:30 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10 p.m. Dr. John Campbell MCTV Channel 1091 Friday, January 5 Through the Night: Arts 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 p.m. Leadership in The Classroom		7:10 a.m. VYO Winter Concert 8:30 a.m. St J Atheneum Concert 9:30 a.m. Cooking Show: Thai Curries 9:54 a.m. All Brains Belong VT 11 a.m. School Boards, State Board of Education 4:30 p.m. Leadership in The Classroom 6:01 p.m. Middlebury Community Winds 7:10 p.m. Shakespeare: It's Elementary - Romeo & Juliet 8 p.m. The Story Matters - Chris Hammond 8:30 p.m. Kingdom Mountain Dulcimers 8:20 p.m. Randolph Singers 9:34 p.m. Pentangle Messiah Sing 10:46 p.m. All Things LGBTQ Saturday, January 6 4:50 a.m. Suite 3 Sessions 5:35 a.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra 6:56 p.m. All Brains Belong VT 8 a.m. Romeo and Juliet 8:48 a.m. School Board Meeting 12:30 p.m. State Board of Education 2:30 p.m. Middlebury Community Winds 3:37 p.m. Leadership in The Classroom 5:10 p.m. Romeo and Juliet 5:58 p.m. Pentangle Messiah Sing 7:09 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra 8:31 p.m. All Brains Belong VT 9:30 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 11:30 p.m. Here We Are - Susan Avery, Author		Sunday, January 7 Through the night: Special Programs 4 a.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra 6:51 a.m. Middlebury Community Winds 8 a.m. Pentangle Messiah Sing 11:30 a.m. The Story Matters 12:00 p.m. Kingdom Mountain Dulcimers 12:50 p.m. Dec. Dance at North Chapel 1 p.m. The Story Matters 1:30 p.m. Prydein - Bagpipe Rock 3:55 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 4:15 p.m. Yoga 05:15 p.m. Yale Alley Cats A Cappella Singing Group 6:30 p.m. Lyndon Institute Winter Concert 7:30 p.m. The Story 8 p.m. Kingdom Mountain Dulcimers 9 p.m. Leadership in the Classroom 10:31 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra Monday, January 8 Through the night: Arts 6:30 a.m. Prydein - Bagpipe Rock 8 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 9:30 a.m. Leadership in the Classroom 11:01 a.m. School Boards, State Board of Education 7 p.m. Otter Creek Audubon Society Tuesday, January 9 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		8:44 a.m. St J Atheneum Concert 9:30 a.m. School Boards, State Board of Education 7:15 p.m. Randolph Singers 8:30 p.m. Middlebury Community Winds Wednesday, January 10 5 a.m. Music in the Morning 7 a.m. Chair Yoga 8 a.m. Recent School Board Meeting/s 3 p.m. Middlebury Community Winds 4:30 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra 6 p.m. All Brains Belong 7:12 p.m. Ethan Allen Homestead 9:01 p.m. Authors and Poets Thursday, January 11 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga 6:30 a.m. Food & Cooking Programs 7:30 a.m. Poets and Authors 10 a.m. Ethan Allen Homestead 11:30 a.m. The Story Matters 12:30 p.m. Kingdom Mountain Dulcimers 12:50 p.m. Dance at North Chapel 1 p.m. The Story Matters 1:30 p.m. Prydein - Bagpipe Rock 3 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 4:15 p.m. Yoga 5:15 p.m. Yale Alley Cats 6:30 p.m. Lyndon Institute Concert 7:30 p.m. The Story Matters 8 p.m. Kingdom Mountain Dulcimers 8:50 p.m. Dance at North Chapel 9 p.m. Avant Dance	

TOP PICK

LEGOS... ROBOTS...
HOW ABOUT ROBOTIC
LEGOS?
THE LOCAL ROBOTICS
TEAMS WILL SHARE THEIR
FINAL PREPARATIONS FOR
THE LEGO FIRST ROBOTICS
STATE COMPETITION AT
THE BIXBY MEMORIAL
LIBRARY IN VERGENNES.
COME BY SATURDAY, JAN.
13, AT 2 P.M.



with music and sign along, with some tunes 200 or more years old.

LEGO ROBOTICS COMMUNITY SHARE IN VERGENNES. Saturday, Jan. 13, 2-2:30 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Join our robotics teams in sharing their final preparations for the Lego First Robotics State Competition. Learn about their Innovation Projects this season and watch their robots complete missions in the lobby of the Bixby.

CONTRA DANCE IN CORNWALL. Saturday, Jan. 13, 7-9:30 p.m., Town Hall, Route 30. Dances 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.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 17

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN WEYBRIDGE. Wednesday, Jan. 17, 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.

"THE DANISH COLLECTOR" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Jan. 17, 11 a.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. For many years no-one was interested in the art of the Impressionists. Artists like Monet, Degas and Renoir were vilified, attacked and left penniless as a result. Then, something remarkable

happened. A new breed of collectors emerged and, before long, they were battling to acquire any work by these new, radical artists that they could find. Amongst them was the visionary Danish businessman Wilhelm Hansen. Tickets \$15, available at townhalltheater.org.

"DIAL M FOR MURDER" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Jan. 17, 6 p.m., Ilsley 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.

KING PEDE CARD PARTY IN FERRISBURGH. Saturday, Jan. 20, 6:30 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall and Community Center, Route 7. A sandwich supper and then on to an evening of fun and games. King Pedé is a game that involves "trick-taking" such as in Hearts and Spades or Pitch. This is a game of fun and skill so come prepared to use your strategic thinking.

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.

TUESDAY, JAN. 23

BOOK AND AUTHOR DISCUSSION: EMILY ST. JOHN MANDEL IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, Jan. 23, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Middlebury College students will facilitate a discussion of "Station Eleven" and other works by St. John Mandel. Set in the days of civilization's collapse, "Station Eleven" tells the story of a Hollywood star, his would-be savior, and a nomadic group of actors roaming the scattered outposts of the Great Lakes region, risking everything for art and humanity.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 24

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN CROWN POINT, N.Y. Wednesday, Jan. 24. Enjoy a leisurely walk across the Lake Champlain Bridge and enjoy the ruins and other sites before watching the sunset and full moon rise. Headlamps and microspikes are required. Contact trip leader Ken Corey at kencorey53@gmail.com for questions and to sign up. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

THURSDAY, JAN. 25

"NEXT TO NORMAL" IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Jan. 25, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. This theatrical performance explores how one suburban household copes with crisis and mental illness. Winner of three 2009 Tony Awards, including Best Musical Score and the 2010 Pulitzer Prize. Tickets adults \$27/student \$17/generous \$37, available at townhalltheater.org, 802-382-9222 or tickets@townhalltheater.org. Repeats Jan. 26, 27 and 28.

FRIDAY, JAN. 26

"NEXT TO NORMAL" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Jan. 26, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Jan. 25 listing.

SATURDAY, JAN. 27

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN RIPTON. Saturday, Jan. 27, Spirit in Nature Trails. Easy to moderate hike on the Spirit in Nature trails in Ripton, 3-4 miles maximum, minimal elevation gain. Hiking poles recommended. Depending on conditions, snowshoes or microspikes may be needed. Contact leader Liana Merrill at merrill.liana@gmail.com to get details and sign up. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

"WOOL & WATER" ARTIST TALK IN VERGENNES. Saturday, Jan. 27, 11 a.m.-noon, Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Curator Michael Glennon will this collaborative data art project that blends fiber art with scientific data to create visual representations of changing water quality conditions in the Adirondacks and Lake Champlain Basin. The exhibit is on display now in the Community Room.

"NEXT TO NORMAL" IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Jan. 27, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Jan. 25 listing.

SUNDAY, JAN. 28

"NEXT TO NORMAL" IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Jan. 28, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Jan. 25 listing.

TUESDAY, JAN. 30

VIRTUAL WINTER BOOK DISCUSSION IN FERRISBURGH. Tuesday, Jan. 30, 6:30 p.m., Zoom. Rokeby Museum sponsors this discussion of "A History of the Village of North Ferrisburgh" led by the author Jean Richardson, a long-time North Ferrisburgh community member and well-known historian and professor emerita of natural resources, environmental studies and geography at UVM. Free. More info at rokeby.org/visit/programmevents.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 31

"CARMEN" LIVE IN HD IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Jan. 31, 11 a.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. A new production of one of opera's most enduringly powerful works, reinvigorating the classic story with a staging that moves the action to the modern day and finds at the heart of the drama issues that could not be more relevant today: gendered violence, abusive labor structures, and the desire to break through societal boundaries. Tickets adult \$26/student \$12, available at townhalltheater.org, 802-382-9222 or tickets@townhalltheater.org.

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UPCOMING MUSIC

Purcell's iconic opera comes alive with a Youth Opera Company performance in Colchester

The Opera Company of Middlebury's (OCM) Youth Opera Company (YOC) is at it again, bringing opera directly into schools with the second installment of the "Dido and Aeneas Project." With an Artist-in-Schools Grant from the Vermont Arts Council, OCM Director of Education and Outreach Sarah Cullins and Colchester High School Choral Director Melissa Towle have been working with all 85 students enrolled in Colchester High School choral groups since September to learn and stage Purcell's timeless opera for a performance on Jan. 11.

Burlington High School was the site of the first "Dido and Aeneas Project," the brainchild of Cullins, who is also the founder and director of the Youth Opera Company, now part of OCM's educational programming.

"With the recent addition of Youth Opera programming to its offerings, OCM is now proudly aligned with national peers in operatic education for teens," said OCM's Executive Director Allison Steinmetz. "The 'Dido and Aeneas Project,' and additional year-round YOC programming, highlights

our commitment to accessible and innovative arts education, while fostering meaningful cultural connections for young people in our state."

Cullins devised the idea of producing an opera directly through a school's choral program as a way to further break down the barriers that often stand between high school students and the world of opera.

"All YOC after-school programs offer scholarships and OCM has an amazing free ticket program for audiences under 26, but both of those opportunities require transportation and, perhaps more importantly, a big mental leap for a Vermont high school student to imagine they might be good at or enjoy opera," Cullins said. The Artist-in-Schools model offers a large group of teens the opportunity to learn about opera by actually doing it, an incredibly hands-on experience.

Why opera? Cullins said that the goals of this project have less to do with the art form itself and more to do with

SEE OPERA ON PAGE 15

MORE TUNES



VERGENNES MUSICIAN RELEASES NEW COVER TUNE THIS MONTH

Vergennes singer/songwriter Kevin Kareckas is releasing a new cover tune on Jan. 12 across all the streaming platforms.

"I was asked to play 'Long May You Run' (Neil Young) for a friend's father's memorial service during the thick of the pandemic," Kareckas explained. "I learned it for the event and have kept it in my set list rotation since."

One morning Kareckas had some free time and decided to "lay it down."

"As a kid, I was (am?) a huge Beach Boys fan, so the verse that references them is particularly nostalgic," Kareckas said. "Rumor has it that Neil Young wrote the tune while reflecting on a favorite car of his that had moved on. Regardless, I love the way the song

SEE MUSIC ON PAGE 15

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Katy Foote



Jenna Hunsinger



Tom Van Sant



Christy Lynn



Jesse Norford

PUZZLES

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ART SUPPLY

ACROSS

- 1. Bleated
- 6. Snakelike fish
- 9. Database management system
- 13. Russian-American violinist
- 14. Wendy's founder Thomas
- 15. Ancient Italian-Greek colony
- 16. Negatives
- 17. Rescued
- 18. Self-immolation by fire ritual
- 19. Assigns tasks to
- 21. Island nation native
- 22. Trade
- 23. Detergent brand
- 24. Famed NY Giant
- 25. Before
- 28. Split pulses

- 29. Extremely angry; highly incensed
- 31. Body part
- 33. American state
- 36. David __, US playwright
- 38. Move one's head slightly
- 39. Secret rendezvous
- 41. Improved
- 44. A place to exercise
- 45. 18-year astronomical period
- 46. Automobile
- 48. You can take it
- 49. A radio band
- 51. Jaws of an animal
- 52. Short-billed rails
- 54. Chinese province
- 56. Shameless and undisguised
- 60. Horizontal passage

- into a mine
- 61. Adult males
- 62. Fail to entertain
- 63. Dried-up
- 64. City in north-central Utah
- 65. Southern U.S.
- 66. German river
- 67. Oxygen
- 68. Make law

DOWN

- 1. Curved segment
- 2. Wings
- 3. From pentane (Chemistry)
- 4. Gradually gets into
- 5. Commercial document (abbr.)
- 6. Overhang
- 7. Christmas and New Year's

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13						14				15			
16					17					18			
19				20					21				
			22					23				24	
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63					64				65				
66					67				68				

6					9	2		
3			5			8		7
								1
	9						8	
		3			1	7		
4		7			3		6	
		2			5	9		
			7	6				
		8						4

Sudoku

Each Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 grid that has been subdivided into nine smaller grids of 3x3 squares. To solve the puzzle each row, column and box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9. Puzzles come in three grades: easy, medium and difficult.

