



## Outer limits

A “No Man’s Land” adventure film festival highlights women in extreme sports. See Arts + Leisure.



## Tigers rolling

The MUHS girls made it eight wins in 10 outings on Tuesday night. See Sports, Page 1B.



## Local biz

The Whiting General Store is back in business thanks to a Vt. entrepreneur. See Page 2A.

# ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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## Porter doctors seeing more patients

### Nursing home management changing

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — While Vermont’s health care system is facing huge financial and logistical headwinds, Addison County’s Porter Medical Center is holding its own with a balanced budget and new patient capacity.

Those were among the takeaways

from a recent interview with Bob Ortmyer, the top administrator for both Porter and Elizabethtown (N.Y.) Community Hospital, both of which are affiliates of the University of Vermont Health Network.

“I think we’re on a pretty good trajectory this year, building on

what we put together last year,” Ortmyer said during a chat that touched on multiple topics, ranging from Porter’s general health to an upcoming 100th birthday party for Addison County’s critical access hospital.

Porter Medical Center — which includes the hospital, Helen Porter Rehabilitation & Nursing and around a dozen

affiliated physicians’ practices — was among a minority of the state’s 14 healthcare hubs to have its fiscal year 2025 spending plan pass muster with state regulators. The Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB) granted Porter’s request for both a 2.5% increase in what it can charge for its services, and for a 4.2% increase in its net

(See Porter, Page 14A)

## Bristol-area voters to weigh in on a new roof for Mt. Abe

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — When voters in the Mount Abraham Unified School District head to the polls on Town Meeting Day they’ll be asked whether to allow district officials to transfer up to \$1.04 million from MAUSD’s Capital Reserve Fund to the general

fund. The money would help pay for replacing Mount Abraham Union High School’s roof.

District officials provided some context during the MAUSD board’s Jan. 28 meeting. At the meeting, Finance and Facilities Committee Chair Mike Dash

(See New roof, Page 9A)

## Ferrisburgh budget up, but maybe not taxes

By ANDY KIRKALDY

FERRISBURGH — Ferrisburgh residents will consider from the floor of town meeting on Saturday, March 1, the selectboard’s proposed Fiscal Year 2026 spending plan of \$2,830,154, which was adopted on Jan. 28.

Ferrisburgh’s town meeting will be held upstairs in the town office building and community center beginning at 10 a.m.

That budget figure doesn’t include \$38,195 of nonprofit requests that are routinely approved. Thus, the actual amount of spending town residents will decide upon by voice vote is \$2,868,349.

Thus, the overall increase in proposed spending this year is \$210,270, or 7.9%.

Residents retain the right to amend the budget from the floor of the meeting.

According to Town Clerk and Assistant Treasurer Pam Cousino, each penny on the town’s tax rate raises about \$55,000, meaning if

(See Ferrisburgh, Page 14A)



### Winter graduation

AFTER MORE THAN a hundred members of the Middlebury College Class of 2024.5 (popularly called “Febs”) received their diplomas Saturday morning, most bused up to the Middlebury Snowbowl to ski the slopes in their academic regalia. This group seems to find the trip down the mountain a little windy. See more photos on Pages 4A and 10A.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Middlebury aiming to keep local option tax

### Board: Let region help pay for infrastructure

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury’s local option tax, established 17 years ago to cover debt and maintenance on the town’s \$16 million Cross Street Bridge, has evolved into the proverbial goose that lays golden eggs. In this case, the town has invested surplus tax revenues in local capital projects that would otherwise need to be bankrolled exclusively by Middlebury property taxpayers.

And Middlebury officials want to make sure this golden goose isn’t slain, like the one on Aesop’s fable. The town’s 1% tax on rooms, meals, sales and alcohol is set to sunset on Sept. 30, 2039. Middlebury residents on Town Meeting Day will be asked to lift that sunset, which would give Middlebury a permanent local option tax to help ease the tax burden for town residents.

(See Middlebury, Page 13A)



## By the way

February has arrived, and with it an exciting new stage of the Ilsley Library Expansion and renovation project. The library last week suspended its operations at 75 Main St. while construction gets underway. The building is now closed to the public, and the library team is packing up and moving the collection, furniture, and equipment. Come March 3, library operations will resume at a new temporary home at 30 Main St. (the National Bank of Middlebury’s Duclos building). In the meantime, if you’re missing the library and want to take a virtual trip down memory lane, Ilsley Library Director Dana Hart reminds you that local photographer Eric Killorin recently captured the library in

(See By the way, Page 15A)

## How are Vermont kids doing?

### Nonprofit study: Progress made, but more is needed

By JOHN FLOWERS

ADDISON COUNTY — Addison County has made progress in preparing its children for adulthood, but it — and the state, overall — needs to make more strides to provide kids with the foundation they need to succeed.

That was the general takeaway from a new report titled, “The State of Vermont’s Children: 2024 Year

in Review.” The annual report was prepared by Building Bright Futures (BBF), a nonprofit organization working to improve the wellbeing of young children and families in Vermont. Among other things, the nonpartisan organization produces data, research and publications to guide policymakers and early childhood partners on issues and priorities affecting children, from

the prenatal period through age 8.

In addition to unveiling data on poverty, education, hunger, childcare and metrics on how Vermont’s children are doing, the report offers recommendations for improvements. The state has an Early Childhood Action Plan that sets goals for “building a comprehensive and integrated early

(See Vermont kids, Page 16A)

## New Haven business park on rise off Rt. 7

By MARIN HOWELL

NEW HAVEN — Work is well underway in New Haven on the first building located at what could one day be the site of a business park featuring a variety of different ventures.

The Deer View Business Park is a 65-acre property located off

Route 7 on Deer View Lane, just south of the Vermont State Police New Haven barracks. The parcel is owned by Weybridge residents Bill and Karrie Sinks and has been zoned for five commercial lots and one industrial lot.

Those passing by the site

(See Business park, Page 15A)

## Ground broken on big housing project in Midd

### Backers, stakeholders say Vt. still needs more dwellings

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Only four years ago, the notion of siting a new, 254-home neighborhood anywhere near Middlebury Village seemed like a pipedream.

A worldwide pandemic, skyrocketing home prices and surging building costs put the clamps on most home starts — let alone major subdivisions.

But a phone call from Middlebury College to a developer, Summit Properties, got the ball rolling in 2021 on a massive (by Addison County standards) subdivision called Stonecrop Meadows that was officially launched on Monday by a veritable village of stakeholders who’ve taken it from concept to construction.

Among those turning a ceremonial spade of dirt at the 35-acre site off Seminary Street Extension were U.S. Sen. Peter Welch, D-Vt.; Gov. Phil Scott; Middlebury selectboard Chair Brian Carpenter; Middlebury College’s vice president for finance & administration,

(See Stonecrop housing, Page 12A)



A GROUP OF state and local politicians (including U.S. Sen. Peter Welch and Gov. Phil Scott in the middle), affordable housing advocates (Gus Seelig next to Welch), Middlebury College officials (Interim President Steve Snyder on left) and developers on Monday each lifted a shovelful of stone, in unison, to mark the launch of construction on a new neighborhood that will create 254 new homes in Middlebury off Seminary Street Extension.

Independent photo/Steve James

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# Slate Valley calls for 5.21% spending hike

## Despite increased price tag, board says Orwell taxes would decline

By JOHN FLOWERS

ORWELL — Residents in the Slate Valley Unified Union School District (SVUUSD) will go to the polls on March 4 to consider a fiscal year 2026 preK-12 budget of \$32,086,270.

Although that figure reflects a 5.21% increase in total spending, it is expected to result in an education property tax decrease in four of the district's six towns — including in the Addison County town of Orwell.

SVUUSD delivers preK-12 public education to 1,216 children from Orwell, Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven, Hubbardton and West Haven.

Contracted employee wage increases and spikes in health care premiums are mainly responsible for the proposed \$1,589,034 spending increase, according to Superintendent Brooke Olsen-Farrell.

"The health insurance increase alone is over \$500,000, which we have no control over at the local level," she said.

The district is currently negotiating a new contract with the district teachers that would take effect for FY26, which begins July 1. Wages are currently expected to grow by 4-5% next fiscal year, according to Olsen-Farrell.

Other items driving in proposed FY26 budget increase include the addition of four full-time (FTE) equivalent behavioral support positions (two staff and two teachers), to be spread among SVUUSD's elementary schools; increases in contracted services, such as transportation; and

continued investments in district buildings and grounds.

At the same time, the spending plan reflects some cuts, including elimination of two FTE elementary teachers and two FTE instructional assistants. The budget would no longer subsidize children at the local Boys & Girls Club; parents will be asked to secure subsidies/fees for the children's participation.

While Olsen-Farrell noted the district's FY26 ask doesn't create any new programs, it would keep current educational services intact, and:

- Support the recruitment, development and retention of district educators.
- Provide resources for "valuable, relevant, engaging and inclusive learning experiences."
- Contribute to the mission of "increasing measurable student learning and reduce achievement gaps."
- Continue to address deferred maintenance and infrastructure needs in all five of the district's buildings.

"I think it's a really responsible budget that we are presenting to voters," she said. "We really strove to take into account, even more so this year, affordability — as well as opportunity and access to resources for our students. And I hope taxpayers will be pleased with the overall reduction to their (education property) rates."

The fact that education property tax decreases are being forecasted in a majority of SVUUSD communities seemed like a far-fetched concept just a year ago, when one-third of all Vermont

school budgets were defeated at the ballot box due to double-digit education property tax increases.

It took five tries before SVUUSD residents endorsed the district's FY25 spending plan.

But the trend appears to be reversing for FY26 public education budgets, which are being influenced by austerity at the school board level and new state aid dynamics, including recent tweaks to "weighting" standards for students that grant additional dollars based on children's needs. For example, more aid is given for children who speak English as a second language.

Another factor governing state aid: a community's common level of appraisal, or CLA. The CLA — as determined by town-by-town analyses of their real estate sales by the Vermont Department of Taxes — compares a town's property tax assessment to fair market value. Ratios created with that study are then used to adjust school tax rates up or down to equalize tax collection among all Vermont municipalities. Recent real estate trends have created CLA imbalances in many towns, and the more a community's CLA is less than 100%, the greater the education property tax burden at budget time.

More towns have been diligent, of late, in completing property reappraisals, which have tilted the CLA factor in their favor.

What it boils down to is that Orwell's education property tax rate is expected to decrease by 2.31 cents (2.36%) — to 95.4 cents per \$100 in property value — if the \$32 million SVUUSD budget is approved on March 4, according to FY26 budget documents available at [tinyurl.com/3a6rbam7](http://tinyurl.com/3a6rbam7).

And the tax news could get even better, according to Olsen-Ferrell.

Gov. Phil Scott, in his Jan. 28 budget address, asked the Legislature to use \$77 million in General Fund revenue to offset property taxes while the state works to revamp its public education system. Scott has proposed his own plan, which among other things call for consolidating all the state's public schools into five regional districts.

It's not yet clear whether the Legislature will buy into Scott's proposed \$77 million property tax offset for FY26. Lawmakers have noted that using General Fund money to fill a hole in an ongoing program can set up a steeper financial cliff for that program for the ensuing year, when the state

(See SVUUSD, Page 3A)



GARRETT LAW, THE proprietor of the Whiting General Store, stands with store assistants with Doreen Knauff, left, and Rani Fallon in the Main Street store on opening day, Jan. 31. They said they saw around 100 people in the first few hours.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

# Whiting gets a new general store

By JOHN S. MCCRIGHT

WHITING — Garrett Law loves history, so it's not surprising that when he decided to run a general store in his native state of Vermont, he turned up at a spot in Whiting that had been a store serving the community for most of that last 150 years.

Law and his staff of employees — "six if you count the guy who shoveled the snow," he said — reopened the Whiting General Store this past Friday, Jan. 31.