Level: Medium

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 13.

have them

- 8. Type of bulb
- 9. Lacking a plan
- 10. Tattle
- 11. Rockers like it "heavy"
- 12. One who's been canonized
- 14. Indicate time and place
- 17. Nobel Prize winner in physics
- 20. The voice of Olaf
- 21. Fragmented rock
- 23. They __
- 25. Master of Philosophy
- 26. Backside
- 27. Landmark house in L.A.
- 29. An act of undue intimacy
- 30. From which a later word is derived
- 32. Equal to 10 meters
- 34. Neither
- 35. Computer language
- 37. Sacred book of Judaism
- 40. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- 42. A way to dedicate
- 43. Challenges
- 47. British Air Aces
- 49. Large, influential bank
- 50. Portended
- 52. Cavalry-sword
- 53. Vaccine developer
- 55. Napoleonic Wars general
- 56. Italian Seaport
- 57. Hip joint
- 58. __ Clapton, musician
- 59. Insect repellent
- 61. Decorative scarf
- 65. Delaware



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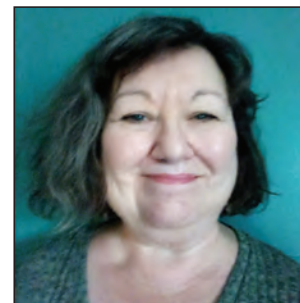
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ASK A MASTER GARDENER

GROWING GREENS IN WINTER



Deborah J. Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from North Adams, Mass., who is part of the Bennington County Chapter.

There's nothing like creating a salad of freshly harvested greens you've grown yourself from seed. The good news is, this is one crop you can grow year-round, indoors, safe from nibbling rabbits in fair weather and freezing temperatures in winter.

BY **DEBORAH J. BENOIT**

What type of greens do you fancy? Leafy lettuces? Deep green spinach?

Spicy arugula?

There are so many possibilities. While you likely won't find seeds for sale locally at this time of year, you can use seeds you already have or hop online to check out all the choices available from mail order catalogs.

Like any garden, location will play a major part in the success of your growing plans. You'll need adequate light, suitable temperatures, an appropriate soil mix and water.

Since light is so important to promoting healthy growth, select a sunny spot directly in front of a south- or west-facing window. Just be sure the location is away from cold drafts from windows and doors, and hot drafts from radiators or woodstoves.

As an alternative, you can use grow lights, which are readily available in stores and online. You also can use a shop light using fluorescent tube bulbs. For more information on using grow lights, see go.uvm.edu/grow-lights.

Once you've selected a location, choose a container or containers for your garden of greens. If you're growing in front of a window, a rectangular window box shape is a good choice, but a selection of small pots can work as well.

Fill your containers with a light potting mix or seed starter that's been moistened. Scatter seeds across the surface and cover lightly with soil according to directions on the seed packet. Use a spray bottle to water in the

seeds.

Add a clear cover to the container to help retain moisture. A plastic soda bottle with the bottom cut off will work well with round pots. Clear food storage bags or food wrap also work well. If water begins to collect on the cover, vent it to allow the excess moisture to escape.

Once seedlings emerge, you can remove the cover. Be sure the soil doesn't dry out, so water as needed. As the seedlings grow, thin to the spacing recommended on the seed package. The thinned seedlings make a good addition to salads or sandwiches while you're waiting for the remaining plants to grow.

Provide 10 to 12 hours of light daily to encourage healthy growth. If you notice any of your seedlings growing leggy or becoming yellow, they are likely in need of more light. Adding a grow light can supplement natural light. Lowering a grow light closer to the foliage can help, as can extending the number of hours of light the plants receive.

When your plants reach several inches high, it's time to harvest. Using sharp scissors, cut the outer leaves. By leaving the inner leaves, the plant will continue to grow for future harvesting.

You can extend your harvest further by succession planting. Instead of planting your entire crop of greens at once, initially plant only part. Every two or three weeks, plant more.

After your original planting has been completely harvested, replant that container. This way you will have greens in various stages of growth throughout the winter and early spring.

If you'd like to try growing something besides greens for your salad, consider radishes (*Raphanus sativus*). Check for varieties ready to harvest in as little as three weeks. Other possibilities include green pea shoots (*Pisum sativum*) and green onions (*Allium fistulosum*).

Whatever the weather outside, gardening indoors can be very tasty indeed.





MILESTONES

Jessica Danyow, center, executive director of Homeward Bound, visited Serena Kim and Matthew Robinson, owners of Swift House Inn, and their beloved dogs, Kubrick and Elsa, to extend her appreciation for their donation of pet fees to the shelter. This partnership kicked off in June 2021 and since then has raised \$10,000 for the local humane society. This visit by Danyow marked her last public appearance as Homeward Bound's leader. Her 10 years at the helm came to an end on Dec. 29.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HOMEWARD BOUND



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Pets In Need HOMEWARD BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society



Cashew, Ember & Phoenix

Cashew, Ember, and Phoenix are usually found huddled up in a furry cat pile. They feel safe with each other and if they can be adopted together it would be the best-case scenario for them. They prefer the company of each other instead of people and might be great candidates for the shelter's Paws on the Job working cat program in a barn where they can be warm, or at a business for rodent control.



Homeward Bound created the **Paws on the Job** program to address the personalities of cats that come our way who are in need of shelter but have not shown that they fit in a traditional home environment. Perhaps they were strays who have lived independently for too long to re-acclimate to living in a home, or they didn't receive enough socialization as kittens to feel fully comfortable with people. These could also be cats who get overlooked at the shelter time and time again because they don't present well to potential adopters- the stress of being caged causes them to have a "short fuse," or to not want to engage with people as much as other cats, or maybe they don't want to be picked up.



oakley

Oakley is a 1-year-old lab/shepherd mix weighing 74 pounds. He is an energetic young dog whose favorite game is playing Frisbee. Oakley came to us because he didn't get along with the cats in the home. He is very nervous around young children and would do best in a home with older kids/teenagers who would be respectful and calmly affectionate with him. Oakley is a smart pup and eager to learn. He would be a great companion for an active family who would take the time to teach him new things for mental stimulation and provide him with physical exercise, as well. He is extremely loving and wants nothing more than to be near his people. Oakley is housebroken, crate-trained, and walks well on a leash.



Julius

Julius came to us as a stray. He is 2.5 years old and weighs 63 pounds. He has the wiggliest body you can imagine and will whip his tail all around out of excitement. Julius has shown friendly body language with fellow shelter dogs and enjoys being near them, but he can be reactive to dogs on walks that he doesn't know and barks at them. He is very strong and will need a family that can handle his strength on a leash. Julius is housebroken and will sit for treats. He has a lot of energy and would do best with a fenced-in yard. Julius adores people and wants to be where the action is, as he can become anxious when left alone. He is very treat motivated.



Want to learn more?

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724 DELONG LANE, SHOREHAM
\$599,000

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EXHIBITS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

adds dimension to an image. In a fictional sense, a portal can become a magical doorway through time and space. Alone or

in combination, they hold unlimited creative possibilities for photographers. This juried photo exhibit uses these devices in intriguing ways. Juror Roula Seikaly selected approximately 35 images for exhibition in the Middlebury gallery, and 40 more for the online gallery. On view Jan. 5-26.

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.

"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 through Jan. 13.

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"Home Is Where the Art Is," an artisan market for holiday giving featuring creations by over 50 local artisans. On view through Jan. 13.



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OPERA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

the way it can challenge students' preconceived ideas.

"We all recognize this time in history as being extremely polarized," she said, "Opera is hard to train and learn and

perform and sometimes it can feel hard to understand or enjoy. It's also loaded with cultural stereotypes and I can't tell you how much I enjoy watching all of this melt away as these young singers — and their friends and family in the audience — learn to love what they're doing and feel tremendously proud of what they achieve."

Cullins said this process gives her hope that young people can approach the world with an open mind regarding new or conflicting ideas and also regarding their own abilities and potential.

"When I first heard we were doing an opera I was like, are we sure we have the ability to do that?" said Juliana Tomlinson, who sings the role of Belinda. "But... we've pulled it off so far, and I think that's really cool!"

From the schools' perspective, Colchester High School's Choral Director Melissa Towle said, "It has been such a privilege to work with Sarah. My students and I have learned so much about the art of opera, and they have grown so much in their vocal abilities over the last four months."

The students themselves have had some individual vocal technique time with Cullins as well as working together in scenes and staging rehearsals.

"Over the course of learning this opera I've really learned a lot about my voice and especially my range," said Greta Stirling, who will be playing one of Dido's closest attendants. "I had no idea I could go that high, and I'm super pleased."

The 17th century music is also a challenge for students who have never even been to an opera.

"It's really expanded my musical abilities and showed me what I can do," said Auriana Quintyne, who sings the role of one of the witches.

The choral students' participation hasn't been limited to just singing and acting out the opera, however. After reading through the libretto (opera speak for script) together as a group, watching video clips of productions at companies around the world, and discussing the themes of the opera, the students were given three choices of settings for the Colchester production, each with a completely different central theme as well as unique costume and



Opera Company of Middlebury Director of Education and Outreach Sarah Cullins rehearses with students at Colchester High School where the Youth Opera Company will be performing Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas Project" on Jan. 11.

set ideas. The students voted overwhelmingly in favor of a traditional setting of the work, complete with Roman columns and other set and costume pieces that evoke the Latin mythology of Virgil's story. Youth Opera's parent company, the Opera Company of Middlebury, is supplying many of the set pieces, and the Colchester High School Music Department's parent's association is helping to support costume costs.

The debut performance will take place on Thursday, Jan. 11, at 7 p.m., in the Colchester High School. Admittance is free. The show will come down to Addison County in December, featuring singers enrolled in Mount Abraham, Vergennes, and Middlebury High School choral programs. Stay tuned!

MUSIC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

just sits in the theme of the relationship between man and machine in such a vulnerable way."

The track will be released on Kareckas' mother's birthday. "Our shared pleasure in tinkering with an old VW beetle when I was a kid seems to connect to all of this," he said.

Admittedly, this release is "at least two harmonica solos short of the real deal" but Kareckas is "pretty happy with the way it shook out."

Support local musicians. Check out Kareckas' "Long May You Run" wherever you stream your music. Learn more about his music by visiting kevinkareckas.com.

"WHEN I FIRST HEARD WE WERE DOING AN OPERA I WAS LIKE, ARE WE SURE WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO DO THAT? BUT... WE'VE PULLED IT OFF SO FAR..."

— Juliana Tomlinson



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Town Hall Theater Presents

Next to Normal

January 25 & 26 at 7:30pm

January 27 & 28 at 2pm

Adult Tickets \$27; Student Tickets \$17

Book and Lyrics by Brian Yorkey • Music by Tom Kitt
Directed by Doug Anderson



Next to Normal explores how one suburban household copes with crisis and mental illness. Winner of three 2009 Tony Awards, including Best Musical Score and the 2010 Pulitzer Prize, *Next to Normal* was also chosen as “one of the year’s ten best shows” by critics around the country, including *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Rolling Stone* and *The New York Times*.

Dad’s an architect; Mom rushes to pack lunches and pour cereal; their daughter and son are bright, wise-cracking teens, appearing to be a typical American family. And yet their lives are anything but normal because the mother has been battling bipolar disorder for 16 years. *Next to Normal* takes audiences into the minds and hearts of each character, presenting their family’s story with love, sympathy and heart.

This deeply moving piece of theatre provides a wonderful opportunity for performers to explore dramatic material and showcase vocal talents with an energetic pop/rock score. *Next to Normal* is an emotional powerhouse that addresses such issues as grieving a loss, ethics in modern psychiatry, and suburban life and is ideal for community theatres, as well as colleges and regional theatre companies.

Starring Elisa Van Duyne, Andrew Ritter, Caitlin Sausville, Jonathan Mount, Michael Koutelos, and Philip Caycedo. Directed by Doug Anderson

Tickets are \$27 for Adults and \$17 for Students. A Generous Ticket is \$37 and proceeds help continue the tradition of Town Hall Theater’s January Musical.

This production includes strong language. There are depictions of various mental health conditions and disorders referred to in the script as ‘bipolar disorder with delusional episodes’, anxiety and complicated grief after a child bereavement.

Please note: Our handicap parking spots on South Pleasant Street are temporarily unavailable due to construction. The handicap drop-off zone remains accessible.

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MNFF Selects

A Compassionate Spy

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MetOpera HD

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January 31 @ 11am

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TOP TEN 2023

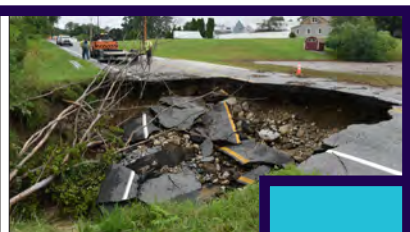
THE STORIES AND PHOTOS THAT MEANT THE MOST IN THE PAST YEAR



Photos by Christopher Hays

floods didn't spare Addison

ver system hit hard



A LARGE SECTION of Route 116 in Middlebury collapsed early on Friday afternoon, receding by the weekend, and temporary pipe closed roadway and to direct drinking water around the water main.



Local farmers a with the changin

By MARIN HOWELL
ADDISON COUNTY — In the face of a year marked by damaging floods and a devastating spring frost, farmers in Addison County and beyond are exploring ways to protect their crops during future growing seasons.

Big THT expansion

Halloween inside the b



Photo courtesy of Karen Swanson



Photo by Steve James

SUSTAINED EXC
DIRECTING AN

THT nets \$1M col gift for its expansi

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — Another chapter in a roughly 20-year relationship between Middlebury College and Town Hall Theater was confirmed the gift at

MUMS dean cites ra as a factor in resign

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury Union Middle School's first-ever dean of climate & culture has resigned from her job after only one year.

major



(See ART, Page 9A)

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4 years



Photo by M

CHIEF JIM B

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Breur, who worked Industrial Services Director overseeing it Foundries account, s the ACEA Advisory I

By JOHN FL

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THT

College seeks \$600M to enhance experience

By MARIN HOWELL
MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury College has launched the public phase of the largest fundraising campaign in the institution's 223-year history. The "For Every Future" campaign aims to raise \$600 million to support a variety of initiatives intended to enrich students' experiences at the institution and help prepare them for the world that awaits them upon graduation.

Monkton history comes alive

Vol. 77 No. 4

Teen fatal shoo

bourne youth killed
ect charged as ad

N HOWELL
OL/MIDDLEBURY — A Burlington youth was in bail into the custody of the Vermont State Police on Wednesday after being charged with the murder of a 17-year-old Shelburne youth in Monday evening.

projects to bri

John Graham agency sees demand go up

By JOHN FLOWERS
VERGENNES — John Graham Housing & Services is making repairs and installing warming kits to serve houseless folks inside and outside of its at 69 North Main St. in this winter.

boost

The Charter House has also developed

Teen

bourne youth killed

College seeks \$600M

to enhance experience

Monkton history

comes alive

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agency sees

demand go up

boost

The Charter House has also developed

Teen

bourne youth killed

in the coming months will help to voice concerns about re its houseless guests tackle the of vandalism, harassment challenges of another cold Vermont and other infractions asc some n of the h c o m m which an enca under the Street B Bakery l Midd has re-e a home task fe help to the c needs hopefull future with business While of the focus h



(See Bristol, Page 1)

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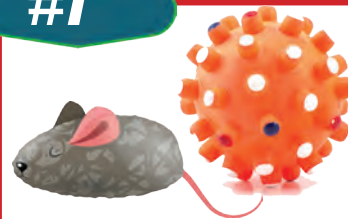


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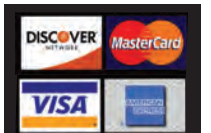
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THE YEAR OF THE DELUGE

#1

MANY ADDISON COUNTY RESIDENTS WILL REMEMBER 2023 AS THE YEAR DURING WHICH THEY NEVER LEFT HOME WITHOUT AN UMBRELLA.

But for some, the record rainfall was far more than a mere inconvenience. It resulted in many a flooded basement, temporarily closed roads, and in some cases, the loss of real estate and other personal property to the swollen, raging Middlebury River, Otter Creek or smaller bodies of water.

Addison County seemingly dodged a major bullet in July. That's when widespread flooding covered streets of Montpelier, Barre, Waterbury, Woodstock and Ludlow, and washed-out roads in some smaller towns like Killington.

Addison County saw swollen rivers result in a few road closures in July, but the worst damage was largely confined to perennially flood-prone areas of Ripton and East Middlebury.

A mid-July rainstorm stalled over Ripton, triggering a mudslide on a slope off Route 125 in the village that uprooted and destroyed a home belonging to Chris and Amber Poploski, while forcing the evacuation of a dozen others in the vicinity. A GoFundMe page was created to help the Poploskis rebuild.

The intense rainfall of that storm made a juggernaut out of an already chaotic Middlebury River, propelling it down the mountain into East Middlebury, pummeling its banks and adjacent Route 125.

East Main Street resident Karin Gottshall, who resides just east of the Waybury Inn, told the *Independent* she thought she heard thunder at around 1:30 a.m. during the night of the storm. But when she went onto her porch, she learned the noise was coming from huge boulders careening downstream.

Many folks living along the

Middlebury River sustained damaged home foundations and lost chunks of their backyards.

As it turns out, the July flooding was just a prelude to a bigger disaster that would unfold in Middlebury during the evening of Aug. 3-4. Six inches of rain descended upon the Middlebury area in less than two hours. Middlebury saw its municipal storm drainage system overwhelmed, resulting in large swaths of Seymour and Court streets being covered with several feet of water.

It was a night filled with frantic calls for help and rescues. Middlebury police officer Ethan Jones retrieved the driver of a vehicle that was almost submerged in a mini reservoir that had materialized underneath the rail overpass near the intersection of Elm and Seymour streets.

Rainwater permeated the Middlebury Police Department headquarters at 1 Lucius Shaw Lane, forcing officers and dispatchers to temporarily relocate. At one point, the water in the building was four inches deep.

Cera Hurley was walking her two dogs around her yard at 83 Court St. when she noticed the tiny Barnes Brook near her house was beginning to pick up steam, to the extent it was overflowing onto her lawn. The water quickly broke through the bulkhead and started pouring into her basement. Hers was one of many basements to be invaded by floodwaters that evening.

Flooding closed Creek Road, Shard Villa Road, 3-Mile Bridge Road, Blake Roy Road, Painter Road, and Route 116. Elsewhere, Route 7 was partially closed in Ferrisburgh; Route 125 in Hancock was closed between Route 100 and Tucker Brook Road, due to a bridge abutment washout.

A major culvert near Dow Pond on 116 in Middlebury was destroyed, triggering a lengthy boil water order for residents north from Jehovah's Witness Church, Butternut Ridge, Mead Lane and Lindale Trailer Park. The town offered free water to

affected residents.

County residents affected by the summer storms asked state and local officials if there was any financial aid to help them rebuild.

The key, they were told, was a federal disaster declaration. Federal Emergency Management Agency investigators spent weeks investigating local damage. FEMA announced in October that President Joe Biden had approved a major disaster declaration related to the Aug. 3-5 storm — but not for the July weather events. This would pave the way for federal funding to help cover early

August damages

to public property and infrastructure, but no assistance for those who sustained private property losses. Some property owners reported that homeowners insurance did not pay for the flood damage because floods were not generally covered outside of typical flood plains.



ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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A LARGE SECTION OF Route 116 in Middlebury collapsed early Friday morning after water from a nearby pond burst through a culvert. The road was closed for several hours. Photo by Christopher Rowe.



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This time the Vt. floods didn't spare Addison County

Middlebury roads, culverts and sewer system hit hard

By JOHN FLOWERS
ADDISON COUNTY — In the face of a year marked by damaging floods in Addison County and beyond, the county's infrastructure was hit hard by the latest flooding. The town's sewer system, which was already in need of repair, was completely overwhelmed. The town's roads, which were already in poor shape, were completely washed out. The town's culverts, which were already in poor shape, were completely washed out. The town's sewer system, which was already in need of repair, was completely overwhelmed. The town's roads, which were already in poor shape, were completely washed out. The town's culverts, which were already in poor shape, were completely washed out.

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Local farmers are grappling with the changing climate

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Big THT expansion set for town review

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Field Days 2023 arrives on a wet note

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Vermont's own 'Pirate' thrills crowds at the fair

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#2

ONCE AGAIN, HOUSING IS SCARCE

A LACK OF AVAILABLE HOUSING CREATED A LOT OF PROBLEMS IN 2023, NOT ONLY FOR FOLKS TRYING TO SETTLE IN ADDISON COUNTY, BUT FOR VARIOUS BUSINESSES AND INSTITUTIONS TRYING TO FILL VACANCIES ON THEIR WORKFORCE ROSTERS.

Employers — ranging from small carpentry teams to Middlebury College — lamented the lack of applications for longstanding job vacancies. The local jobless rate was around 2% or lower for most of the year, confirming most folks were gainfully employed amid a rapidly aging population.

Recruiting out-of-staters for those jobs proved arduous, as many couldn't find a home — or at least one that was right-sized and affordable — in our area.

The lack of available housing placed

additional stress on emergency shelters run by the Charter House Coalition in Middlebury and John Graham Housing & Services in Vergennes. The shelters were consistently full, and some houseless people elected to camp out along the Otter Creek and under the Cross Street Bridge off Bakery Lane in Middlebury. That Bakery Lane settlement included at least a few folks who ran afoul of the law, keeping Middlebury police busy with complaints of vandalism, harassment, panhandling, theft and assault. One of the occasional campers was linked to a vandalism spree that resulted in tens of thousands of dollars of damage to cars parked in the downtown area.

Police, in concert with mental health advocates and human services officials, organized a system of daily checks on the campers to ensure their safety and to guard against criminal activity. They also restarted the Middlebury Homelessness Task Force.

But there was cause for hope on the housing front amid all these challenges.

The Middlebury Development Review Board in September conducted its first review of a preliminary plan by Summit Properties to build a 218-unit, mixed-income housing project on 35 acres of Middlebury College-owned land off Seminary Street Extension. As proposed, “Stonecrop Meadows” called for a phase-in of rental and for-sale homes, including

affordable, “workforce” and market-rate options.

In Bristol, folks celebrated the opening of the Firehouse Apartments, a new affordable housing development off Firehouse Drive. The development consists of 20 mixed-income units just east of the town’s fire station and across the street from Mount Abraham Union High School and the town’s recreation fields. The 20 units include two duplexes and a block of town homes with one- and two-bedroom units.

The Bristol project was financed with \$8,649,000 from a mix of private and public funding sources, including the American Rescue Plan Act, the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board and the Vermont Community Development Program.

In Vergennes came hope for seniors looking for a place to call home. Work began on a \$25 million effort to renovate and expand the former Vergennes Residential Care at 34 North St. and equip it with an interconnected 53-room, four-building care home capable of accommodating up to 82 seniors with modest means. It will also triple the business’s employee count from 18 to an estimated 48. The new facility will be called Vergennes Grand.

Middlebury, Vergennes and Bristol all made changes to their respective
(See Housing, Page 5)



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BIG BUILDING PROJECTS GET UNDERWAY

#3

2023 WAS A YEAR DURING WHICH SOME MAJOR BUILDING PROJECTS GOT OFF THE GROUND — OR AT LEAST OFF THE DRAWING BOARD.

Among them was a proposed major renovation and expansion of Middlebury's Ilsley Public Library. The Middlebury selectboard during the fall unanimously endorsed the concept of a two-story renovation/expansion plan for the 100-year-old Main Street library, along with a proposed reconfiguration of the municipal parking lot behind Ilsley to avert a loss of spaces. This followed a busy August, during which library officials picked Wiemann Lamphere Architects and the ReArch Company to create a final design for the Ilsley project, which would afford 24,000 square feet for library services. Ilsley officials are hoping for a spring 2024 vote on the project, which could cost upwards of \$14.8 million.