People are excited to have a general store in town.

"We had, oh, 100 people" before 1 o'clock on opening day," said Rani Fallon, who was running the cash register.

It made Law smile to see so many people. This was the idea he was aiming for with the store — to get people in a community together live and in person.

"In an age when people engage so often in electronic communication online, the ability to have a place to meet and engage with people in person, face to face, is really important," he said.

The Whiting General Store, which is the same building as Whiting's U.S. Post Office, looks to combine the best of traditional general store provisions, with some contemporary updates.

The Freegard family ran a store in this spot beginning in 1912. Then it passed on to the Villeneuve family in the 1930s. Jerry Villeneuve, who was 4 years old when his family took over proprietorship, showed up on last Friday's opening day of the new store.

Pat and Chuck Pope, who ran the store beginning in the late 1980s, eventually turned it into an antique shop. In the late 1990s, Ellen Kurrelmeyer and John Travis opened Bulwagga Books in the store and ran it for many years. Now Law has returned the space to its previous incarnations as a general

store.

Law began his life in Vernon, N.Y., and moved with his family to Barre, Vt. when he was 5 years old.

He studied engineering and the History of Science at Harvard.

Law helped launch Global Outright — a biotech and media

strategy and mergers and acquisitions consultancy in Cambridge, Mass. — and was on the staff of the mayor of Boston as the analyst for the Boston Fire Department.

Eventually he landed at KHIZ-TV Los Angeles, where he was the youngest general

manager in the huge LA television market. He oversaw all operations of the station and company, executing its successful turnaround and engineering overhaul.

In 2008, he helped found a hospitality business called Attention Span Media, where he worked with such food makers as Hormel.

Law has the Vermont background in Barre, but didn't have direct ties to Addison County before buying the Whiting place. But his business partner, Peter White, has relatives in Shoreham, he said.

To start, the Whiting General Store will be open weekdays 6 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturdays 7 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sundays 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Law said he looks forward to talking with everyone in the coming days and weeks, learning more about how to best serve the town. He will consider suggestions and requests for products that people want him to carry.

Law said he would consider this business a success if he could "make this a necessity and a fun place to visit."

At the opening, one fun thing he was selling was Valentine's gift bags, which sat right near the front door. Among the unique things for sale are his mom's handmade greeting cards.

He said he loves watching little kids shine as they pick out candy to buy from the wide assortment that the store has on stock.

"Seeing kids pointing and being excited is a lot of fun," Law said.

*"In an age when people engage so often in electronic communication online, the ability to have a place to meet and engage with people in person, face to face, is really important."*  
— Garrett Law



THE NEW WHITING General Store at 3 Main St. opened this past Friday at the spot that has seen various general stores operate for much of the last century and a half.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

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Happy New Year!

HUNDREDS CAME TO Middlebury's Town Hall Theater on Sunday for the annual Lunar New Year gala sponsored by Addison County BIPOC+. It was a celebration of family, feasting and good fortune observed by millions of people around the world, and showcased dance, art and crafts from different Asian traditions. Among the activities were, top, a samulnori percussion performance; above, a Moth-style storytelling event; and, bottom, a tae kwon do demonstration by TKD Kicks. The storytellers are, from left, Paul Suk-Hyun Yoon, Natash Chang (organizer), Smita Ruzicka, May Poduschnick, Narin MacDonald, Varna Ramaswamy and HaQuyen Pham (organizer).

Photos by Megan Brakeley and Natasha Chang



SVUUSD

(Continued from Page 2A)  
might not be as flush with cash.  
It should also be noted that President Donald Trump, through an executive order, recently proposed freezing billions of dollars destined for public schools. His administration subsequently rescinded that order, but the president has served notice he'd like predicate federal funding based on school districts' curricular adherence to his administration's

conservative positions on gender identity, patriotism, immigration, etc.  
**ORWELL BUILDING**  
Olsen-Farrell noted the proposed FY26 budget includes resources to further a cafeteria/gym capital project for the Orwell Village School. The district is trying to secure state and federal grant money to fund the majority of that effort, which was originally part of \$60 million SVUUSD bond that

was defeated back in 2020.  
The superintendent invited SVUUSD residents to ask questions or share their FY26 budget questions at upcoming school board meetings, or online at [tinyurl.com/ypmhznch](https://tinyurl.com/ypmhznch). Folks can also deliver their feedback to the suggestion box at the Orwell Free Library at 473 Main St.  
Reporter John Flowers is at [johnf@addisonindependent.com](mailto:johnf@addisonindependent.com).

City water bond vote is set for Feb. 12

By ANDY KIRKALDY  
VERGENNES/PANTON  
Residents of Vergennes and Panton will decide on Wednesday, Feb. 12, whether to support up to \$3.52 million in a bond and/or loans to fund replacing almost a mile of some of the system's most troubled water lines.  
Voting will be held at the Vergennes-Panton Water District office at 63 School St. in Vergennes between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. that Wednesday. An informational meeting was set for Feb. 5, at the district office.  
If the bond is backed the project would go out to bid this year and work would begin sometime in 2026, according to District Superintendent Jonathan Deming.  
Deming said the district could not wait until Town Meeting Day to hold the vote because of a deadline imposed by a state revolving loan

fund that is in line to support the project.  
The lines to be replaced run from Main Street to its intersection with Green Street in Vergennes, a stretch testing showed to be problematic, including "low fire flow issues," and from the intersection of Main Street along the length of Monkton Road and past the railroad tracks into Ferrisburgh for about a quarter mile. According to Deming, there are several problems with that latter stretch of line, which has seen several breakages in recent years, including a recent major one in January.  
"Part of it is that it's 1930s pipe. You've got a lot of deterioration in it, and you lose a lot of your flow in friction. Then I know there's a lot of six-inch line in there that I know is going to be eliminated because we're going to put in a larger 12-inch line. And some of that six-inch

line has some galvanized lines hooked up to it, so those are going to be removed, and at least copper run to the curb stops," Deming said. All the new lines along the roads will be copper, he added.  
Deming said the estimate for the full length of lines to be replaced runs around 5,000 feet.  
One unknown at this point is the exact impact of the bond on ratepayers. The good news, Deming said, is the district is paying off another loan this year, thus offsetting any new future bond payments.  
On the other hand, he said the VPWD board is almost certainly already looking at higher rates in 2026, the earliest any impact of a new bond is likely to be felt in rates, due to rising costs of district operations.  
Deming hopes for a good turnout of people casting ballots next week.

# SIPS & STORIES

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Join us for a cozy mid-morning of coffee and conversation. Share your favorite books and the stories behind them while enjoying a hot cup of coffee. This is a wonderful opportunity for everyone — residents and guests alike — to connect, reflect, and discover new reading recommendations.

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Editorials

Chaos and scapegoating: Why it works for Trump

As the nation’s increasingly discredited president continues to sow chaos at every level — domestic and international — it helps to understand what we can of his tactics. A recent piece by Jess Bidgood, a *New York Times* correspondent, explains how Trump uses “the blame game” so successfully. She notes that Trump has used the value of a simple story “whether one told in a 1990s tabloid, or a 2000s reality show (‘The Apprentice’) or at the White House briefing room” to win over supporters. A central premise in his storytelling is to create a villain.

When a U.S. military Black Hawk helicopter and passenger plane collided, Trump immediately blamed DEI hiring as the culprit — without any evidence or common sense.

When a man killed 10 people in New Orleans, Bidgood continued, Trump suggested the attacker was an illegal immigrant — just to further inflame his supporters against his catch-all enemy (illegal immigration). It turned out the attacker was a U.S.-born American. No matter, Trump never issued a correction or apology. He scored a headline and scoffs at honest statements.

He blames climate change policies for undermining the nation’s ability to meet our energy needs, even though the nation produces more energy than ever and has increased its energy production through adding renewable sources — a false enemy if there ever was one.

It’s important the public understands that’s who Trump is and how he operates. We know he uses lies and outlandish fiction to keep opponents off balance and to misdirect their attention. And he either doesn’t understand, or doesn’t care, that his lack of credibility — and the nation’s lack of consistency and rational policy — will create negative consequences. This is particularly true of Trump’s chaotic and outrageous statements on foreign affairs.

Stupid suggestions that we take over the Panama Canal, buy Greenland, make Canada a 51st state or, most recently, take over Gaza and kick out all the Palestinians do not just discredit Trump as a serious thinker, but they also set the stage for authoritarian governments, such as Russia and China, to take over Ukraine (and other former Soviet bloc countries) and Taiwan.

And then there are Trump’s tariffs, which if eventually fully imposed could start a damaging trade war. They are supposedly intended to stop the flow of illegal drugs into the country, but are really primarily being imposed to bring in revenue to pay for his promised tax cuts to the wealthy. The tariffs will not only cause prices to rise domestically (inflation), but will also prompt nations worldwide to seek out other trade partners and will in the end greatly diminish America’s strength in international trade. That, of course, hurts jobs at home. The Trump tariffs are, in the words of the conservative *Wall Street Journal*, the “dumbest trade war in history.”

In another prime use of misdirection, Trump’s absurd suggestion that America would take over Gaza and kick all Palestinians out of the country drew the headlines. But the real story of his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu went

unreported: That is America’s continued support of Israel’s war against Hamas and invasion of Gaza with no reported U.S. restraints on Israel’s aggression. (Where are all those American protesters who criticized President Biden prior to the election for being too pro-Israel and threw their support behind Trump?)

And Black and Latino Americans and women who supported Trump must now certainly be disillusioned by the president’s increased attacks on DEI practices, which were put in place in the 1960s to ensure employers gave everyone an equal opportunity to be hired based on merit. Unfortunately, many Americans were sucked into believing Trump’s and the GOP’s conservative diatribe that DEI hirings gave preferential treatment to nonwhites and the LBGTQ community. The truth is that it was a mere extension of laws that sought to prevent employers from discriminating against people based on race, religion, age or gender — a principle almost all Americans embrace.

What’s shocking is that they have been telegraphing these messages for the past year and yet MAGA supporters across the country, and many Republicans in Congress, continue to deny that’s the undercurrent of their actions.

But Bidgood asks a deeper question: Why does Trump’s scapegoating of America’s troubles work? Or more pointedly, why do MAGA supporters fall for such flimsy excuses?

Charles Zug, an assistant professor at the Truman School of Public and Government Affairs at the University of Missouri and the author of a book about demagoguery in politics, provides a simple answer.

“Part of what demagoguery is, is the personalization of what are, in fact, highly impersonal, systemic problems,” Zug told Bidgood. “Part of (Trump’s) success is the sort of creation of an entire fictive, rhetorical world of enemies — you know, villains and heroes — that his supporters can buy into.”

Those who believe Trump, Zug continued, “end up authorizing the actions of people like Trump who end up wielding the state’s power to vindicate these people’s hopes and expectations.”

Bidgood also reached out to Jason Stanley, a Yale philosophy professor and the author of “How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them.” Stanley points out a finer point on the tactic: “Trump is building coalitions with scapegoats,” adding that scapegoating “is a way of bonding people together against a common enemy and thereby creating unity between people who otherwise would be in conflict.”

In short, it’s Trump’s “us-vs-them” worldview that attracts supporters because many Americans want to blame a perceived enemy rather than seek remedies to complex problems. But until Trump’s supporters, and the Republican Party, see through the obvious faults in his “blame game,” the nation will see a sharp decline in international prestige (including the value of soft power gained by helping other countries with foreign aid) and could lose the nation’s immense benefits from the foreign trade agreements that have benefited the national economy since World War II.

Trump is the wrecking ball he promised to be, and we can appreciate that Trump supporters say they like that Trump “gets s#t done.” But doing the right things matter — otherwise we’ll be left with a big pile of it on our doorsteps, while Trump and his cronies will leave office with trillions in misbegotten benefits after forcing middleclass taxpayers to pick up the tab.