Just around the corner from the library, at 68 South Pleasant St., workers broke ground in December on a \$7.5 million renovation/expansion project for Middlebury's Town Hall Theater. The

centerpiece of the project: a 7,000-square-foot, three-story addition onto the southwest end of THT building that will host rehearsal studios, performances, receptions and arts education. The project also provides for a new outdoor plaza to host performances, celebrations and to serve as an informal gathering spot for the community.

Meanwhile, in the Little City, demolition and site work got underway for a project known as "Vergennes Grand Senior Living." Once completed, it will transform the existing Vergennes Residential Care senior housing facility at 34 North St. into an interconnected, 53-room, four-building care home capable of accommodating up to 82 elders with modest means. Charlotte residents Dan and Rebecca Hassan are the driving force behind the \$25 million project.

In Bristol, construction continued on a new commercial business park off Firehouse Drive, near the Bristol fire station. The so-called Stoney Hill Business Park's first building is expected to be completed this month and, early this year, will begin housing AllEarth Renewables, a company currently based in Williston that makes solar trackers and other green energy components.

Middlebury College was also part of the miniature building boom. The institution broke ground on a new first-year dorm to replace Battell Hall, which

currently houses 40% of the incoming class. The new 87,000-square-foot, four-story building will have 148 doubles and two singles, all of which will be fully accessible. All of the bathrooms will be gender neutral. Occupancy is planned in 2025.

More construction requires good infrastructure, and Middlebury, Bristol and Vergennes took steps to bolster water and sewer services.

Bristol officials learned they'll need to replace around half of the village's water lines. They got off to a great start with replacement of a significant stretch of water main on Pine Street.

Middlebury began the first phase of a two-year effort to replace the municipal waterline on South Street, which serves Porter Medical Center and Middlebury Regional EMS. Plans for big changes to the Vergennes sewer system proceeded apace in 2023.



HOUSING

(Continued from Page 4)

zoning laws in an effort to promote more housing. Officials in all three

communities were hopeful the changes would serve as a catalyst for investment by developers interested in building homes that young families could afford.

Addy Indy Numbers Quiz

Take this little numbers quiz to test how well you know what we do at the Addison Independent!

1. How many people read *The Addy Indy* each week?
2. How many towns do we regularly cover?
3. How many special sections do we feature throughout each year?
4. How many pages did we print in 2023?
5. How many page views did our website get this year?
6. How many impressions did ads on our website receive this year?
7. How many email newsletter opens did we have this year?

(Answers on page 14D)

ADDISON COUNTY
INDEPENDENT
Serving Addison County, Vt., Since 1946

Top Ten ways to reduce waste in 2024

Avoid impulse shopping. Buy only what you need.

Say no to freebies from events, work, and other gatherings.

Use reusable containers and bags at stores.

Repair broken items instead of discarding them.

Shop secondhand instead of new to extend an item's life.

Buy items made from recycled content, not raw materials.

Make your own non-hazardous cleaners.

Donate usable items instead of throwing them away.

Before grocery shopping, shop your fridge first.

Consider online subscriptions and bills; avoid junkmail.

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HazWaste Center Hours: Mon-Fri 8 AM - 2 PM & Sat 8 AM - 1 PM



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#4

SHOOTINGS CLAIM LIVES IN, AROUND COUNTY

ACTS OF GUN VIOLENCE SHOOK THE COMMUNITY ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN 2023, AS SHOOTINGS CLAIMED THE LIVES OF FOUR IN AND AROUND ADDISON COUNTY.

In June, one man was killed and another critically injured in a double shooting in Leicester. At around 9:55 p.m. on June 4, Vermont State Police were called to a disturbance at 1352 Route 7. When law enforcement officers arrived at the scene, they found one man dead, 35-year-old Scott Lanpher, and his brother, 31-year-old Larry Lanpher Jr., suffering from gunshot injuries. Larry Lanpher was taken to Porter Hospital and then airlifted to University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington. He was later discharged.

Authorities said the shooting was a targeted event, and that there was no broader threat to the general public. In August, a suspect was arrested on an unrelated federal charge in Maine. Zaquikon Roy, 35, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was

arrested on a federal charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm. Vermont State Police detectives investigating the Leicester shooting believed that Roy initially fled to New York City after the Leicester shooting.

Another county resident was fatally shot in September, when police say a juvenile watching a fight between two women at a Waltham home picked up a gun that had apparently been dropped by one of the women and shot her multiple times. The victim, Michelle Kilbreth, 48, of Waltham, was killed by gunshots to her torso, according to the Chief Medical Examiner's Office in Burlington.

Police reported Kilbreth got into a physical altercation with another woman who lived in the neighborhood at around 7 p.m. on Sept. 15. Kilbreth had a handgun in her possession, but at some point, she lost control of the weapon, and the youth picked up the gun and fired it, striking Kilbreth multiple times.

Residents in and around Waltham grappled with the loss of Kilbreth, who was known by many in the community as a school bus driver for Vergennes-area schools. By year's end, authorities hadn't determined whether they'd charge the juvenile involved in the shooting.

In October, former Addison County resident Honoree Fleming, 77, was shot and killed on a rail trail in Castleton.

Fleming was found dead on the afternoon of Oct. 5 on the Delaware & Hudson Rail Trail, near the Castleton campus of the Vermont State University.

Fleming was a retired dean at the university and had previously served on the faculty of other educational institutions, including Middlebury College. She and Ron Powers raised their two sons in Middlebury. Police reported Fleming died from a gunshot wound to the head, and authorities hadn't identified a suspect in the shooting as of the year's end.

In November, a 14-year-old Burlington youth was released on bail into the custody of his family after pleading innocent in court to charges he'd shot and killed a 14-year-old Shelburne youth in Bristol.

According to authorities, Madden Gouveia and Hussein Mohamed were sitting in a car with two other teenagers outside a North Street home during the evening of Oct. 30. Police reported the teenagers were passing around a handgun, and Mohamed allegedly was fooling around with the weapon when it fired, striking Gouveia in the back, resulting in a fatal injury.

Mohamed appeared in Addison County Superior Court, Criminal Division, in Middlebury the next morning, pleading

innocent to charges of second-degree murder, manslaughter and aggravated assault. The teenager is being charged as an adult. Mohamed was ultimately released on conditional bail, following a two-hour-long hearing on Nov. 1, during which Addison County State's Attorney Eva Vekos withdrew an earlier motion to hold the teenager without bail.

Vekos explained her decision to withdraw the motion was made following testimony provided during the hearing by a Vermont Department of Corrections official, who described the limitations of holding a juvenile without bail in a state that doesn't operate a juvenile detention center.

As 2023 came to a close, the case was still making its way through the court system.

The *Independent* newsroom could not recall a time when Addison County saw so many fatal shootings in a single year.

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Sewing in the News 2023

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A poet's life
Susan Jeffs talks about what goes into a poem as she brings out a new collection. See Arts + Leisure.



Tigers roar
Middlebury boys' soccer had a fast start in the Division II tournament. See Page 1B.



Saying 'I do'
We profile nine couples with county ties who got married this year in our Weddings section.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Teen charged in fatal shooting

Shelburne youth killed in Bristol; teen suspect charged as adult & released

By MARIN HOWELL
MIDDLEBURY — A 14-year-old Burlington youth was released on bail into the custody of his family on Wednesday after pleading innocent in court to charges that he had shot and killed a 14-year-old Shelburne youth in Bristol on Monday evening.

In Addison County Superior Court Criminal Division, the teenager was charged with first-degree murder, manslaughter and aggravated assault.

The teenager is being charged as an adult.

Madden Gouveia was sitting in a car outside a home off North Street in Bristol on Monday evening, when he was shot by a handgun.

He died at University of Vermont Medical Center.

(See Bristol, Page 11A)

process, construction will begin next spring on a much-anticipated 'Community Childcare Expansion Project' at the Otter Creek Child Center (OCC) at 150 Westbridge St., a project designed to create 77 new childcare slots (for a total of 130 and 28 related new jobs in our area).

(See Childcare, Page 11A)

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury area will see a major infusion of much-needed childcare slots during the next two years, thanks to a big expansion of an established center and the launch of a new one.

Assuming a smooth permitting

process, construction will begin next spring on a much-anticipated 'Community Childcare Expansion Project' at the Otter Creek Child Center (OCC) at 150 Westbridge St., a project designed to create 77 new childcare slots (for a total of 130 and 28 related new jobs in our area).

(See Childcare, Page 11A)

By MARIN HOWELL
MIDDLEBURY — Halloween night in Bristol was a bit brighter this year.

Among the ghosts, goblins and spooky characters that filled the town's streets on Tuesday, around a dozen glowing jellyfish lit up the dark, chilly night with a colorful display.

The group of jellyfish was made up of Bristol and Starkboro residents and a couple from Starkboro.

(See Jellyfish, Page 11A)

By ANDY KIRKALDY
VERGENNES — A new, multi-grade Vergennes Union Middle School (VUMS) course asks its students to work in groups on hands-on service learning projects that range from building hot boxes to boosting gender equality.

Other projects created by teacher Nan Guilmette's 16 groups of students.

(See VUMS, Page 4A)

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — Coo Moseley has always felt comfortable surrounded by books. And as director of the Lawrence Memorial Library, she's had plenty of times of all sizes and genres to keep her company.

But after three-and-a-half years serving as "retail" of Bristol's library hub, Moseley is taking

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(See Moseley, Page 11A)

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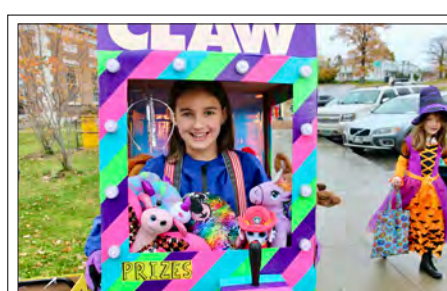
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Halloween inside the box
WEARING HER HOMEMADE "Claw" costume, 8-year-old Hanny Dushaw pauses near the Middlebury Post Office on Sunday afternoon during the annual Spooktacular celebration that attracted hundreds of kids in costume to collect candy from downtown merchants. See more photos on Pages 4A and 10A.

Independent photo by James

By MARIN HOWELL
BOSTON — After spending 44 years largely within the boundaries of Addison County, Hannah Zeno found herself this summer looking for an adventure that would take her outside her comfort zone.

The Bristol resident had recently wrapped up a series of moves, but these children were all entering adulthood, and she'd begun to ask herself, "What's next?"

It turned out the answer was a

trip to Culver City, Calif., to test her wit on the Wheel of Fortune TV game show.

Zeno was among a handful of contestants to compete in an episode of the popular show that'll air at 7:30 p.m. this Thursday, Nov. 2.

She said she'd glad the pushed herself to try out for the show and wants to motivate others to pursue their own big adventures.

"That was a once-in-a-lifetime experience," Zeno told the *Independent*.

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(See Zeno, Page 15A)

By MARIN HOWELL
BOSTON — After spending 44 years largely within the boundaries of Addison County, Hannah Zeno found herself this summer looking for an adventure that would take her outside her comfort zone.

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(

GOOD NEWS ON THE CHILDCARE FRONT

#5

THERE WAS GOOD NEWS ON THE CHILDCARE FRONT IN 2023. IN JUNE, THE VERMONT LEGISLATURE PASSED A SWEEPING CHILDCARE BILL THAT WOULD INVEST \$125 MILLION A YEAR OF NEW FUNDING INTO THE STATE'S CHILDCARE SECTOR, MAKING IT ONE OF THE MOST EXPANSIVE SYSTEMS IN THE NATION.

The bill stopped short of offering free, full-day pre-K in public schools for all 4-year-olds — which was the centerpiece of the original legislation — but it does much to improve what many agree is a broken system defined by families struggling to afford childcare and childcare workers struggling to make a living.

The bill expands income eligibility for financial assistance to families earning up to 575% of the federal poverty level, and

it subsidizes programs with state funding so they can offer more childcare slots and pay their workers a more livable wage.

The Middlebury area will see an increase in childcare options next month with the opening of the brand new Red Clover Children's Center in the Congregational Church of Middlebury. The center will offer 24 slots to families with children ages 6 weeks to 3 years.

The program received \$560,000 in donated seed money, including \$200,000 from local nonprofit Table 21 and a \$360,000 donation from an anonymous longtime supporter of the church's community outreach efforts. Naylor & Breen completed renovations on the Red Clover space, which is inside the church, earlier in 2023. And in September, the Red Clover board hired Tessa Dearborn as executive director. She is a childcare veteran who most recently led Kid Logic Learning Center in South Burlington.

Then in December existing Middlebury program Otter Creek Child Center got the OK from the town to begin a \$10 million major expansion and renovation project, which will add 77 new childcare slots. OCCC officials are working toward a fall 2024 groundbreaking on the project, which will create a new 6,900-foot addition on the Weybridge Street building, along with renovations to the existing building and related site improvements.

Officials have so far raised more than half of the money they need to complete the project, thanks to a \$4 million commitment from Middlebury College, a \$3 million federal earmark through Let's Grow Kids and several other sources.

In Ferrisburgh, town officials are considering establishing a childcare center that could serve up to 24 children in the former United Methodist Church, aka the Brown Church, on Route 7. Late last year, the church's congregation, which was no longer large enough to necessitate the use of the building, deeded it to the town.

Last spring, motivated by the results of a survey of town residents, Ferrisburgh officials met with representatives of Let's Grow Kids to assess the feasibility of creating a childcare center in the church's lower level. They determined it would be a great space for children, with good light, three exits and two bathrooms. And because the property is town-owned, Ferrisburgh could bond for renovations.

There's plenty of work to do before the town can establish a timetable on

this project, but we'll be keeping an eye on it.



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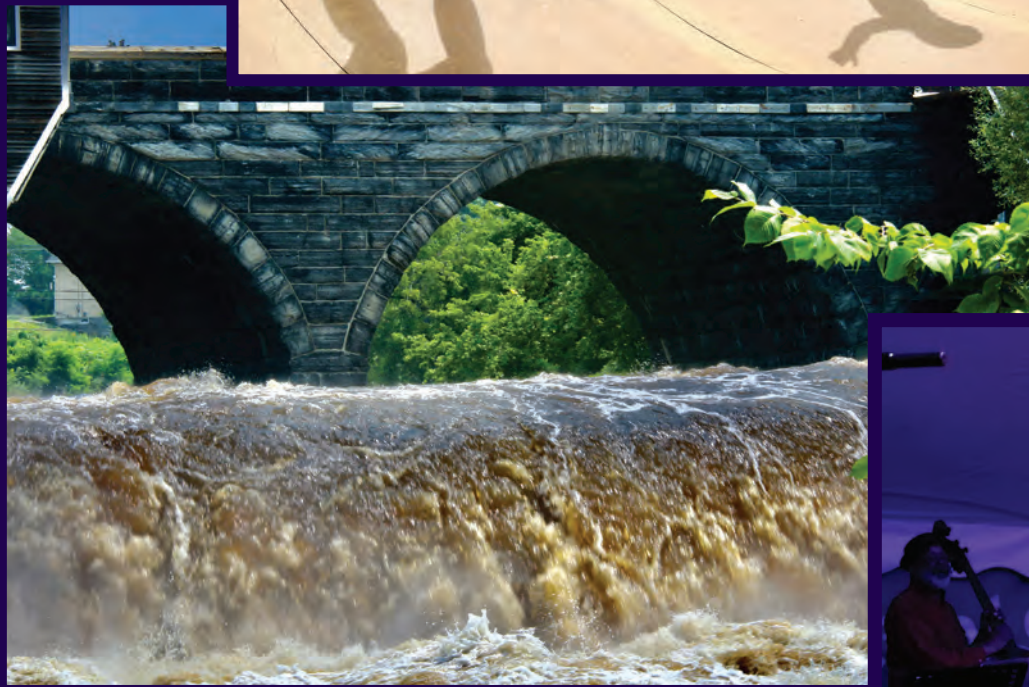
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2023 IN PHOTOS



Eye on the county

Traditionally, words are the stock and trade of a newspaper, but in modern times readers count on images to tell the story, too. Addison Independent staff photographer Steve James told a lot of stories in 2023 with his camera; here are a collection of images that give a taste of what he saw and captured.

On this page, you see (above) re-enactors of a Civil War cavalry troop clip-clopping through Vergennes during the Memorial Day Parade, (top left) new Middlebury Union High School graduate Xander Campanelli looks like he is ready to go out and pound the pavement and look for a job just after the June commencement ceremony; and (left) Carrie Ade Brer of Middlebury and her 8-year-old son, Brer Basson, tune up their skateboarding skills together on a newly opened feature at the developing skate park near Middlebury town pool on the last day of July.

Meanwhile, rainstorms in July gave new meaning to the term “waterfall” (bottom left) as the Otter Creek Falls in Middlebury roared violent and noisy through the shire town. Despite the rains, the 44th annual Festival on the Green came off mostly as planned, and dancer Brendaliz Cepeda (below) whips up the crowd, her bandmates and her red skirt during a performance of the Puerto Rican band Bombajazeando.

Independent photos/Steve James



2023 IN PHOTOS



But wait ...

There's more photos from the last five months of this past year. Addison County Fair & Field Days is a signature event in these parts, and the 75th annual edition in August was no exception; above, 12-year-old Colin Chamberlin of Addison shows off his calf Hummer in the show ring. A newer tradition is the Woofstock Walk for Animals in Middlebury, which always ends (top right) with a puppy plunge into the town pool.

Steve James saw a classic vignette play out at Town Hall Theater in early December (right) when 5-year-old twins Charlotte, left, and Penelope "Poppy" Hanson of Middlebury mailed their letters to the North Pole using a convenient box set up near a spot where Santa was visiting with children.

Pupils at Bristol Elementary School in late September found out that education isn't all about book learning when 15 lucky students got to smash a plate of whipped cream in the face of the school's top administrators as a reward for gaining the most points for good behavior; (bottom right) kindergartner Elizabeth Heck clearly loves smashing a paper plate of whipped cream in the face of Principal Aaron Boynton.

Retiring Middlebury Police Chief Tom Hanley was joined by members of his force on stage at Town Hall Theater in late October (below) during an open house recognizing his more than 32 years of service to the community.

Independent photos/Steve James



#6

COUNTY MARKS CHANGING OF THE GUARD

THE TOP OFFICIALS

IN OUR COMMUNITY ARE CALLED "LEADERS" FOR A REASON. THEY AREN'T JUST FIGUREHEADS, BUT HAVE ACTUAL AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS THAT AFFECT OUR DAILY LIVES.

Sometimes that power is conferred in legal statutes, and sometimes it comes from the moral authority conferred upon them by us — the general public that they serve.

Addison County saw a fair number of changes in its local leadership in 2023. Perhaps the most prominent changes were at the top of the biggest law enforcement agencies in the county.

One of the counties longest-serving law enforcement leaders was Tom Hanley, who came to Middlebury to be police chief in 1991. After serving 32 transformational years leading the local PD, in July Hanley announced he would retire. Two months later, the selectboard unanimously voted to

hire Middlebury Police Sgt. Jason Covey to become the new chief.

The promotion of Interim Vergennes Police Chief Jason Ouellette to the permanent head of the city police department became official on March 14, when the Vergennes City Council formally approved a decision made in mid-January by City Manager Ron Redmond and a council-appointed hiring committee. Ouellette, 39, a highly decorated 15-year veteran of the city force, replaces Chief George Merkel, who retired the previous fall after 13 years of service.

Tom Mozzer was named the new commander of the Vermont State Police's New Haven barracks at the end of June. Now in his 23rd year with the VSP, Lt. Mozzer started at the Rutland barracks, became a detective sergeant with the Narcotics Investigation Unit, and was promoted to lieutenant in 2017.

On Feb. 1, Rose Elmore pinned the Addison County Sheriff's badge on her husband, Michael Elmore, in a ceremony at the Mahady Courthouse in Middlebury. Michael Elmore took the oath of office to become the county's top elected law enforcement officer that day, as did State's Attorney Eva Vekos, though she had started her duties the previous December when the acting state's attorney left for another job.

Law enforcement wasn't the only place we saw new leadership. The citizens

of Vergennes on Town Meeting Day elected as its new mayor Chris Bearor, a Vergennes-Panton Water District Board cochair and city lister. More than a year after long-serving Middlebury Town Clerk Ann Webster announced she would retire, the town appointed Karin Mott would take the job.

On the education front, the Addison Central School District saw some leadership turnover. Superintendent Peter Borrows announced he was looking for a new job, and at the end of June he left to take the helm at the Milton, Mass., school district. The school board selected two finalists to replace him, but ultimately hired an interim superintendent — Tim Williams — to serve for a year while the candidate search continued. Williams, who had been serving as interim head of the Patricia Hannaford Career Center, was relieved of that responsibility when Nicole MacTaggart was hired to fill that role beginning July 1.

Middlebury Union High School Principal Justin Campbell did not give nearly so much warning before he left that job. He announced his resignation on a Monday afternoon in January and made it effective at the end of the day. Assistant Superintendent Caitlin Steele took over as an interim and was later hired as the permanent MUHS principal.

In September, there was another surprise departure of a top local leader when Porter Medical Center's Tom Thompson stepped away from his role as president and chief operating officer of the county's top health care provider in order to focus his time and energy on caring for his ailing wife. The UVM Health Network installed Bob Ortmeyer as an interim replacement.



They're back

After a four-year hiatus, Middlebury's Police Department is returning to Town Hall Theater. See Arts + Leisure.



Tough night

Burr & Burton shined off an early Tiger TD and rolled to a win on Friday. See Page 1B.



Town clerk

Meet the new official in charge of Solidbury town land records and the like. See Page 2A.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Vol. 77 No. 37

Middlebury, Vermont • Thursday, September 14, 2023 • 42 Pages

\$1.50

\$25M city senior housing plan good to go

Vergennes Grand construction to begin soon

By ANDY KIRKALDY
VERGENNES — Five years and several setbacks after first launching their plans for a major expansion and renovation of Vergennes Residential Care, a 200-year-old property at 34 North St., into an interconnected 23-room, four-building care home

capable of accommodating up to 62 seniors with modest means. It will also triple the business's employee count from 18 to an estimated 48.
The Hansens call the project Vergennes Grand Senior Living. It will include roughly 40,000 square feet of new construction and what the Hansens call a historically sensitive renovation

of the existing 10,000-square-foot North Street building that fronts the northwest corner of Vergennes' central park.
Their plans have been backed by city officials and members of the Vergennes business community, who see Vergennes Grand meeting a need for area seniors, providing jobs, and bringing patrons to other

(See City housing, Page 9A)



CONOR MCMANUS HAS taken over management of Middlebury's Happy Valley Orchard just as the growing season was ended by a late spring frost and summer floods. But McManus has plans to keep the business humming along.

Sparse apple crop won't deter Happy Valley's McManus

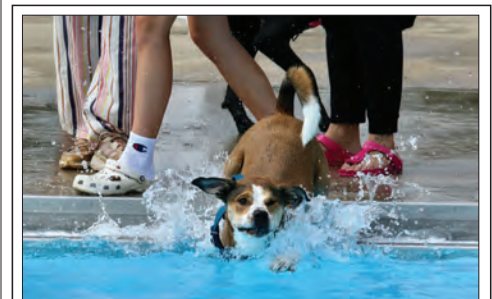
By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade," is an American writer. Ebert Libbey's enduring ode to optimism.
Local orchardist Conor McManus has almost cornered the market on optimism.

Middlebury's Happy Valley Orchard of roughly 98% of its 2023 crop. So McManus's credo this year can best be described as, "If life doesn't give you lemons, bring some in and diversify your operation to make it resilient for the long haul."

McManus, 44, has indeed picked a difficult year to take

A cruel spring frost robbed

(See Happy Valley, Page 13A)



Puppy plunge!