— Angelo Lynn



**Panther cheer**  
A QUARTET OF newly graduated Middlebury College bros on their way to the traditional ski down at the Snowbowl on Monday mug for the camera while Interim College President Steve Snyder looks happy to take a break from his official duties.  
Independent photo/Steve James

Who are our actual criminals?

Recently I read a statistic that really blew my mind. If you add up all the theft that happens in the U.S. annually, shoplifting, car break-ins, robberies, burglaries, the total amount is not even 4% of what employers steal from workers each year.

Wage theft, which includes stolen tips, illegal paycheck deductions, failing to properly compensate overtime work, and minimum wage violations, robs an amazing 15 billion dollars annually from workers in the U.S.

So let’s take two imaginary dudes, Jake and Jeffrey, who are both about to do something illegal. Jake is eighteen years old, and he is trying on some shoes at a chain footwear store in a shopping mall. He is really liking the look of the Nike Men’s Air More, in black and white. These retail for \$320, and Jake doesn’t have that much money. As Jake is walking around the store wearing the Nikes, someone in the back of the store starts yelling. Jake sees the store manager and two employees head toward the disturbance, leaving the front of the store empty of people. Jake goes for it. Bundling his old sneakers under one arm, he strolls out of the store wearing the Nikes.

Meanwhile, two hundred miles away, Jeffrey sits behind a desk in a corner office. Jeffrey is the CEO of the chain footwear store, and he is about to attend a shareholder meeting where he will be announcing the favorable results of the last quarter. Jeffrey’s annual pay is 14 million dollars. Under Jeffrey’s leadership, the company’s profits have increased, but there has been no increase in pay to retail or warehouse workers. In

fact, based on cost-of-living increases, employee pay has actually gone down over the last three years, while Jeffrey has received stock options and bonuses annually. Jeffrey has a large house in Connecticut, an apartment in Berlin, a vacation home in Costa Rica, a yacht and a private plane.

Jeffrey doesn’t know this, but the shareholder meeting that he is getting up from his desk to attend, is about to be interrupted by some disgruntled employees who were not paid for work they were required to do during their lunch breaks, before clocking in, and on their supposed days off. As Jeffrey takes his seat at the glossy wooden table, a powerpoint presentation displays the upward slanting line of increasing stock prices.

Back at the mall, security cameras have captured Jake’s image as he walks out of the store. He leaves the mall and is waiting at a nearby bus stop when a police car pulls up. Because the stolen shoes have a retail value of more than \$300, Jake is charged with a felony.

Back at the shareholder meeting, a brief disturbance by current and former retail employees is quelled by security, and the meeting adjourns without further incident. Later that month, Jeffrey is named one of the 30 most impressive CEOs of the decade by Business Weekly, and the company grants him additional stock options and bonuses. He buys a second yacht.

American jails are filled with people like Jake. Seventy percent of incarcerated people are imprisoned for nonviolent offenses, like property crimes. People

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

Ways of Seeing

By Joanna Colwell



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

Are two sleeps better than one?

In the winter, a typical Saturday night at our house means watching TV after dinner, dozing off for a few minutes now and then. If we’re feeling wild, we might stay up late, sometimes past 9:30.

But this weekend I have something even crazier in mind: going to bed at 8.

It’s not because we’re dull, although one could make that argument. It’s because I was watching YouTube again.

I was trying to learn who this Sabrina Carpenter person was so I could feel relevant for a minute, but then I saw a different video that piqued my interest.

My interest is very piquable. It’s a problem.

In the video, a historian, having no connection to Sabrina Carpenter whatsoever, was talking about “biphasic sleep,” or what they used to call, in the old days, “first sleep” and “second sleep.” I was hooked.

For my over-50 friends and me, sleep is one of the main topics of conversation, right up there with our declining short-term memories and who all these “famous” people are at the Grammys.

It’s not just us. Our culture is rife with sleep-promoting advice, special mattresses, bedtime routines, melatonin and low-dose THC gummies. We all want to figure out the One Simple Trick to sleeping through the night.

The harder we try, it seems, the worse we do.



Around the bend

By Jessie Raymond

Researchers have even discovered that people who wear fitness watches to track and help improve their sleep quality have an increased risk of developing insomnia. I’m no gadget expert, but that seems counterproductive.

The historian said that in the past, people tended to divide their nights into two sessions of sleep with a “watch” in between.

Before artificial light changed our effective day length, people went to bed earlier, presumably because they found it boring to sit around in the dark without any screens to stare at. After a few hours, however, they’d naturally wake up — same as me most nights. That was the first sleep.

But they wouldn’t lie in bed cycling through the next day’s to-dos, cringing over something dumb they had said the day before or imagining unlikely catastrophes — my personal playlist. They’d get up, tend the fire, have a snack, maybe check outside for marauders (whom I hear were popular back in the day), chat for a bit and then go back to bed for their second sleep until morning.

Humans might even be wired for this. Modern experiments have shown that subjects who were deprived of clocks and artificial lighting reverted to biphasic sleep schedules.

(See *Jessie*, Page 5A)

Letters to the Editor

Some violating billboard law

In 1968 our state legislature passed a law effectively banning roadside billboards. The statute is detailed in various sections of Title 10, Chapter 21. Each day as I drive along Route 7, 22A, and even when I’m venturing further afield on I-89 and I-91, I am so thankful to our representatives of yore who had the foresight to enact this law.

I just returned from a visit to Connecticut. On I-91 North you have personal injury lawyers, cannabis outlets, discount furniture stores, and more, hawking their wares and services as far as the eye can see. As soon as you cross into Vermont, the vibe changes. The hills and mountains become visible. My white-knuckle grip relaxes, and I can breathe that much easier.

Within the last few months, along Routes 22S and 7 I’ve noticed what looks awfully like billboards popping up. These large, flapping advertisements are affixed to idle hay trailers, standing in farmers’ fields. They all advertise for the same New York-based business that purportedly sells a variety of products and services. They are not signage that communicates the services of that property. They are not official directional signs. They are seemingly advertisements for an out-of-state business.

According to Title 10, Chapter 21, Statute 497 the Agency of Transportation is responsible for removing unauthorized signs. If these are not billboards, what are they?

We need to ask ourselves whether we’re willing to tolerate the erosion of this quintessential Vermont law. We must preserve what makes our state so special — and hold those responsible for enforcing the law accountable.

David Small Vergennes

Nation’s leader is incompetent

“ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL.”

With 29,000 hours in the logbook and dozens of landings on runway 33 at Washington National Airport, I find recent comments by the President of the United States pathetic at best.

Our leader is embarrassingly shallow and ignorant. It’s sad, if not dangerous, to be led by an incompetent, and therefore, potentially dangerous supreme leader. Of course, calling him an idiot would be unkind or impolite. A lack of intellect, however, does not equate to common sense. Here lies another accident to investigate: How did we get where we are?

Alec Lyall Middlebury

Deportation will hurt our nation

Last week I was asked to grocery shop and deliver to a family of four undocumented migrant adults and one child on a dairy farm who ran out of food the day before but were too afraid to go to the store. They knew the reports of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) vehicles seen in a grocery store parking lot with officers questioning shoppers. A friend of mine did the same for three migrant households the day before as fear spread rapidly throughout Addison and Chittenden counties.

As I was returning home from my delivery, a Burlington school teacher sent a text asking for food support for three families who are keeping their children home and were running out of food. A patient stayed home from scheduled tests and doctor appointment in Middlebury. Spanish church services were cancelled after the church was told no one would come.

The Republican administration’s order allowing ICE officers to arrest undocumented immigrants at or near schools, places of worship, health care sites, shelters and relief centers has rapidly resulted in

(See *Lewis letter*, Page 5A)

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# Letters to the Editor

## Power of community can put us back on course

I think it’s plain to say we are in trouble here. I’m not even going to get into the left/right politics of it all. I think every Vermonter would have a hard time looking around these days and saying “yup, things are just fine, nothing to worry about here.” The problems that we face in the aggregate, are overwhelming.

There is a theory that the human mind was not designed to absorb information on the level we are receiving it, via our iPhones, streaming platforms, Facebook, etc. That this constant stream of information has deeply affected us, in ways we don’t truly understand. That it has made us callous. That it had made us mean. That it has turned us into a nation of cheap punks, who no longer have the empathy to care for those around us, but only the desire to one up and score points on each other.

Although clearly there has been an effect, I say this is defeatist talk. Let us remember that television was supposed to be great destroyer of civilization, yet somehow, we figured that out. Remember that Elvis was on Ed Sullivan, and yet the sun came up in the morning. We will, in time, figure this out as well.

But it is clear we are a bit off course. We have, in a sense, lost our way. In our quest to become more and more connected, the opposite has happened, we have become, in the real world, less and less. In a desire to build an online community, we have neglected the real one. But the good news is the solution is right in front of us, and available to

all. It is rebuilding the links and bonds that once fostered our communities through some of their darkest times. It is getting off our couches, getting off our phones, and getting involved.

In the Town of Middlebury, where I live, there are 14 openings for volunteers for everything from the Regional Planning Commission, to the Development Review Board, to the Sports Commission. Stop reading this for a second and think, what could I bring to one of these boards, what do I have to offer? What skills could I use to help my community in some small way? What other things could I do? Does my neighborhood need a community garden? Does my union need a shop steward? Does the old timer at the end of the block need a little help moving firewood?

As Jack Kennedy said on a cold morning in January some years ago “ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country.” This simple message once motivated a nation, but have we forgotten so soon? We all need to think about this. We need to take a break from posting our rage on Facebook and ask ourselves, “what skills do I have that can help my community, my neighbors, my friends, my own family? Who is hurt, who is scared, and who needs help?”

The division in this country is unlike anything we have seen since the Civil War, and I think it’s clear now no magic politician is coming to save us. There are no more lifeboats my friends,

the rich and powerful jumped in those and rowed away a long time ago. We either start working the bilge pumps or we are all going down on this ship together.

I think of another quote, from a poet named Dylan Thomas. Mr. Thomas asked us to “Rage against the Dying of the Light” And that is what we need. But a righteous rage. An anger that things are getting worse instead of better. We can make this country rise to its greatest aspirations rather than sink to its greatest fears, but the only way to do that is block by block, community by community, town by town.

Sometimes it is the small things, the little actions, that in the end turn out to have ramifications far beyond their scope. Sometimes it is the small gesture that turns out to be the most important thing of all. For it is these small actions, these simple everyday kindnesses and support of others in our community, support for the community as a whole, that create the bonds that bring us together. That create the apparatus that allows us, together, to deal with the big things.

And so I ask you my friends and neighbors, to take a moment, and give yourself a chance to hope, really hope, for a better tomorrow. Think of what you could offer those around you, to make their lives, and your community, better. Then figure out what small part you can do to make that a reality, and get out there and do it.

Jeremy Rathbun  
Middlebury

## Urge VT lawmakers to fight ‘Constitutional Crisis’

America is in a Constitutional Crisis now, this week.

I hope you will join me in urging our Senators to do everything they can to push back against the following Presidential power grab and to oppose confirmation of Russell Vought’s nomination to lead the Office of Management and Budget.

Last Monday, January 27, President Trump issued an Executive Action calling for a freeze of all Federal grants supporting a dizzying array of services that benefit a huge swath of Americans. The OMB sent a memo directing agencies to institute the freezes. A huge national backlash nationwide prompted the OMB memo to be rescinded, but the President says the cuts in the executive order remain in place, so uncertainty is everywhere.

Chaos and confusion have rippled through government funded and nonprofit agencies. People who depend on critical services are panicked about whether they can pay rent and afford food. Essential staff have been laid off in many agencies, and fear is paralyzing operations. Medicaid portals nationwide shut down temporarily. Hospitals were affected. Wildfire efforts and disaster relief are targeted. Climate change mitigation efforts have been curtailed. USAID’s website disappeared, and employees were placed on leave. And on and on.

These actions are illegal and unconstitutional. Period. The Constitution clearly says that

Congress, not the President, determines Federal spending. The Impoundment Control act of 1974 and Supreme Court precedents specifically outlaw impounding of funds. Whatever his ideological reasons, Trump does not have the power to shrink the government like this. It is illegal; and we are a nation of laws, not of kings.

A major goal of the current onslaught of Executive Orders is to steamroll opposition and act as though the President has power over things that he does not. Furthermore, agents of Elon Musk, who is not an elected official and not even a government employee, have full access to the systems of USAID and the Treasury payment systems that processes Social Security, Medicare, and tax refunds. They have financial information of citizens who are recipients of federal services. This is alarming.

This is fast-tracking Project 2025, and it is a Constitutional crisis of the highest order. During the campaign Trump claimed he knew nothing about Project 2025 and those behind it. That was an absolute lie, and Americans are beginning to pay the price for it. Russell Vought, a far-right extremist who has a long history of pushing to defund the government, was a major architect of Project 2025, which is deeply unpopular across America. Trump has nominated Vought for director of the OMB, and he is being voted on in the Senate possibly as early as this Thursday. He is a dangerous threat to our democracy

and should not be confirmed.

This is not a question of conservatives vs. liberals, or Democrats vs. Republicans, or old vs. young, or rich vs. poor. This is a question of the super-rich vs. everyone else. Trump, the Project 2025 crew, and the oligarchs behind them are actively planning tax cuts for the super-rich of approximately \$5 trillion over ten years, which they plan to offset by cuts in services affecting millions of Americans and totaling an estimated \$1 trillion per year.

Considering that the entire Federal revenue is about \$4 trillion per year, this is a huge giveaway to those who do not need it at the expense of those who do. To Trump and Musk, the budget is just about numbers, but it deeply affects the lives and livelihoods of millions of Americans.

If you share my concern about this, please contact Senators Bernie Sanders (202-224- 5141) and Peter Welch (202-224-4242) and tell them please fight the confirmation of Russell Vought for director of OMB, and the illegal funding freeze. They are against these actions, but they need to know we are vitally concerned, and we insist they fight these with all means at their disposal to head off this constitutional crisis.

For more information contact NE Addison County Indivisible at neaddisoncountyvtdivisible@gmail.com.

Howard Jennings  
Bristol

## College choral ensemble presented unique concert

The Middlebury College Choral Chameleon Ensemble put on a most unusually staged concert at several locations simultaneously in the MAC hallways and main concert hall the evening of Jan 22. They broke up the chorale five octets and a vocal trio that sang continuously for more than an hour as the audience was

divided into small groups that were released every 6-8 minutes to walk through the six different sites where the singing never stopped.

Each site had a theme with phrases suggesting aspects of the theme, which you could reflect on as the singing continued to flow around you as you paused for a few minutes at each location. The

music was ethereal, meditative, mystical, and mostly atonal but always pleasant. It was the most unusual concert I’ve ever heard. I’d love to hear more. Maybe even offer the wandering “audience” an opportunity to dialogue about the themes of the event.

David Benedict  
Middlebury

## Lewis letter

*(Continued from Page 4A)*

psychological and physical harm for hardworking, decent people who know that a “criminal” offense might be a simple traffic violation. Additionally, the economic effects of this policy will strike at the core of day-to-day life for all Americans very soon.

Let’s look at the research — starting with taxes, a hot button topic in Vermont as we attempt to figure out how to pay for schools.

- 2018: Immigrant-led households in Vermont paid \$194.2 million in federal and \$88.9 million in state and local taxes. (American Immigration Council).
- 2020: 50 of the largest U.S. corporations paid ZERO federal taxes AND got \$12 billion in tax breaks (Institute of Taxation and Economic Policy — ITEP).
- 2022: U.S. undocumented workers paid \$96.7 BILLION in federal, state and local taxes. (ITEP)
- One third of migrant tax dollars go to federal programs for which they are not eligible (Social Security, Medicare, unemployment insurance): they support our benefits!

- Annual U.S. tax revenue from migrant labor would increase by \$40.2 billion if work visas were provided — currently unavailable to dairy workers. (ITEP).

One false assumption regarding jobs and deportations is that if there were fewer migrant workers, there would be more jobs for Americans and possibly higher wages. Not so says Chloe East, Professor of Economics, UC Denver:

- For every 13 fewer undocumented workers, there are 10 fewer employed American workers; as businesses lose customers, people get fired.
- Migrant workers create jobs by taking jobs American workers avoid, becoming work crews that supervisors/owners can deploy to grow businesses.
- Migrant workers are complimentary to, not a substitute for, American jobs.

Previous deportation attempts led to drastic economic declines in 1920-30, 1964 (ITEP)

- 2011 — Immigration crack down in Georgia resulted in \$140 million crop loss
- 2023 — Florida Bill 1718

created new immigration felonies leading to stalled construction projects, fruit rotting in fields, empty rental units, restaurant closures and insufficient cast members for Walt Disney World.

Cost of deportation — it’s not free

- Estimated cost of mass deportation of current 13 million undocumented workers is \$315 billion to cover arrests, detention, legal processing and transportation removal. (American Immigration Council)
- Since that plan is not at all feasible, spread out over 10 years equals \$88 billion annually, not counting economic decline from loss of 5% of U.S. labor force.

Do the math: the U.S. makes money through the hard work of undocumented workers who strengthen the economy filling jobs Americans shun. We need to find solutions to keep these valuable employees and make the real bottom line the preservation of dignity for all who work and live in the United States.

Patricia Lewis  
Migrant outreach volunteer  
New Haven.

## Ways of Seeing

*(Continued from Page 4A)*

like Jeffrey, meanwhile, are rewarded handsomely for their wrongdoings. We live in a society that provides the greediest people with never-ending luxuries, while forcing the rest of us to work longer and harder to meet our basic needs for housing, healthcare, food and education. Almost everyone I know wants things to be different. Can

we build a world that values justice and kindness over Jeffrey’s second yacht?

Joanna Colwell is a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher who founded and directs Otter Creek Yoga, in Middlebury’s Marble Works. Joanna lives with her husband and foster cat in Ripton, and also directs the Yoga Equity Project, which exists to remove barriers

to yoga for people of the global majority (BIPOC). Joanna is part of VT/NH Jewish Voice for Peace, works with the Middlebury chapter of Showing Up for Racial Justice, and serves on the core team of L’Chaim Collective, which exists to provide spaces for Jewish ritual and culture separate from nationalism. Feedback welcome at: joanna@ottercreekyoga.com.

## Jessie

*(Continued from Page 4A)*

I’m a good sleeper in general, but I don’t believe I’ve ever made it through the night without waking up at least once. And with a small bladder, a restless dog and a cover-stealing husband, I don’t expect to ever see a solid eight hours.

I told Mark I had a great idea for this weekend: Instead of “resting our eyes” in the living room after dinner, we’d listen to our bodies and go to bed as soon as we felt drowsy. Then, when we inevitably woke up later, we’d go downstairs.

We could sit by the wood stove with just enough light to see by. For an hour or two, until we got tired again, I’d knit or do something even more appropriately old-fashioned, like make cornhusk dolls or churn butter. Mark could whittle, maybe? (I’m still working out the details.)

Even if we just talked, it sounded more enjoyable than the alternative. Most nights at that time, I’m be wide awake in bed, fighting increasingly dire thoughts of impending societal and/or climate collapse.

But Mark wanted no part of it. To be fair, he operates on a different schedule; he doesn’t activate his own existential dread spiral until just before dawn. That’s too close to wake-up time to allow for a proper second sleep.

I want to try it, though, even if I have to go it alone.

Saturday night, if I start to nod off on the couch, I’m going to

give myself permission to turn in absurdly early and get up for a while in the middle of the night. I just want to see if a sleep break (a reverse siesta, if you like) could help me get better rest overall.

Mark says that if I tell people I’m doing this, they’ll think I’m a weirdo.

Whatever. I’m not going to lose any sleep over it.



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John & Mary Howard, Monkton, VT

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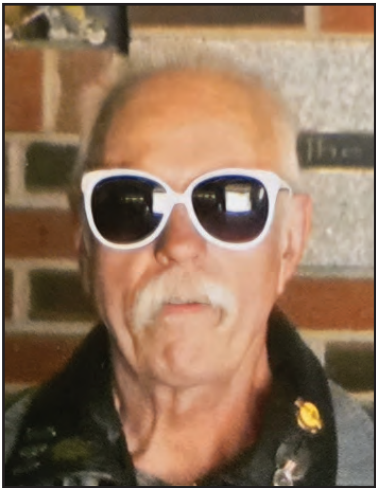
ADDISON  
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Obituaries

Marcel Arthur Benoit, 70, of Bridport

BRIDPORT — Marcel Arthur Benoit, born on Oct. 12, 1954, passed away on Dec. 15, 2024. He is survived by his loving wife of 46 years, Julia (Lovey) Benoit, and his son, Allen and wife Amanda. Marcel was a dedicated laborer who served his community through the local labor union with pride and dedication.

Marcel found joy in gardening, often sharing his bountiful harvests with family and friends. He took immense pride in his first Harley, a ‘57 Panhead, which he meticulously built himself. Marcel’s heart held a special place for his biker brothers, especially his blood brother and friend, Ben, as well as his lifelong friend, Brett Lavigne. He cherished the new friendships he formed with



MARCEL ARTHUR BENOIT

Brennan and Oliver.  
Marcel is also survived by his

siblings: Suzette Gibbs, Norman, Martha Cary, Robert, Renee Lombard, Jeanne Hallock, and Ann Milizia, along with many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Ludger Benoit and Helen (Lapointe) Benoit.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to Ann for her selfless care and support for Marcel.

A memorial service will be held in the spring in Bridport, where friends and family will gather to celebrate Marcel’s life and the memories they shared with him.

Rest in peace, Marcel. You will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved you.

Online condolences at [www.sandersonfuneralservice.com](http://www.sandersonfuneralservice.com). ◊

John J. Scanlon Jr., 63, of Port Charlotte, Fla.

PORT CHARLOTTE, Fla. — John J. Scanlon Jr., 63, of Port Charlotte, Fla., died Friday, Dec. 13, 2024. He hailed from Salisbury, Vt. He has no known survivors. Arrangements by Roberson Funeral Home and Crematory, Port Charlotte Chapel, phone: 941-629-3141.



Helen Marsh celebration of life

MIDDLEBURY – A celebration of the life of Helen Marsh, who died Dec. 18, 2024, will be held at St. Stephen’s Church in Middlebury at 1 p.m. on Feb. 8, 2025, with a reception to follow at the Founder’s Room at the Residence at Otter Creek around 2:30 p.m.◊

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Cynthia Cota Day, 84, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Cynthia Cota Day, age 84, passed peacefully; with family by her side; on Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025, at Porter Nursing Home in Middlebury.

Cynthia was born in Burlington on June 4, 1940. She was the daughter of Perley and Myrle (Warren) Cota. She grew up in Waterville, where she received her early education and graduated from Cambridge High School, class of 1958. She worked as a nurse’s aide at Fanny Allen Hospital, Mary Fletcher, and Porter Hospital. She retired from Chittenden County Visiting Nurse Association.

She is survived by her daughter, Alison Matot; two sons, Milo and Christian Day; and two sisters, Carol Hopper and Linda Dumas. Six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and several nieces, nephews and cousins also survive her. She was predeceased by her

CYNTHIA COTA DAY

parents and two brothers, Pearl and Wayne Cota.

Respecting her wishes, all services are private. Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon. ◊

Peter Gordon Halstead, 76, of Chatsworth, Calif.