A HUMAN ORGANIZER OF Woolstock Walk for the Animals in Middlebury gushed about how the weather really turned out for Sunday's fundraiser for Homeward Bound, Addison County's Humane Society. But this beagle didn't seem to care whether it was raining or sunny when he came to dive into the Middlebury town pool. It was a lot of fun for everyone. See more photos on Page 10A.

Independent photo/Dave Jones

MUMS teacher inspired by a Holocaust hero

Bérubé learns by tracing his footsteps

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury Union Middle School French teacher Denise Bérubé's summer experience as an inquisitive tourist is about to pay nice educational dividends for her students.
Her recent two-week trip to

France, Spain and Portugal has given her new insights into the late Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, a Portuguese diplomat who saved thousands of Jewish refugees from the Nazis during the early stages of World War II. The aftermath of her sojourn will produce pen-pal

opportunities, as well as lessons in history, languages, geography, selflessness and compassion for many MUMS sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders.

Bérubé developed an interest in the experiences of World War II Holocaust survivors through her long friendship with Simon Barenbaum, a former

Middlebury College educator.

Barenbaum was part of a Jewish family residing in France during the German occupation of that nation during the early 1940s. He and most of his family were able to escape deportation to Nazi concentration camps thanks to their determination, family

(See Mendes, Page 8A)

Climate group will help homeowners decarbonize

By MAKEN HOWELL

ADDISON COUNTY — The Climate Economy Action Center of Addison County is launching a pilot program that will offer five one-on-one support to county residents looking to

reduce their home's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

The "Navigator Project" will kick off later this fall and is designed to help homeowners and renters identify

(See CEAC, Page 9A)

Thompson steps down as Porter president

MIDDLEBURY — Tom Thompson, who has been leading Porter Medical Center for around three years, will step away from his role as president and chief operating officer of the Middlebury health care hub as of Sept. 18. He will focus his time and energy on a pressing family health matter.

"We have had opportunities to face many challenges and achieve great success together at Porter," Thompson said in a message to staff. "I leave feeling like my work with you all remains unfinished but know you will continue to serve and care for our patients and residents with the professional, compassionate care you have always shown our community."

As of Monday, Bob Ortmeyer will begin serving the UVM.

(See Thompson, Page 11A)



Sgt. JASON COVEY, a 23-year veteran of the Middlebury Police Department, has been named its new chief. He begins his duties Sept. 18.

Covey new Middlebury police chief

Sergeant promoted to lead department

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury selectboard on Tuesday unanimously selected a new police chief: Jason Covey. Currently a sergeant with the department, Covey joined the MPD 23 years ago as a

patrolman.

Covey, 47, will officially begin his new duties on Sept. 18. That's when he'll take over the top spot from longtime

Middlebury Police Chief Tom Hanley, who's retiring after

having led Addison County's largest municipal police

department since 1991.

"It's exciting," Covey said of

his new job. The possibilities

are endless, I'm energized. I have

so many ideas that are racing in

my mind.

(See New chief, Page 14A)

By the way

Middlebury Union High School French teacher Michelle Steele never imagined her fall semester sabbatical spent in Morocco would coincide with a natural disaster. But it has. Steele and her family are currently in Rabat while she's visiting her public

(See By the way, Page 6A)

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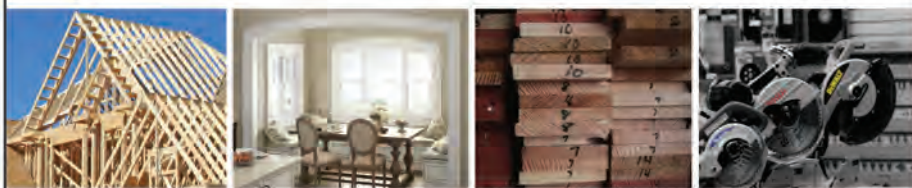
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RACIST INCIDENTS OCCUR AT SCHOOLS

#7

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS EXPOSED AND EXACERBATED DURING THE PANDEMIC SOFTENED SOMEWHAT IN 2023, THOUGH COUNTY SCHOOLS STILL WRESTLED WITH TROUBLING STUDENT BEHAVIOR.

In particular, local schools grappled with racist incidents directed at both students and educators and considered ways to foster more welcoming and inclusive learning communities moving forward.

At the start of the year, members of the Middlebury Union High School girls'

basketball team announced they'd skip a Jan. 12 game at Enosburg Falls High School, citing a history of racist attacks directed at Tiger athletes at the Franklin County school. Students pointed to three separate incidents during the past three years in which Middlebury athletes had endured racist harassment from Enosburg spectators.

The students' decision followed lengthy discussions between Enosburg officials, team members and district officials, and was made in part due to dissatisfaction with Enosburg administrators' proposals for dealing with Tiger athletes' concerns. The two teams later met for a Feb. 7 match-up, during which members of the Tigers and Enosburg teams took turns reading a prepared statement condemning the racism that Vermont students have endured in recent years. The denouncement came just days after a member of the Milton boys' basketball team allegedly directed a racial slur toward a Tiger player, causing that game in Milton to be suspended in the second half.

Along with students, local educators were also the target of

racist harassment this year. In August, Middlebury Union Middle School's first-ever dean of climate & culture resigned from the position after only one year. Esther Charlestin, who is Black, cited two racially-charged incidents, both involving students targeting her with use of the "N-word," as well as what she claimed was an "underwhelming" response to those events from school administrators, as contributing to her departure.

Following Charlestin's resignation, the Addison Central School District announced new and ongoing efforts to battle racism and intolerance. MUMS Principal Michaela Wisell and ACSD Interim Superintendent Tim Williams sent emails to public schools community, expressing their sorrow for the harassment Charlestin suffered, while and outlining short-term plans and broader efforts to address racism in the district.

In Bristol, a dozen community members stood before the Mount Abraham Unified School Board in April, calling on school officials to take immediate and extensive action in addressing racism throughout the district after a student of color at Bristol Elementary School was twice called a racial slur.

Residents at the meeting asked the board to consider adopting an anti-racism plan for the district, and other community

members took to Front Porch Forum to express their sympathy for the BES student who was racially harassed and to encourage parents to speak with their children about acceptable behavior. Other posts called on district leadership to implement an anti-racist curriculum or take other actions following the incident.

Eight months later, community members once again packed an MAUSD board meeting after another incident in which a student at Bristol Elementary School was called a racial slur. This time, more than three dozen residents stood in front of the board, united in their plea for district officials to instate anti-racist education for teachers and staff, and curriculum for students.

Board members at the Dec. 19 meeting took time to reflect on what they'd heard, discuss next steps and invite community members to be a part of continued conversations about anti-racism work in the district.

In related news, Elias Urang, a nine-year-old fourth-grader at Mary Hogan Elementary School, in December convinced the ACSD board to allow the Middlebury school to fly a Black Lives Matter flag.



ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Vol. 77 No. 35 Middlebury, Vermont • Thursday, August 31, 2023 • 42 Pages \$1.50

Some flooding losses are attributed to small rivers

By NATHAN ADAMS
KESWICK
ADDISON COUNTY
Although Otter Creek has been the center of attention for preparing for high waters in Middlebury throughout this soggy summer, the heat of August flooding that wreaked 4 inch flooding that wreaked

County farms see \$3M in damage

Summer rains also causing feed issues
By MARIAN HOWELL
ADDISON COUNTY
Heavy rains that hit the state in July alone caused over \$3 million worth of damage to Addison County farms, according to a survey conducted by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets this month. As a result, some farmers are already dipping into their winter

feed stores to feed their animals now. Feed-related issues are on the minds of farmers Brian and Cindy Kayler, who own Kayler's Honeysuckle Meats in New Haven. They're recovering into this summer, they have lost 20 acres of the pasture they use to feed their beef and dairy herd.

What's feeding what should be our winter feed now. What that will mean, I don't know. I'm hoping to make more," Brian Kayler told the Independent. "Normally I don't touch the feed that we're feeding right now until Dec. 17."

The recently completed Ag Agency's "Severe Weather and Flooding Loss & Damage Survey" was intended to assess the impact that the excessive rain and flooding that occurred between July 7 and 18 has had on farmers, agricultural businesses and services and non-profits organizations throughout the state. The survey tallied 285 responses, with respondents reporting an estimated \$10,062,124 in total losses on over 27,000 impacted acres. Addison County was reported a total of \$3,104,455 in estimated losses, more than any other county in the state.

(See County Farms, Page 9A)

THT nets \$1M college gift for its expansion

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY
Another chapter in a roughly 20-year relationship between Middlebury College and Town Hall Theater was written on Wednesday, Aug. 30. Elizabeth Guilbeau said, "The educational institution will make a \$1 million donation toward THT's \$7.5 million renovation

expansion project at 68 South Pleasant St., which is adjacent to the existing theater. College President Laurie Patton confirmed the gift at a celebration at THT that included project banners, theater officials and one of Patton's predecessors: John McCordell, who was instrumental in the theater's founding.

(See THT, Page 9A)

MUMS dean cites racism as a factor in resignation

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY
Middlebury Union Middle School's first-ever dean of climate & culture resigned from her job after only one year, Esther Charlestin, who is Black, cited two alleged, racially-charged incidents — and what she called an "underwhelming" response to those incidents from Addison Central School District (ACSD) — as reasons for her departure. Charlestin, a former Middlebury

member who recently left her homeland in the face of the ongoing Russian invasion. "Given the circumstances in my homeland, I felt it was right to leave (Ukraine) a long distance, at least until there's peace back in Ukraine," Charlestin Guilbeau said. "Her presence has not only enriched our lives, but also provided her with a meaningful role and purpose amidst the challenges."

The Guilbeaus' trek to cooler climates had been in the works for several years. The Guilbeaus family of Austin, Texas, was among those seeking to buy down new routes in

gentler and deeper Green Mountain pastures, find when their search for a conventional home came up empty, they took a novel approach. They acquired Ripton's 195-year-old Chippewa Inn, which they hope will become both their long-term home and a successful business venture.

And in addition to housing the Guilbeaus and what they hope will be a steady stream of guests, the Chippewa Inn will also provide homes to a weary traveler from a western land. Ukrainian national Svetlana Ostelka, an extended family

member who recently left her homeland in the face of the ongoing Russian invasion. "Given the circumstances in my homeland, I felt it was right to leave (Ukraine) a long distance, at least until there's peace back in Ukraine," Charlestin Guilbeau said. "Her presence has not only enriched our lives, but also provided her with a meaningful role and purpose amidst the challenges."

(See Chippewa Inn, Page 16A)



Filmmaker
JOHN BLATTNER, BEST known for his gig in front of the camera on the show "Mad Men," is also quite talented behind the camera. The mini annual Middlebury Film Festival's feature, which wrapped up on Sunday, screened one of his films, the new feature "Maggie Moore's" starring Jon Hamm and Tina Fey, and "God's Pocket" featuring Philip Seymour Hoffman, John Turturro and Christine Hendricks. Blattner, shown leading his VHS award, had a nice engagement with the audience at Sunday's awards ceremony. See more MNFF photos on Page 16A.

Bristol looks to make town parks accessible

By MARIAN HOWELL
BRISTOL
Bristol is exploring ways to make three of its town parks easier for all visitors to enjoy. The effort, largely organized by Bristol resident Peter Knight, is aimed at identifying options for making Memorial, Synagogue and Eagle parks more accessible. In the months ahead, the town

Family can't find a home, buys Ripton's inn

New owners have roots in Texas and Ukraine
By JOHN FLOWERS
RIPTON
In addition to abundant rainfall, this summer has brought numerous inquiries from people seeking to relocate to an Addison County that has few available homes to offer.

The Guilbeaus family of Austin, Texas, was among those seeking to buy down new routes in

gentler and deeper Green Mountain pastures, find when their search for a conventional home came up empty, they took a novel approach. They acquired Ripton's 195-year-old Chippewa Inn, which they hope will become both their long-term home and a successful business venture.

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Pewter maker is diversifying into pottery

Danforth adds 'Pizzazz' to its entrepreneurial portfolio
By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY
Klepper sometimes gets asked to describe how the Middlebury company's artisans are able to fashion bowls, mugs and other bathroom out of metal.