CORNWALL — Peter Gordon Halstead, of Chatsworth, Calif., died peacefully on Jan. 31, 2025, in Cornwall, Vt., with his sister, Janet Halstead Franklin, by his side.

The son of the late D. Gordon and Virginia Carpenter Halstead, Peter was born in Stamford, Conn., on June 14, 1948. A graduate of Stamford High School, Peter earned a B.S. degree in mechanical engineering from Lafayette College in 1970.

After graduation, Peter worked for Westinghouse in their desalination division. He later moved to the Los Angeles area, where he was a project manager and senior technician in the HVAC construction industry.

While Peter struggled with many demons, everywhere he went people around him loved and cared deeply for him. His beautiful smile never left him. Intensely analytical, Peter took great pride in solving complex problems of all kinds.

He is survived by his sister, Janet Halstead Franklin and her husband, Churchill Franklin of Cornwall; nephew Chip Franklin (Hannah

PETER GORDON HALSTEAD

of Newton, Mass., and their 5 children; and nieces Katie Franklin Cohn (Tim) of Jackson, Wyo., and Lindsey Franklin (Kevin Dillon) of Richmond, Va.

There will be a graveside memorial for Peter in the spring in Middlebury.

Please critically analyze something or take a mountain hike in Pete’s memory, and know that Peter is at peace.◊

**In Loving Memory  
of Greg Forrest**



  
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in Our Hearts  
and Thoughts**  
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John Edward Zecher Sr., 88, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — On Jan. 28, 2025, John Edward Zecher Sr. passed away at home surrounded by his loving family and friends. John was born Feb. 21, 1936, in Hempstead, Long Island, N.Y. He was the second son of E.P. and Marie Zecher, along with his brother Donald.

As a child, John moved about the country a bit due to his father’s career as a U.S. postal inspector. Eventually, the family settled down in Mansfield, Mass., where the family opened the Old Country Store in the 1950s.

Throughout the entirety of John’s life he had a deep love for animals and farming, which led him to study animal husbandry at the University of Massachusetts and Michigan State. Once he completed his studies he went back home to Mansfield, where he purchased a farm and operated a thriving dairy.

On Jan. 26, 1968, John married Margaret Camara Richardson. Shortly after marrying, the couple sold the farm and relocated to East Wallingford, Vt., where together they opened the doors of a new business, The Hearth and Cricket Stove Shop. During these years John installed many of the woodstoves and fireplaces for much of the new construction in and around the local ski areas. On

JOHN EDWARD ZECHE SR.

Feb. 21, 1973, (John’s Birthday) the couple welcomed John Jr. (John John) to the world.

A few years later, John and Marge sold the business, moved to Salisbury, Vt., and purchased a storefront in Middlebury, Stoves and Things. Another successful stove, hearth and gift shop, which would later be renamed The Country Bear.

In 1986, John and Margaret would go their separate ways. They sold the business and John evolved once again and developed the business plan for Homestead Fence Company, which he owned and operated into his (semi) retirement.

Deborah Churchill Wing, 73, of Lake Dunmore

LEICESTER — Deborah Churchill Wing, 73, of Lake Dunmore, passed away peacefully on Jan. 31, 2025, surrounded by family. Debbie was born on June 19, 1951, in Proctor, Vt., to Mary Jane Churchill Wing and Howard W. Wing.

She spent her childhood summers on her grandparents’ farm in Brandon, where she found joy working with animals and alongside her favorite uncle, George Churchill, who could fix anything.

Debbie earned a B.S. in English Literature from Windham College in Putney, Vt., in 1973. She began her career at Matthew Thornton Health Plan in Nashua, N.H.

A passionate skier, Debbie volunteered as an instructor for the Junior Program at Pico before becoming a ski instructor at Pico and Killington, a role she embraced for 11 years. When not on the slopes, she could be found in her garden, exploring Vermont’s landscapes with her naturalist group, enjoying game nights with friends, savoring the latest summer cocktail, or dancing to an excellent tune.

DEBORAH CHURCHILL WING

Debbie is remembered for her wicked sense of humor, exuberance, curiosity, and unending thirst for knowledge. A proud feminist, she was a passionate advocate for progressive causes and community organizations. She cared deeply for her community and was known for her fierce loyalty, incredible generosity, and adventurous spirit. She never turned down an opportunity for an excursion or a

Lesa (Hobbs) Pratt, 62, of Brandon

BRANDON — Lesa (Hobbs) Pratt of Brandon, Vt., passed away peacefully at Rutland Regional Hospital Jan. 28, 2025. at the age of 62 years. She was born June 15, 1962, to Stewart Sr. and Brenda Hobbs. She is survived by her loving husband of 44 years, John Pratt.

She will be lovingly remembered by her two sons, Micah and Darcy Pratt of East Middlebury and Andrew Pratt of Cornwall; her daughter, Emily Pratt of Hartland; her two grandsons and the special loves of her life, Crosby and Marley, also of Hartland; her sister, Debbie and husband Kevin Williams of Cornwall; and three brothers, Chuck (Stewart Jr.) and Jill Hobbs of Cornwall, Gary and

LESA (HOBBS) PRATT

Christine Hobbs of New Haven, and Tom and Jen Hobbs of Forest

John never liked to stand still, so starting in 1988 Homestead Wreath Company was born. He was active in that wreath room right up to this past holiday season.

In addition to fencing and wreaths, he was also the director of the children’s barn at the Addison County Farm and Field Days. This was his pride and joy. He loved the days of preparation leading up to, and ultimately the fair itself, sharing his love of animals with young and old alike.

In 1994, John would meet the love of his life, Jeanie Bird. They would spend the next 31 years by each other’s side, sharing many wonderful moments and creating a lifetime of memories.

John is survived by his son, John Jr.; stepson, Peter Richardson; daughter-in-law, Stephanie and her husband Andrew Wilson; his partner, Jeanie; and six grandchildren. John (Boppy) was a wonderful man, and the world is a better place for having him in it. He will truly be missed by so many.

There will be a celebration of life this spring, date TBD. Anyone interested in attending please contact John Jr. at (518) 366-1813 or Jeanie Bird at (802) 388-1917 for details.

Miller & Ketcham of Brandon is assisting the family. ◊

new project that would beautify her world.

Debbie lived a full life, but she would tell you that her most cherished memories were the times spent with her children, family, and friends at Lake Dunmore, where generations of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends grew up together.

Debbie is survived by her children, Sarah Jane Pritchard and her husband, C. Austin, of Lake Dunmore, Vt.; and Caleb Voigt and his wife, Jennifer, of Frisco, Texas; and her beloved grandchildren, Tanner and Charlotte Voigt. She is also survived by her sisters, Melissa H.W. Gibbud and Heather L.W. Bierschenk, as well as nieces, nephews, and many dear friends who adored her — along with her little dog, too.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Lake Dunmore Fern Lake Association (P.O. Box 14, Salisbury, VT 05769) or The Vermont Foodbank (33 Parker Road, Barre, VT 05641).

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.◊

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



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## Diane Marie Cushman, 72, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Diane Cushman, an intrepid traveler and devoted nurse, passed away on Jan. 25, 2025, leaving behind a legacy of devotion to community and a spirit for adventure that began in her childhood in Bristol, Vt. Diane would recount the day she boarded the Greyhound bus for Nashville, Tenn., as the beginning of a great adventure.

Leaving her hometown behind, Diane enrolled in the nursing program at Vanderbilt University, where she followed in her mother's nursing footsteps. While at Vanderbilt, Diane helped to found the Student Health Coalition, which advocated for socially and economically disenfranchised populations across the landscape of healthcare, with social justice at the center of their advocacy. It was also at Vanderbilt that Diane found a lifelong friend in the founder of The Center Pole, an organization which empowers indigenous people on the Crow Reservation through education, entrepreneurial skills, food sovereignty, and cultural ownership.

Diane was deeply proud of her alma mater, and remained connected to her friends and colleagues there throughout her life.

Diane lived and worked as a nurse abroad at a U.S. Army Hospital in Germany, and worked stateside in Tennessee, Michigan, and North Carolina. Chapel Hill was an especially important place in Diane's life, where she and her sister Mary surrounded themselves with witty and uproarious friends. Diane traveled back to North Carolina beaches annually to reunite with this band of special people.

A cornerstone of Diane's legacy is her career in Vermont as a home health pediatric nurse, serving the most vulnerable families in Addison County. Diane worked to expand and strengthen pediatric and maternal-child health care and ensured that children with special needs received the care, resources, and dignity they deserved. Diane was instrumental in developing the Pediatric High-Tech Nursing program, which allowed medically



DIANE MARIE CUSHMAN

complex children and adults to receive critical care safely at home.

She was also a generous mentor who shaped the next generation of nurses and home health professionals with her wisdom, high standards and unshakable belief in their potential. Diane's legacy lives on in the countless children, families, and colleagues whose lives she changed for the better.

Diane's tenacious work as a nurse enriched the lives of those around her in numerous ways outside of direct service. Diane was a founding member of the Vermont Global Village Project, where she co-led study-abroad opportunities in Ghana for Vermont high school students. The VGVP promoted personal growth and world peace through local and global community connection. Diane was fond of saying the most important outcome of VGVP was to observe the kids returning from their travels as "citizens of the world."

Diane's time with the VGVP spawned a lifelong love affair with the country of Ghana, and fostered prevailing friendships with hundreds of peers, students, and leaders. Diane lived her values of global citizenship, traveling all over the globe to Australia, New Zealand, Haiti, the Caribbean, Hawaii, Botswana and all across Europe.

Diane was a proud member of the Pocock Entertainment Committee since the 1970s.

Amidst this group of distinguished hooligans, you might have seen Diane strut down the street in the annual Bristol 4th of July Parade dressed as a cavewoman, an alien, a zebra mussel, or a pirate, often in a pair of iconic neon camouflage leggings. Her membership in the PEC brought her immeasurable joy and, in her final days, surrounded her with boundless love.

Diane refused to be encumbered by illness. She served as Bristol's Town Health Officer, played board games with her friends, and could be found throwing toast at a midnight screening of The Rocky Horror Picture Show. Diane spent time visiting family across the country, traveling to Hawaii with her son Will, and she never missed a Tunbridge Fair. Even when Diane was in Boston receiving radiation treatment, she was a woman about town visiting museums, learning about the historic city, going to musical shows, and making countless new friends.

Diane outlived every prediction and probability with dignity, living fully and on her own terms until the very end. Diane was tremendously proud of her two children, Anna and Will, and was overjoyed by the birth of her grandson Sebastian.

Diane is predeceased by her parents, Elisabeth and Thomas Cushman; and her two brothers, Thomas and Edward Cushman. She is survived by her children, Will and Anna Smith (Ryan, Sebastian); her sister, Mary Cushman and her two children Douglas (Sara, Aurora) and Elisabeth Porter (Quinn Doyle); and Anna and Will's father, Bill Smith, and his family. She also leaves behind her sister-in-law Norma Cushman (Joe, Brian, Erika, Olivia, Avery); her niece Alex Harper (Jared, Evan); Ethan Ready (Elizabeth, Abe, Louis), and many cousins.

A celebration of Diane's life will be held at the United Church of Lincoln on May 17, at 1 p.m., followed by food and fellowship at Burnham Hall, in Lincoln, Vt. Diane's family requests that you make a donation to an organization that befits her memory. She always believed in helping others. ◇

## Allen Fortin, 61, of Hinesburg



ALLEN FORTIN

HINESBURG — It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Allen Fortin, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, and friend, on Feb. 2. Allen passed away peacefully, surrounded by his loving family. He leaves behind a legacy of dedication, service and love that will be cherished by all who knew him.

Born and raised with a strong sense of community, Allen graduated from Mount Abraham Union High School and Middlebury Vocational School and quickly became a leader, serving as the FFA State President in 1982 and as a National Treasurer. His commitment to service extended beyond his early achievements, as he proudly served in the U.S. Army, demonstrating his unwavering dedication to his country.

On Oct. 1st, 1988, Allen married the love of his life, Anne (Breer), with whom he shared a beautiful journey filled with love and companionship. Together, they owned and operated the Fortin Valley House, a testament to their shared dreams and hard work.

Allen's career was marked by his 29 and a half years of service with the Shelburne Police Department, where he was known for his integrity, kindness, and dedication to protecting his community. After retiring from the police department, he continued to serve by joining the Sheriff's Office for an additional four years.

Family was at the core of Allen's life. He is survived by his sons: Patrick Fortin and his fiancée Isabel Sharp, of Hinesburg, Vt.; Stephan

and his wife Marcela Fortin of Orlando, Fla.; and Samuel and his wife Hannah Fortin of Monkton, Vt. He was a proud grandfather to his cherished granddaughter, Stela Fortin, who brought immense joy to his life.

Allen is also survived by his siblings, Thomas and his wife Marge Fortin of Hinesburg, Vt.; Nicole and her husband Dave Sherwin of Ormond, Fla.; and Jeffrey Fortin of Monkton, Vt. He is also survived by his in-laws, Maryellen Manville of Tennessee; Brad and his wife Claire Breer of Westminster, Md.; Jodi Breer of Pennsylvania; and Susie Walbridge of Morrisville, Vt. Allen is also survived by his childhood friend, Frank Provost. He leaves behind several aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews, all of whom held a special place in his heart.

Allen's interests were as diverse as his experiences. He found joy in family time, mini-golf, and the

thrill of lottery tickets. He loved traveling to Las Vegas, Myrtle Beach, and Florida, where he embraced life to the fullest. A true people person, Allen never met a stranger and was known for his warm smile and friendly demeanor. He also had a fondness for raising rabbits and worked on local dairy farms during his school years, instilling a strong work ethic that lasted throughout his life.

Family and friends are invited to call at St Jude the Apostle Church Parish, 10759 Route 116, Hinesburg, Vt., on Sunday, Feb. 9, from noon to 2 p.m. and 4 to 8 p.m.

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at St Jude's Church on Monday, Feb. 10, at 11 a.m.

Interment will be in the spring at a time to be announced.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made in Allen's memory to the ALS Association or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. These organizations were close to Allen's heart, and contributions will help further their important work in research and support for those affected by ALS and childhood illnesses. By donating, you will honor Allen's legacy of compassion and his desire to make a positive impact in the lives of others.

Allen Fortin will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him. His memory will live on in the hearts of his family and friends, who will forever cherish the moments shared with him. May he rest in peace, knowing he made a profound impact on the lives of many. ◇

## Letters to the Editor

### Criticising Israeli regime is not antisemitism

I would like to offer another (Jewish) perspective on the Apartheid Free Communities measure on the Vergennes town meeting ballot.

I am a supporter of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions, a decades long international effort to get Israel to respect the human rights of Palestinian people. My small business in Middlebury is one of many around Vermont who have taken the Apartheid Free Communities Pledge, meaning we are working to help our communities to understand that safety and freedom for Palestine is in everyone's best interest. We are all human, we all share this planet, and we all deserve freedom.

The United States unconditional military support of Israel impacts Vermonters in many ways.

One example is that we are in a constant struggle to provide stable and affordable housing, while the U.S. is the world's largest exporter of weapons. The resources that we spend manufacturing weapons could instead be spent to house, feed, and educate everyone. We are the richest country in the world, yet people are sleeping in the street in the dead of winter.

A recent letter to the editor claimed that Israel was not an Apartheid state, but that is simply untrue. Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank live under impossibly brutal conditions, and this is why numerous international human rights organizations have condemned Israel in the strongest terms.

These international issues do impact our day to day lives. My

Jewish heritage teaches me to always speak up for those who are suffering. The value of Tikkun Olam, which means Healing the World, calls me to link arms with thousands of other Jewish people in calling for Justice for Palestine. I hope Vergennes will pass this measure, and I hope more Vermont towns will follow suit.

Please understand this: it is in NO WAY antisemitic to criticize the State of Israel for its many human rights abuses. The sooner Israel conforms itself to international human rights standards, the closer we will all be to a safer and less militaristic world for all people.

Joanna Colwell  
Director, Otter Creek Yoga  
Middlebury

## Letters to the Editor

### Counseling Service of Addison County is here for you

At the Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC), we want our community to know: We are here for you. No matter your background, immigration status, or identity, if you need mental health or substance use support, you are welcome at CSAC.

We understand that recent executive orders have created fear and uncertainty, particularly for our New American, immigrant, and LGBTQIA neighbors. We want to assure you that seeking help at CSAC is safe.

People can access our crisis

services anonymously, and we do not ask about or track immigration status. Your personal information is protected by federal law (HIPAA), and we cannot share it without your consent — except in rare cases, such as when required by a court order, during a medical emergency, or when there is an immediate threat to safety.

If you or someone you know needs support, please reach out. CSAC offers a range of crisis and urgent care services, including Interlude, our alternative crisis support model in the Marble

Works, Mobile Crisis response, and rapid access appointments. You can reach us anytime by calling our local crisis number at 802-388-7641 or calling and texting 988.

In uncertain times, community and connection matter more than ever. CSAC remains committed to providing top-notch, compassionate, confidential care to everyone who seeks help. You are not alone. We are here.

Rachel Lee  
Executive Director  
Counseling Service of Addison  
County

### Despite national politics, there's hope for VT education

Wow! A lot going on in the U.S.A. and Vermont these days!

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the U.S. Capitol police who protected our government from violent terrorists trying to overthrow a fair and democratic election. I'm sure The Proud Boys and others are raising their beer steins somewhere and chanting, "what's a few dead and injured police when you can get a presidential pardon"?

On another note, am I the only one who wonders how JD Vance feels after being kicked to the curb by the billion-dollar man Elon? And how do the voters for our current president feel about finding out after the election that they really voted for Elon

Musk? Elon and the Tech Bros. What a band! Their number one hit, "Give Me a Piece of that Government" really rocks! And their B side, "Don't Regulate Me," is an unrivaled ode to greed and corruption. It is amazing what money can buy today. And they have so much in common with us regular people. Not!

Let's talk about egg prices. When egg prices were high last year during president Biden's term, it was Biden's fault. And now that egg prices are higher, and in shorter supply, it's still President Biden's fault! How is that possible? Of course, neither president is responsible. It's simply that 145 million birds have been slaughtered trying to save

the rest of the national bird flock from bird flu. It's the bedrock principle of capitalism, supply and demand. If you can't get enough of something the price goes up. But hey, if you can't blame a Democrat who can you blame?

Moving on to the local scene. Kudos to Governor Scott for a bold education proposal. It certainly won't make everyone happy. But if Democrats, Republicans and the Governor can truly approach this 1st proposal with an eye toward compromise we might move forward toward a sustainable educational future for our children.

Gardner Merriam  
New Haven

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BAOBOB TREES DOT the landscape in the southern portion of Kruger National Park. The trees can live thousands years. The size of this particular one, according to Cockrell, is at least 20 feet wide and 70 feet tall, and he believes it to be around 1,000 years old.

Photos by Dale Cockrell



IT'S A RARE day when a Zebra is not spotted (or should we say striped?) in Kruger National Park.



WHITE-FRONTED BEE-EATERS, LEFT, are a fairly common sight in Kruger National Park, but they are no less stunning than some of the rarer species.



TRAVELING IN AFRICA has many challenges to those used to living in the U.S., but gazing at sunsets like this one over a cool drink make up for it.

Dale & Lucinda Cockrell's  
ADVENTURES WITH  
ANIMALS IN AFRICA

Part 2 of 3

In the fall of 2024, Dale and Lucinda Cockrell of Lincoln traveled to South Africa for a five-week stay in Kruger National Park. Over the course of the trip, Dale Cockrell snapped more than 18,000 photos. This is the second installment of a three-part series in the *Independent*, offering up a sampling of some of those 18,000 photos and the journal entries that go along with them.

DAY 21

1 November 2024, Punda Maria, Kruger National Park. We packed up early on this relatively cool day and headed the 72 km (45 miles) to Punda Maria, a trip that takes about three hours. Punda Maria is our favorite camp. It's smaller than any of the others, more out-of-the-way, quieter, hilly, with fewer visitors, and is less "modern" (but still very comfortable). Much of the camp was built in the 1930s as accommodation for park rangers, and it still retains something of that time-period flavor. We'd opted this time to stay in a "safari tent," but discovered that they were in the process of converting the tents to "bush cabins" and we got assigned the only one that was completed (and air conditioned, thankfully).

Over the course of the drive to Punda we saw a wide array of wildlife (or "game" as they call it in Kruger): warthogs, gnus, impalas, waterbucks, giraffes, a duiker, kingfisher, bee-eaters, hippos, terrapins, elephants, zebras, buffalos, four elands, and two lions, a male and a female sleeping sweetly together. And we bumped into yet another relative (who was always somewhat obstreperous).

One tends to develop a love/hate relationship with the baboons — fascinating creatures in the wild but not so much those resident in the camps, who tend to be thieving, bullying, deceitful, criminally minded thugs. Apparently baboons share 94% of their genes with many humans.

DAY 22

2 November 2024, Punda Maria, Kruger National Park. "It's Africa!" The Group of Six decided early on that the trip motto would be — "It's Africa!" When the power goes off inexplicably — Well, "It's Africa!" When the hot water is on the right in this camp — OK, "It's Africa!"



A BABOON HOWLS, or yawns, showing its impressive teeth. "One tends to develop a love/hate relationship with the baboons — fascinating creatures in the wild but not so much those resident in the camps, who tend to be thieving, bullying, deceitful, criminally minded thugs," says Cockrell.

When you need gas, are short on cash, and the credit card machine isn't working today — Whatever, "It's Africa!" When the shop doesn't have any bread — Of course not, "It's Africa!"

When there's only one electrical outlet in the bungalow and it's over the bathroom sink — Then Plan B, "It's Africa!" When it's 104°F — It's hot, "It's Africa!" When it's 68°F the next day — Surprise, "It's Africa!" When the monkey steals your peanuts from under your nose — Grrrr, "It's Africa!" When there's bat poop on the veranda floor in the morning — Get the broom, "It's Africa!"

But way more than balancing these moments are the animals, the kind camp staff, the birds, the land, the trees, the sounds, the smells, the colors ... and the sunsets viewed over a glass of sundowner — Because, "It's Africa!"

DAY 23

3 November 2024, Punda Maria, Kruger National Park. The Baobabs. You first start to see these astonishing trees just south of Satara, and by the time you get to Punda Maria they are a regular sight. Baobabs are simply awesome in all ways, and hard to describe for comparisons are difficult. A photo like this one almost never gives a true sense of perspective. (I tried to get Lucinda to go stand by this tree but she demurred and said something about lions in the bushes.)

I photographed this same tree in 2019 when there was a herd of impalas around it, and it took about five impalas tail-to-head to span the tree's diameter. Estimate about 20' in diameter and 70' tall. In addition to being huge, baobabs can live for thousands of years; this one is probably at least a thousand years old. The bark is mangled because elephants have stripped it off to get to the water-rich interior (which is something like a watermelon); fortunately baobabs are one of the few trees that can regrow bark. (Look closely and you'll see another baobab in the far distance.)

DAY 24

Day 24: 4 November 2024, Punda

Maria, Kruger National Park. The Birds. The northernmost part of the Park, especially around Pafuri, is renowned for its birdlife. Here a subtropical climate, a forested landscape, and the abundance of water found in the Luvuvhu and Limpopo Rivers makes for ideal bird habitat. In fact, one of the best ways to see the birdlife is to take lunch to the Pafuri picnic area, grab a bench or a table under one of the huge Natal mahogany trees right on the banks of the Luvuvhu, and simply enjoy. (But watch that the monkeys don't get your sandwich.)