"When we're explaining the process of spinning metal on a lathe, what most of us say is, 'It's like throwing a pot on a potter's wheel,'" Klepper told the Independent. "You start with a disc of pewter or a blob of clay, and by applying the right amount of skill and the right amount of pressure in the right places, you sort of magically make it turn into a different shape."

The pottery analogy will soon carry added significance for Danforth's, a nationally renowned manufacturer of handcrafted pewter ornaments, jewelry, frames, vases, drinking mugs, plates and much more. That's because the company is acquiring Fair Haven-based Pizzazz Pottery, an enterprise that will relocate early next

By the way

Labor Day weekend is a highlight for backyard barbecues and other celebratory gatherings at which some folks like to pass down a few cold ones. Be advised: (See By the way, Page 11A)

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#8

COLLEGE AIMS TO OFFER REAL-WORLD, ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

HOW DOES AN ESTEEMED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION CONTINUE TO PREPARE ITS STUDENTS FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION IN AN EVER-CHANGING, COMPLEX WORLD? IT EVOLVES.

This year, Middlebury College sought to update its offerings, providing students with more accessible educational opportunities and experiences that would ready them for a 21st-century world and workforce. The institution also in 2023 launched a \$600 million fundraising campaign to support those efforts.

College officials kicked off the public phase of the “For Every Future” campaign in October. The fundraising campaign is the largest in the school’s 223-year history and is aimed at supporting a variety of initiatives intended to enrich students’ experiences

at the institution and help prepare them to navigate the world that awaits them after graduation.

Funds raised through the campaign will support projects in five priority areas: access, academic excellence, experience, annual giving and capital improvements. More than a third of the funds will increase financial aid that could diversify the student body. The campaign also targets an expansion of key academics, particularly interdisciplinary programs and funding of internships and experiential learning (including athletics). Another 20% of the funds will be earmarked for building projects, including at the Snowbowl.

During the next 10 years, Erol’s pledge of \$3 million will be used to support current CAP programming and to create additional opportunities for students to pursue climate action work at Middlebury and beyond. For its part, NextWorld pledged \$4 million to endow CAP.

In addition to planning new offerings for students, this year Middlebury College continued its work with the Kathryn Wasserman Davis Collaborative in Conflict Transformation, providing opportunities for members of the college and broader Middlebury community to explore different types of conflict and how they approach that friction.

The various programming was supported by a \$25 million grant the college received from an anonymous donor in March of 2022 to fund the creation of a new conflict transformation initiative. Through the initiative, the college has supported existing institution-wide work in the area of conflict transformation and developed new programming.

This year, the initiative supported students in internships at Addison County social service organizations, events at the Middlebury campus covering topics like restorative justice practices in schools and politics and persuasion in American politics, and opportunities for individuals to explore conflict-related goals through community workshops and other events as part of The Global Body in Conflict: Movement Matters series.

As the year came to a close, college officials encouraged community members to take part in upcoming programs related to the conflict transformation initiative.

The college launched the campaign in July of 2021 and hopes to reach its \$600 million fundraising goal by June 2028. By the end of the year, the institution was a little more than halfway toward meeting that target, with \$389,088,126 raised.

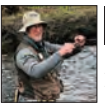
Included in that total was \$7 million in gifts the institution secured through a partnership with two charitable organizations — Erol, a philanthropic foundation, and Next World Philanthropies — to expand the college’s Climate Action Program. The Climate Action Program, or CAP, supports students in their efforts to tackle climate change through paid fellowships, connections with Middlebury alumni and a variety of other offerings.



‘Rewilding’
Some lawns, including at Middlebury College, are being returned to a natural state. Arts + Leisure.



Parks ‘N Rec
Middlebury has a wide variety of offerings for families and adults this winter. See the pullout inside.



Veterans
We celebrate the many who have served their country in a special section inside Arts + Leisure.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Prominent leaders changing at Porter

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — Bob Ortmyer was content. He was in his 30th year as an administrator with the WellSpan Health System in York, Pa., a network of eight hospitals serving folks in South-Central Pennsylvania and parts of northern Maryland.



Dr. Benvenuto caps eventful 11-year run
By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — When Dr. Anna Benvenuto leaves Porter Hospital’s employ later this month, her 11-year tenure will represent only a fraction of the institution’s 98-year history as Addison County’s healthcare hub.

County arts offerings gathered in one place

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — Town Hall Theater has taken another step in its emergence as a regional arts organization, with the launch this week of a new website that’ll serve as a comprehensive digital arts calendar for all of Addison County.



Classic cold
DURING MIDDLEBURY UNION High School’s Tuesday evening dress rehearsal of the thespians’ production of “Frozen: The Musical,” Ella Kozak, playing Anna, sings before a crowd in the palace of Arendelle. Anna, her sister Elsa, and the whole Disney crowd will put on a terrific show at the MUHS auditorium this Thursday and Friday evenings and Saturday afternoon. See more photos on Page 10A.



Long haul
A PORTION OF the throng of nearly 400 runners taking part in this past Sunday’s Middlebury Maple Run trot down South Street in the first mile of the annual race, which includes a half-marathon (13.1 miles), a two-person relay and a 3-mile fun run. See more photos on Page 13A.

College seeks \$600M to enhance experience

By MARIN HOWELL
MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury College has launched the public phase of the largest fundraising campaign in the institution’s 223-year history. The “For Every Future” campaign aims to raise \$600 million to support a variety of initiatives intended to enrich students’ experiences at the institution and help prepare them for the world that awaits them upon graduation.

Monkton history comes alive thanks to three active residents

By MARIN HOWELL
MONKTON Around two years ago, Monkton residents Candace Polzella, Lauren Parren and Cindy Walkott embarked on a quest to learn more about the history of the town they call home.

By the way

While her appearance on TV’s “Wheel of Fortune” game show occurred last August, Britain’s Hannah Zeno had quite the rooting section for the long-awaited broadcast of her episode this past Thursday, Nov. 2. Zeno hosted a viewing party that drew more than 60 people, and many more in Addison County and beyond watched from the comfort of their own living rooms. Zeno wasn’t able to disclose how she

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HOW WE FUND OUR SCHOOLS #9

ADDISON COUNTY RESIDENTS SHOWED STRONG SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION ON TOWN MEETING DAY, WHEN ALL LOCAL SCHOOL BUDGETS PASSED, FOUR OUT OF FIVE BY LARGE MARGINS.

Voter approval for budgets proposed by Addison Central, Mount Abraham Unified and Addison Northwest school districts boards ranged from 63% to 80% in Australian balloting.

Voter approval for budgets proposed by Addison Central, Mount Abraham Unified and Addison Northwest school districts boards ranged from 63% to 80% in Australian balloting.

And 75% of area residents who cast ballots backed a significant increase in Patricia Hannaford Career Center spending — this despite the fact that a yes vote meant a 14% hike in the tuition for students at the career center.

Only voting for proposed Otter Valley Unified Union School District spending was relatively close: About 52% of district voters there supported a budget plan a year after an initial proposal was defeated.

And property taxes continued to rise faster than inflation, in part because of higher school spending.

Vermont lawmakers changed some rules on how state funds are doled out

to pay for education. Some changes rejiggered the way students are counted when calculating funding based on student poverty or familiarity with English. The passage of H.480 (now called Act 68) makes changes to the system of Common Levels of Appraisal, or CLAs, ultimately requiring municipalities to begin to assess their properties every six years, rather than when the CLA falls out of whack. And the CLAs, which are ratios the state tax department uses to compare property tax values in all Vermont towns, are seriously out of whack in Addison County (as well as statewide).

The Vermont Department of Taxes uses CLAs to measure how well communities measure their property values. Then, state officials use CLAs to adjust school tax rates to create equity among towns with varying levels of accuracy in how they assess real estate. CLAs above 100% — a rarity in Vermont right now — result in lower tax rates.

Lower CLAs — which are now widespread in Addison County — result in upward pressure on school tax rates.

In the fall, local school boards were struggling to make this coming year's budgets palatable, with changes in state education tax law in mind. One state-mandated spending rule

provides that for those districts that raise spending by less than 10%, the state will cap the district's homestead property tax rate increase at 5%. So all districts are trying to keep spending in check.

This won't be easy with health insurance rising for school employees by 16%, most districts hooked into employee contracts that guarantee raises of 11% in some cases, inflation driving other costs higher and COVID-era ESSER funding disappearing.

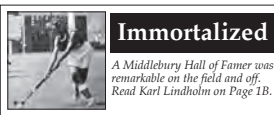
Much like a math-averse student getting their first dose of calculus, the Addison Central School District board in November got a quick, dizzying tutorial on

the possible budget impacts of Act 173 — a major revamp in the way special education services are funded and delivered at public schools. Board Chair Barb Wilson aptly summed up the board's sentiments after a 70-minute deep-dive. "It's very complicated," she said, as her colleagues nodded in agreement.



Joint effort

A Middlebury Studio School show offers art from instructors and students. See Arts + Leisure.



Immortalized

A Middlebury Hall of Famer was remarkable on the field and off. Read Karl Lindholm on Page 1B.



Winter Sports

Learn about the two-dozen teams competing at all four local high schools — plus team photos!

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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MOUNT ABE SENIORS Hannah Gallivan as the Fairy Godmother and Sarah Heath as Little Bo-Peep rehearse a scene from the Addison Repertory Theater production of "Adrian: The Alternative Panto" on Tuesday. The holiday play will be staged Friday and Saturday at the Hannaford Career Center in Middlebury. Independent photo/Steve James

ART goes slapstick for the holidays

Pantomime play uses British template

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — When one thinks of holiday-themed performances, the mind instantly wanders to "A Christmas Carol" or "It's a Wonderful Life." But folks at the Hannaford Career Center's Addison Repertory Theater, known as ART, are straying from Christmas convention this year. They're thinking outside of the holiday gift box, you might say. As a matter of fact, the young

ART actors this weekend are taking their cue from Monty Python, rather than Charles Dickens. The cast and crew will be staging what ART Director Eric Reid-St. John called a "good ol' English panto" — panto is short for pantomime — that'll

ANWSD mulls 5% spending hike

Towns' CLAs seen as pushing school taxes higher

By ANDY KIRKALDY
VERGENNES — The Addison Northwest School District Board took a second look at a draft Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget at a Monday Zoom meeting. Despite a confusing set of new state school funding laws, including new ways to count districts' students, different methods of funding special education, and two new spending caps for district officials to work around — there are clear takeaways for ANWSD residents. One is that it appears one of those spending caps will work in the district's favor. Because the ANWSD board almost certainly

will next month approve a budget that raises spending by less than a 10% threshold, the state will cap the district's homestead property tax rate increase at 5%. Although not set in stone yet, ANWSD officials said this will probably mean an increase of

City voters to weigh in on fire truck bond

By ANDY KIRKALDY
VERGENNES — Vergennes residents next week weigh in on a proposal to bond for up to \$1.75 million, money that would allow the city's fire department to replace a 21-year-old heavy rescue truck and a 25-year-old ladder truck. Balloting will be held this coming Tuesday, Dec. 19, in the basement of the Vergennes Fire Department from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. The face value of the equipment on the ballot is \$1.125 million

for the heavy rescue truck and \$500,000 for a used ladder truck, plus \$125,000 for radios needed for the new trucks. That amount is already about \$600,000 less than a bond



Gotta catch 'em all
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE JUNIOR Irland Melvier explains the process of pollination to kids during the "Pokémon Pop-Up Museum" at Bicentennial Hall this past Saturday. Middlebury students highlighted to community members the real-world inspiration behind popular Pokémon characters through 20 student-designed exhibits. See more photos on Page 19A. Independent photo/Steve James

Porter eyes a major makeover for its ER

Doubling of its size is part of the plan

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — Porter Medical Center officials are busy planning the institution's top construction priority: A doubling of the size, hopefully within the next two or three years, of the hospital's Emergency Department (ED) in an effort to make it more friendly for patients, their families and those who work there. Porter's ED underwent its last substantial update 30 years ago and is in dire need of a makeover, according to Dr. Amanda Young, (See Porter, Page 20A)



By the way... Seems like everybody is talking about changes to Vermont's land use law, Act 250. The Vermont Natural Resources Commission is holding public hearings on the proposed changes. (See By the way, Page 10A)

Work begins on senior housing in Little City

Vergennes Grand build starts with bang

By ANDY KIRKALDY
VERGENNES — After a well-attended ceremonial groundbreaking in mid-October, work began in earnest late last month on the roughly \$25 million Vergennes Grand Senior Living project in the heart of the city — and residents can expect its next construction phase, beginning early next week, to be noticeable. That elderly housing complex, when complete in a little over a year, will house up to 82 seniors, (See Vergennes housing, Page 17A)



Digging into the future
TOWN HALL THEATER Executive Director Lisa Mitchell and Middlebury College President Laurie Patton mark the symbolic start to the next phase of the Middlebury arts institution's growth, as they take part in a THT addition groundbreaking on Tuesday. See more photos on Page 11A. Independent photo/Steve James

Fourth-grader wins OK to fly the BLM flag at Mary Hogan

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — Elias Urang delivered a master class in social justice and the democratic process at Monday's Addison Central School District (ACSD) board meeting. And he's only 9 years old.