Some of the birds around Pafuri are year-round residents while others have migrated down for the breeding season from Europe, Asia, or northern Africa. We have timed our last two trips to Kruger just so that we can catch the early part of that migration. The birds are everywhere, some wading in the river while others are flitting about in the trees faster than they can be photographed. Some of them are rarely seen, while others are quite common. Common perhaps, but often no less striking, such as is the case with this White-fronted bee-eater.

DAY 26

6 November 2024, Mopani, Kruger National Park.

"I asked the zebra  
Are you black with white stripes?  
Or white with black stripes?  
And the zebra asked me,  
Or are you good with bad habits?  
Or are you bad with good habits?  
Are you noisy with quiet times?  
Or are you quiet with noisy times?  
Are you happy with some sad days?  
Or are you sad with some happy days?  
Are you neat with some sloppy ways?  
Or are you sloppy with some neat ways?  
And on and on and on and on  
And on and on he went.  
I'll never ask a zebra  
About stripes  
Again."

— Zebra Question  
Shel Silverstein



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# Vermont’s climate to be discussed in Salisbury

SALISBURY — Vermont State Climatologist Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux will give a presentation entitled “Exploring Climate Change in Vermont through the Lenses of Vulnerability and Inclusion” on Thursday, Feb. 6, at 7 p.m. In the talk, sponsored by the Salisbury Conservation Commission, Dupigny-Giroux will discuss her research and teaching about climate change concepts and response strategies, emphasizing human and geographic vulnerabilities. Her presentation will be at the Salisbury Meeting House at 853 Maple Street.

Dupigny-Giroux is a Distinguished Professor of Climatology in the Department of Geography & Geosciences, the Vermont State Climatologist since 1997, and the President of the American Association of State Climatologists from 2020-2022. In 2020, she was appointed by the Vermont House of Representatives to the Vermont Climate Council as the member with expertise in climate change science.

Dupigny-Giroux teaches courses in climatology, physical geography, and remote sensing. Many of her courses are Service-Learning collaborations with municipalities across the state, State of Vermont Agencies and Federal entities such as NOAA. She holds a B.Sc. in Physical Geography and Development Studies from the University of Toronto (1989), an M.Sc.(1992) in Climatology and Hydrology, and a Ph.D. (1996) in Climatology and Geographic Information Systems from McGill University. She is



VERMONT STATE CLIMATOLOGIST Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux will be in Salisbury Thursday, Feb 6, at 7 p.m., to present the talk “Exploring Climate Change in Vermont through the Lenses of Vulnerability and Inclusion.”

Photo courtesy of Jim Andrews

an expert in floods, droughts, and severe weather and the ways in which these affect the landscape and peoples of Vermont and the U.S. Northeast.

She has contributed to all five National Climate Assessments, serving as the lead author for the Northeast Chapter of the 2018 Fourth National Climate

Assessment of the U.S. Global Change Research Program.

This presentation is part of the Salisbury Conservation Commission’s Thursday Presentation Series. All presentations are free and open to the public. They generally last about one hour with time for questions afterward.

# Garden expert explains natural landscapes

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Garden Club offers its first public program of 2025, “Close to Nature Landscape Design,” on Tuesday, Feb. 11, at the Residence at Otter Creek.

In this talk, award winning

landscape designer Silvia Jope of Old World Gardens will teach the basic steps behind landscape planning while approaching it through the lens of ecology and sustainability. Silvia aims to inspire gardeners to create landscapes that

are havens for people and wildlife alike and that are energy wise, multi-functional and beautiful.

The talk begins at 1 p.m. at the Residence at Otter Creek, 350 Lodge Road, in Middlebury. It is free and open to the public.

# New roof

(Continued from Page 1A)

said the committee recommends putting all of the district’s fund balance (audited at \$819,990) into the Capital Reserve Fund and withdraw from the current funds in the reserve to help pay for the roof project — both actions that will need to be approved by voters on March 4.

“(The Finance and Facilities Committee) had a pretty lengthy discussion about this fund balance and about district needs, and it really felt like there was a confluence of events,” Dash said. “One was having this substantial fund balance. The other is sort of a dire need for a pretty large capital project, which would be replacing the roof here at Mount Abe; something that we’ve known as a district for a while is necessary, but haven’t gotten to.”

Dash pointed to a third factor to consider: an aspect of the excess spending penalty reinstated by the Legislature last year.

Under the penalty, school districts that exceed the per pupil spending threshold set by the state will incur an additional tax for the amount spent over the threshold. Capital reserve funds older than five years now count toward a district’s cost per pupil as it relates to the excess spending penalty.

MAUSD Business Manager Floyd Davison told the *Independent* that the capital funds transfer is better looked at through the lens of the spending threshold penalty under 24 V.S.A. § 2804(b), which states, “If the Agency of Education determines that any amount in the reserve fund has not been used for approved school capital construction within five years after deposit into the fund, then 150% of that amount shall be added to the district’s education spending in the then-current year for purposes of calculating the excess spending penalty.”

“MAUSD could fund this roof project with capital construction funds from the FY25 and FY26 budgets. With the property tax implications on capital funds that exceed 5 years be added to the Districts Ed Spending amount

could put MAUSD close to, or over, the spending threshold in FY27, resulting in a 150% property tax impact for that portion of spending exceeding the threshold,” Davison explained. “It is for this reason we suggest that the voters spend down the Capital Reserve by \$1,040,000, and deposit \$819,050 (the total FY24 fund balance) into the Capital Reserve to restart the 5-year exclusion.”

That reasoning was echoed by Dash on Jan. 28.

“In some ways this might feel a little goofy...like ‘Why are we putting money in just to take it out?’ Again, the rationale there was to avoid this new tax on basically rainy day funds that you really should have so that you can deal with construction and maintenance needs within the district, but now that are limited in time to this five year window,” Dash explained.

The district’s Capital Reserve Fund contained \$1,771,800 as of June 30, 2024. If voters agree to deposit the entire fund balance into the Capital Reserve Fund and transfer out funds to support the roof project, district officials estimate the Capital Reserve Fund balance would total around \$1.5 million.

“So, we have a decrease in the reserve a little bit from where we are at present, but we walk away with most of a roof essentially budgeted for, and then when you account for funds that we typically put in for construction anyways, you get to the rest of the roof ideally,” Dash said.

## PROJECT DETAILS

The *Independent* asked Davison and MAUSD Director of Facilities & Grounds Joe Wesley about the current state of the roof and significance of the replacement project.

“The Mount Abe High School Roof has exceeded its life expectancy,” Wesley said.

“Currently it is still working — though we see some leaks from time to time that we address and repair. In heavy wind the roof membrane lifts. Replacing the roof protects all of the investments MAUSD has made over the last few years to the gym, locker rooms, restrooms, library space, performing arts center, and the new main entrance.”

Wesley said the project would remove three layers of older roofing and insulation.

“We will add current energy code insulation and cover with a 30-year roof,” he said. “We are also working with an engineering firm to determine what capacity our roof has for solar installation.”

As for the cost, Wesley noted current estimates run from \$1.4 million for a 20-year roof to \$1.6 million for a 30-year thermoplastic polyolefin roof, “which is a blend of plastic and rubber with hot air welded seams.”

“A thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) roof will have pre-consumer recycled material. The cost for a traditional rubber membrane is estimated up to (\$2.01 million),” he said. “Additionally, we are expecting an estimate of cost should there be a need to engineer the support structure of the roof to include a future rooftop solar array.”

Davison said district officials don’t anticipate needing to secure funding for the project outside of the district’s current budget and reserves.

“We expect to fund this project from our annual budget expenditures by linking FY25 and FY26 funds within the Capital Construction lines of these 2 years, net of the Capital Reserve amount,” he said.

When could the project get underway? Wesley said district officials are looking to start the project this summer with a completion prior to the start of school in the fall.

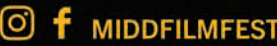


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# MIDD February Graduation



MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE CELEBRATED this year's February graduates in familiar fashion this past Saturday with members of the Class of 2024.5 descending the slopes at the Middlebury Snowbowl while donning their caps and gowns. Pictured, clockwise from left, a group of grads hold tight to their hats; Mary Nagy-Benson of Weybridge, center, and fellow graduates show their excitement; a quartet of grads cheer on the chair lift; Huthefa Maalim of Kenya descends the hill on snowshoes; 2020 MUHS grad Joseph Findlay glances back for a moment while gliding forward with a couple fellow 2024.5 Middlebury College grads; an enthusiastic skier zooms down the slope; and the Class of 2024.5 tosses their caps.

Independent photos/  
Steve James



# Middlebury man cited for DUI

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police cited Charles J. Ouellette, 31, of Middlebury for driving under the influence, following a stop on North Branch Road on Jan. 31. Police said they measured Ouellette’s blood-alcohol content at 0.222%; the legal limit for driving is 0.08

In other action last week, Middlebury police:

- Checked on the welfare of a local man who had shown signs of mental health challenges on Jan. 27.
- Assisted Vermont State Police with an agitated man at a traffic stop on Cady Road on Jan. 27.
- Checked on the welfare of a homeless man tenting off Merchants Row on Jan. 27.
- Cited Tyler D. Baker, 28, for driving under the influence and driving with a criminally suspended license on Court Street on Jan. 28.
- Helped a person contact a local family member on Jan. 28.
- Responded to a report of a person allegedly driving erratically on Route 7 South on Jan. 28.
- Spoke with Jackson Lane residents on Jan. 28 about a recent fight between four neighborhood dogs.
- Served court diversion paperwork on Jan. 28 on a person who had allegedly tried to steal \$400 of merchandise from a Court Street store.
- Helped Middlebury Regional EMS (MREMS) with a drunken man on Main Street. Police said MREMS took the man to Porter Hospital.
- Responded on Jan. 28 to a two-vehicle crash on Route 7 South that resulted in one driver being taken to Porter Hospital for

## Middlebury Police Log

treatment of non-life-threatening injuries.

- Responded — with MREMS and firefighters — to a two-vehicle crash on Jan. 28 on Seminary Street that resulted in a person being injured.
- Helped a stranded driver on Route 7 North on Jan. 29.
- Offered the assistance of the department’s police dog, Guinness, to another department on connection with a potential illegal drugs case on Jan. 29.
- Enforced Middlebury’s overnight winter parking ban in the downtown area on Jan. 29, and again on the 31st.
- Cited Tanya M Brace, 35, of Leicester for driving with a suspended license on Route 7 South on Jan. 30
- Received word on Jan. 30 that an Exchange Street storage locker had recently been broken into.
- Checked on the welfare of some Washington Street residents on Jan. 30.
- Cited Pierre A. Laroche, 32, of Salisbury for allegedly violating a restraining order in the Jackson Lane area on Jan. 30.
- Euthanized a sick bear found in the Otter Creek off Creek Road on Jan. 30.
- Checked on the welfare of a person in the Court Street area on Jan. 30.
- Received a report at around 7:26 p.m. on Jan. 31 that a pickup truck driver had driven off the roadway at the intersection of North Pleasant Street and Court

Square, striking (and knocking over) a lamp post. Police said the driver didn’t report the collision.