With dinner and bedtime beckoning, Urang appeared before the board to request that the Black Lives Matter flag be flown at Mary Hogan Elementary School, where he's currently a fourth-grader. He presented the ACSD board with a petition bearing the names of more than 100 fellow students who share his convictions and explained his rationale behind his flag pitch. "Sometimes, as a Black student at Mary Hogan, I

(See BLM, Page 14A)

Student survey explores energy-efficiency efforts

By MARIN HOWELL

ADDISON COUNTY — Several students at Middlebury College spent part of their fall semester out in the community rather than inside the classroom, speaking with the owners and managers of nonresidential properties across Addison County. The students were hoping to hear about the challenges and opportunities those individuals see in decarbonizing their buildings. Through their research, students learned about how factors like costs and building age can hinder nonresidential decarbonization

(See Decarbonization, Page 8A)

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#10

WE BOAST CHAMPIONS ALL AROUND

THE INDEPENDENT SPORTS SECTION BELIEVES EVERYONE'S EFFORTS COUNT. SURE, WHEN SCORES ARE LOGGED, TIMES ARE KEPT, DISTANCES ARE MEASURED, OR PERFORMANCES ARE JUDGED, WINNERS ARE NAMED. AND HERE WE'LL CELEBRATE OUR MOST SUCCESSFUL ATHLETES.

But not without saying that all our local athletes' contributions mattered, regardless of the outcomes. Sports are about doing one's best and having fun in the process. No one asks or expects more.

One example: One of the most dramatic moments the *Independent* saw in 2023 was a duel for fifth place in a midseason cross-country race between Grey Fearon of Vergennes and a Burr & Burton runner.

Both had determination and pain etched on their faces. Fearon earned the higher place by a tiny fraction of a second despite his competitor's desperate dive across the finish line.

Moments like that are as much why we watch and appreciate sports as any trophy hoisted.

But, for the record, whose 2023 efforts did pay off with hardware?

- Coach Katharine DeLorenzo's undefeated Middlebury College field hockey team claimed both the NESCAC and NCAA Division III crowns — for the sixth straight season since 2017 (there were no games in the COVID year of 2020). Junior midfielder Amy Griffin was named the NCAA D-III player of the year.
- Coach Kate Livesay's Panther women's lacrosse team claimed the NESCAC and NCAA D-III titles. The NCAA title was the program's third straight after the Panthers didn't compete in 2020 or 2021 due to the pandemic. Livesay now has four NCAA and four NESCAC titles in her six active coaching years at Middlebury.
- First-year Middlebury College football coach Doug Mandigo led his team to an 8-1 record, good for a first-place tie with Trinity. Middlebury won at Trinity during the season, but NESCAC does not use tiebreakers in football.
- Three local high school wrestlers won

state titles. Eli Brace, a VUHS senior, earned the 132-pound championship, hit 100 wins in the semifinal round, and was named the state meet's Outstanding Wrestler. Eagle senior Devan Hemingway claimed his second straight 120-pound title, and Tiger senior Nick Sheldrick powered his way to the 285-pound crown.

- The MUHS Nordic ski teams blew away the competition at the two-day state meet. Lia Robinson, Ava Schneider, Mary Harrington and Beth McIntosh scored all the points for the Tiger girls and the scorers for the boys were Eliot Schneider, Trey Bosworth and Baxter Harrington on both days, and Matias Citarelli and Haakon Olsen on one day apiece.
- In indoor track last winter, Commodore Calvin Gramling won the D-II boys' 1,000-meter race.
- In D-III outdoor track in the spring Commodore Calder Rakowski won the boys' 800-meter race and also ran on the Commodores' winning four-by-800-meter relay team with Gramling, Fearon and Riley Gagnon.
- In D-II, outdoor track Tiger Jazmyn Hurley was the story, winning both the girls' 200- and 400-meter state meet titles.
- The Mount Abraham softball steamrolled its way through the D-II tournament, defeating No. 5 seed MUHS in the final, 12-2. It was the

program's fourth title since 2017.

- Vergennes Champ and Middlebury Marlin swimmers fared well at the state meet in White River Junction. Champ swimmer Will Clark won four boys' 14-and-under races, while Noah Smits (14U) and Carlyn Rapoport (19U) earned two wins apiece. For the Marlins, 18U boys' swimmer Aidan Chance and 12U boys' swimmer Constantin Bellman each won one state title.
- Middlebury College senior and Middlebury Fire Department volunteer firefighter Emily Jones did one thing none of these other athletes accomplished: set a Guinness world record.

On a cool, sunny Saturday in front of about 120 onlookers, Jones ran a mile wearing 60 pounds of full firefighter gear, breathing through a respirator, in eight minutes and 25 seconds, a full 2:35 faster than the previous record.

Afterward Jones figured her time might be tough to beat.

"I think people are going to have to work pretty hard for it," she said. "I would love to see someone break it so I would have an excuse to come out here and do all this again. It was really fun."

And there you have it.

ANSWERS:
Addy Indy Numbers Quiz

1. There are **over 30,000 weekly readers** of The *Addy Indy*.

2. We routinely cover **23 towns** — every town and city in Addison County.

3. We publish **50+ special sections** each year, including the popular Profiles in Community, Health & Well-Being, Sports Reports, Seasonal Guides, and Parks & Recreation Activity Guides.

4. We printed **3,130** pages in 2023.

5. Our website received over 2.4 million page views in 2023!

6. Web ads on addisonindependent.com had over 8 million impressions this year! Curious about buying a web ad? Email: advertising@addisonindependent.com.

7. Our weekly email newsletters received **325,000 opens** in 2023. Interested in getting the news delivered straight to your inbox? Visit bit.ly/3VVIC4M or scan the code below!

Thanks for playing and thanks for reading!

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

ADDITION COUNTY INDEPENDENT

B Section

THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2023

SPORTS

ALSO IN THIS SECTION:

- School News
- Classifieds
- Legal Notices
- Police Logs

Panther women's lacrosse completes historic run
Dominant NCAA final four performance caps undefeated season, nets program's eighth crown



By ANNY KIRKALOV
SALISBURY, Vt. — The NCAA Division III women's lacrosse championship was won by the Middlebury College Panthers on Sunday, June 1, 2023, as they defeated the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in a 12-2 final. The Panthers' victory capped an undefeated season and earned them their eighth national title. The team, coached by Kate Livesay, had won the NESCAC title in 2022 and the NCAA title in 2023. The Panthers' success was a testament to their hard work and dedication throughout the season.

MAV boys rolling into playoffs
Middlebury Athletic Varsity (MAV) boys' basketball team is looking to make a strong showing in the playoffs. The team, coached by Henry Anderson, has been performing well in recent games and is looking to build on their success. The team's goal is to win the state championship and represent Vermont in the national tournament.

Local track & field athletes shine at major Essex meet
A group of local track and field athletes from Addison County performed well at a major meet in Essex, Mass. The athletes, including several from Middlebury College, competed in various events and achieved impressive results. The meet was a significant challenge for the athletes, and their performance was a testament to their hard work and talent.

Commodore softball wins D-III opener
The Commodore softball team won their D-III opener in a 12-2 victory over the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. The team, coached by Calvin Gramling, was led by senior player Emily Jones, who hit a home run in the fourth inning. The team's victory was a great start to their season and showed their potential for success.

Grey Fearon wins cross-country race
Grey Fearon of Vergennes won the cross-country race at the state meet. Fearon, a senior, ran a strong race and finished in first place. His victory was a testament to his hard work and dedication to the sport. Fearon's win was a great achievement for him and his team.

So those were the Top 10 stories that the *Addison Independent* news staff considered the most important of 2023, but readers had their own opinions about what interested them most. One indication of that is what you “clicked” in 2023. We looked at your response to stories on addisonindependent.com and on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

On the *Addy Indy* website, people sometimes wanted the same thing that we thought was most important — news on the floods. Plus, sadly, news on crime was always very click-worthy for our online readers (like web surfers everywhere). And, of course, there were the nice stories about local people doing interesting things that drew a lot of online attention.

Here’s how it stacked up on addisonindependent.com. To see links to the stories, read this list online at our website.

ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM

1. Middlebury police respond to gunfire near train station (June 3) — 17,101 views
2. Letter to the editor: Middlebury’s downtown businesses are under siege (Oct. 12) — 14,369 views
3. College student dies in dorm room (Sept 21) — 10,431 views
4. Rising waters begin to close area roads (July 10) — 8,712 views
5. Middlebury police looking for missing teen (March 30) — 7,824
6. Woman killed in Waltham; police investigate (Sept. 19) — 6,695 views
7. Couple thinks big on mansion restoration (Oct. 5) — 6,627 views
8. Castleton homicide victim had Middlebury ties (Oct. 7) — 6,559 views
9. College firefighter sets world record in Middlebury (Apr. 10) — 5,761 views
10. Zeno takes a spin on Wheel of Fortune (Nov. 2) — 5,084 views

ON FACEBOOK:

Facebook is a different beast. Consumers clicked on a few of the same feature stories that made the top 10 on our website. But there was definitely a different tone to the Facebook favorites. Here is the top 10 on the *Addy Indy*’s Facebook page:

1. MUHS Principal Justin Campbell abruptly resigns less than three years on the job (Jan. 23) — 125.1k reach
2. Middlebury College student Emily Jones sets world record for running mile in firefighter gear (Apr. 8) — 120.6k reach

ONLINE TOP TEN 2023

3. Shoreham couple to restore Means mansion (Oct. 5) — 95.7k reach
4. “Mom & Pot Shop” opens in Vergennes (Aug. 31) — 56.2k reach
5. Zeno competes on Wheel of Fortune (Nov. 2) — 55.2k reach
6. John Bratko resigns as Bristol Elementary principal (March 23) — 48.7k reach
7. Bristol haunted forest offers scares and fun (Oct. 19) — 47.5 reach
8. Longtime paraeducator Diane Bolduc retires from Mary Hogan (June 15) — 46.9k reach
9. Raging otter creek (video) after the July floods (July 10) — 39.3k reach
10. Barber Joe DeGray retires after decades cutting hair in Middlebury (June 1) — 33k reach

You will notice the metric this platform uses to track reader activity is “reach.” This is not the same as “views” on addisonindependent.com. “Reach,” in Facebook terms, technically means it appeared in that many people’s feeds; whether or not they stopped to read it, or clicked on it is a whole different thing.

ON INSTAGRAM:

We get less traffic on our Instagram page, but there’s definitely a constituency for it. Here is the 2023 top 10 on Instagram:

1. Protestors support trans rights outside anti-trans talk at VUHS (421 likes)
2. Addison County Fair & Field Days photos (334 likes)
3. Video of raging Otter Creek after July deluge (314 likes)
4. Middlebury pedestrian bridge closed to public due to flooding (265 likes)
5. Randall and Kathleen Brisson of Shoreham to restore Means Mansion (252 likes)
6. Tribute to Victor Nuovo (245 likes)
7. Pics from Great Bristol Outhouse Race (241 likes)
8. Juvenile moose spotted around Middlebury (218 likes)
9. Outtakes from high school team photos (217 likes)
10. Otter Creek still rising after deluge, pic of Vergennes (208 likes)

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MEMBER OWNED. MEMBER COMMITTED.



We'd like to thank all our customers from 2023 for trusting us to improve your homes. It's been a great year and we have YOU to thank!

*Candlelight
Cabinetry*

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