- Received a report on Jan. 31 that someone had rifled through vehicles parked in the Ossie Road area of East Middlebury. Police reported the culprit stole items from at least one vehicle.
- Responded to a report of a U-Haul truck striking a gas pump at a North Pleasant Street filling station on Jan. 31.
- Assisted a local resident with a credit card fraud case on Court Street on Jan. 31.
- Checked the welfare of a man living in a tent off Merchants Row during frigid temperatures on Jan. 31 and Feb. 2.
- Gave a courtesy ride to a stranded patient who had been discharged from Porter Hospital on Feb. 1.
- Responded to a parking complaint from a business owner on College Street on Feb. 1.
- Prevented the fraudulent use of a credit card at a Washington Street business on Feb. 1.
- Responded to a reported traffic hazard at the intersection of Exchange Street and Route 7 on Feb. 1.
- Reunited a local family with their lost pet on Feb. 1.
- Allowed a stranded woman, who had been discharged from Porter Hospital without transportation at 3 a.m. on Feb. 1, to sleep the remainder of the night on a cot in the Middlebury PD lobby during a snowstorm.
- Assisted MREMS in responding to a report of a man having a medical crisis on Danyow Drive on Feb. 2.
- Assisted MREMS at a medical call on Grand View Road on Feb. 2.



### Oopsy

**WORKERS TEND TO an overturned milk tanker in the Maplefields gas station parking lot off Route 22A in Shoreham on Monday morning. The tank, which was not attached to a truck, somehow overturned on Sunday and it couldn’t me removed until Monday.**

Independent photo/Sean Dougherty

## Police respond to fight over extension cord

VERGENNES — On Jan. 30 Vergennes police responded to a reported fight between two construction crews at the downtown Vergennes Green construction site

Police said they learned workers were arguing about who owned an extension cord, but all involved in the dispute were gone when authorities arrived. Police added that once they talked to those involved, accounts of the incident conflicted, and no one was hurt.

Police notified the project superintendent so that he and the construction companies could sort things out.

Between Jan. 27 and Feb. 2, Vergennes police also conducted 11 cruiser patrols and four traffic stops, dealt with two 911 hangup calls and one false alarm, processed three fingerprint requests for employment or school volunteerism, and:

- On Jan. 27:
  - At the city station helped Vermont State Police by having a city Drug Evaluation Expert test a DUI-Drugs suspect. The DRE ruled the driver was impaired.
  - Investigated a report of a suspicious person in Hillside Acres.
- On Jan. 28:
  - Checked the welfare of an Armory Lane resident after a Meals on Wheels driver reported they did not answer the door. Police learned the resident was at an appointment.
  - Referred a Vergennes Union High/Middle School truancy report to the Department For Children and Families and the state’s attorney’s office.
  - Took a call from a Ferrisburgh

## Vergennes Police Log

resident about what appeared to be a spam caller posing as a federal investigator. Police said the caller to the station had not revealed any personal information.

- Helped a law enforcement agency execute a search warrant in the Orwell area.
- On Jan. 29:
  - Took a report of a minor car accident in a Pantan Road parking lot.
  - Heard from a teacher concerning a Facebook post containing “false accusations and aggressive language” directed at the teacher, making the educator concerned for their safety. Police said they did not identify any “direct threats,” but “recognized the teacher’s concerns.” Police said they contacted the individual responsible for the post, who said they had already addressed concerns with the school and had agreed to delete the post. Police said the teacher was “satisfied with the resolution.”
  - On Jan. 30:
    - Began investigating a report of a man impersonating a federal officer at Shaw’s Supermarket.
    - Responded to a single-car crash on Green Street. Police found the car unoccupied and spoke to the driver by phone and were told there were no injuries and the snowy

road had caused the accident. The vehicle was towed.

- Calmed a divorcing couple who were arguing at a First Street home. Police advised them to separate when they were sparring, including for that evening, and said one of them found a different place to stay for the night.
- On Jan. 31:
  - Received a complaint about traffic congestion on East Street during Vergennes Union Elementary School dismissal. Police said they would discuss the issue with school officials so they can address it with parents.
  - Took a complaint from a Comfort Hill resident that cars are speeding on that road. The caller reported one license plate, and police warned that driver.
  - On Feb. 1:
    - Backed up VSP at a Route 7 traffic stop when the occupants became argumentative.
    - On that evening and on the next day enforced the city’s winter parking ban after the alert system was activated. Three vehicles were towed on Feb. 1.
  - On Feb. 2:
    - Took a report from a Hillside Acres resident that she believed she was being followed; she provided a photo of a truck. Police said an investigation is ongoing.
    - On Pantan Road spoke to a Girl Scouts meeting to help them achieve a badge.
    - Checked the welfare of a Hillside Acres resident, who said she was fine.

## Vermont State Police Log

ADDISON COUNTY — A woman who drove off the road in Monkton, and hid in a nearby unoccupied vehicle when Vermont State Police showed up this past Friday evening, netted more than a half-dozen criminal citations.

Troopers responded to Hollow Road in for a reported stolen vehicle at around 7:15 p.m. on Jan. 31. Police located the stolen vehicle off the roadway and then found and identified the operator of the vehicle, 37-year-old Sara A. Whritenour. Troopers discovered that Whritenour’s license was criminally suspended and she was required to have an ignition interlock device in any vehicle she drove.

While speaking to Whritenour, the officer observed several indicators of impairment.

Ultimately police arrested Whritenour and cited her for aggravated driving without the vehicle owner’s consent; driving under the influence, second offense; leaving the scene of an accident; driving with a criminally suspended license; failing to comply with vehicle ignition interlock restrictions; and unlawful trespass.

While searching Whritenour, the trooper found cocaine on her person, so Whritenour was also charged with possession of cocaine.

She is due to answer the charges in Addison County Superior Court,

criminal division, on April 7.

In other recent activity, state police:

- On Jan. 27 at about 2:25 p.m. observed a motor vehicle violation on Route 7 near West Salisbury Road in Salisbury and pulled the car over. Police eventually cited the driver, as Pierre LaRoche, 33, of Salisbury, for driving under the influence of drugs, and for careless and negligent driving.
- Troopers were assisted by Vergennes police.
- On Jan. 28 shortly before 6 p.m. stopped a car driven by Richard Bodington, 29, of Hinesburg on Route 7 in New Haven. Police cited Bodington for driving with a criminally suspended license.

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For advice about your rights: contact an attorney

# Stonecrop housing

(Continued from Page 1A)  
David Provost; and the leaders of a variety of state and federal agencies that helped secure key funding for a project that will boast a combination of affordable, workforce and market-rate homes, both for sale and rent.

“We are building an ambitious, all-electric, innovative neighborhood on a scale and of a type that rural Vermont has not seen in decades,” Summit COO Zeke Davisson told the crowd of more than 120 people in Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater to salute Stonecrop’s launch.

“The town created the environment, a major employer stepped up, state agencies and legislators put their money where their mouth was, and the community has embraced development done the right way. That is the magic and the model that Stonecrop Meadows can be for the state,” Davisson added.

Plans call for Stonecrop to be phased in over multiple years, with the initial installment of 80 units — along with the development’s infrastructure — now underway. The first homes are expected to be available by this summer.

Of the first round of 80 homes, 34 will be classified as “affordable housing,” reserved for families



DAVID PROVOST

earning less than 80% of Area Media Income. For Addison County in 2024 that was \$61,050 for a single person and \$94,200 for a family of five.

Thirty-one of the first 80 Stonecrop units will be for households earning 80-150% of the Adjusted Median Income (up to \$163,500 for a four-person household), and the remaining 15 will be sold at market rate.

Home sizes will range from 1,516 square feet with two bedrooms and 1.5 bathrooms, to 2,019 square

feet with three bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms. Summit has selected Middlebury’s IPJ Real Estate to handle Stonecrop marketing and sales.

The buildings will be modular homes, built offsite by East Montpelier’s Huntington Homes. Davisson recounted his outreach to Huntington Homes Co-owner Jason Webster during the fall of 2023. Webster had declined a prior overture from the company.

“(Webster) said, ‘You’ve caught me in a moment when I’ve been reflecting on what we do and why. We have employees who lost their homes in the (July 2023) flooding,’” Davisson said.

He quoted from a Webster email: “We can’t do ski homes and affordable at the same time. But it’s about focusing on priorities, right?”

During the first week in May, Huntington is slated to drop 12 modular homes at the site.

“In just two days, we’ll go from a poured foundation to a standing six-unit, three-story townhome building that will soon welcome six middle-income families,” Davisson said.

He further explained the building strategy for Stonecrop: “We’re building modularly for the initial for-sale homes, controlling costs, improving quality, energy efficiency, reliability. And we’re building with green energy; a big component of this will be geothermal.”

### COLLEGE BUY-IN

Summit, in partnership with the Vermont’s Congressional delegation and organizations like the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB), secured millions of dollars in federal grants, low-interest loans and tax credits to help make Stonecrop financially viable and accessible to folks of multiple income levels. But Summit officials stressed the project wouldn’t have gotten off the ground without the impetus and buy-in from Middlebury College.

Davisson said it was in 2021 that he fielded a call from college leaders who said, “We have a workforce housing problem.”

Provost and acting college President Steve Snyder on Monday noted 20% of the college’s staff commutes from New York State because they can’t find homes in Vermont.

The college, Davisson noted, not only bought the Stonecrop property to reduce the upfront development costs, but it also bridged a \$2.5 million funding gap this past October to ensure the timely start of phase one of the development.

Provost added that recently departed Middlebury College President Laurie Patton was a

*“We’re not just going to break ground for a building today; we’re going to be building a foundation for community.”*  
— Gus Seelig



GUS SEELIG, EXECUTIVE Director of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, tosses a shovel of blue stone Monday during the ceremonial groundbreaking of the new Stonecrop Meadows housing development off Seminary Street Extension in Middlebury. Independent photo illustration/Steve James



U.S. SEN. PETER Welch, a Democrat, left, gets a chuckle out of Republican Gov. Phil Scott during Monday’s ceremonial launch of the new Stonecrop Meadows development in Middlebury. They were among the dignitaries who discussed their commitment to state and local affordable housing efforts in front of a crowd of more than 120 people at Town Hall Theater.

Independent photos/Steve James

*Watch an Addison Independent video about this event with the story online at [addisonindependent.com](http://addisonindependent.com).*

strong supporter of Stonecrop as an amenity for the entire community.

While the college’s resources and conviction were key, Provost reiterated Stonecrop couldn’t have advanced without the many players assembled on Monday.

“It takes all of us. We are all subject-matter experts in certain things; we cannot do this alone,” he said. “That’s how we’re adding 250 units of housing in a very short time.”

Sen. Welch was credited for being a longtime supporter of affordable housing initiatives. He’s nominated Stonecrop for a \$5.5 million federal earmark as part of the Fiscal Year 2025 federal budget, which is currently in progress.

“Ambitious initiatives like the Stonecrop Meadows project are essential to tackle our housing challenges in Vermont and across the country,” he said. “I’ll continue to fight for passage of this upcoming budget to ensure these funds make it to this critical project.”

Carpenter also hailed Stonecrop’s launch, noting the town selectboard in recent years has made housing creation its top priority. To that end, he recognized Middlebury’s planning officials for revising the town’s zoning laws to facilitate housing projects and accessory units, among other things.

“My message today is one of gratitude—to our state government, for the support of simplifying and fast tracking development approval in downtown areas,” he said. “Gratitude to our state and federal partners, for the subsidies that have been directed toward this project, to help ensure a large portion of these dwellings will be occupied by those who could not otherwise afford to live in the town of Middlebury. And, especially, gratitude to Middlebury College, for their leadership, and the board of trustees for their willingness to invest in the Middlebury community.”

Gov. Phil Scott pledged his administration’s support for future housing initiatives statewide. Among other things, his proposed fiscal year 2026 budget proposes to add \$15 million to the VHFA’s middle-income housing program. “I believe housing is the cornerstone to solving so many challenging issues,” he said, citing job creation, attracting young families and increasing the tax base as among the benefits.

He encouraged communities like Middlebury to adopt Tax Increment Financing to leverage additional private investment to build and renovates the housing, commercial, and retail space.

“There are so many good things we can accomplish together,” Scott concluded. “(Stonecrop) is an example of that.”

### 40,000 HOMES IN VT

The Vermont Housing Finance Agency released a report last year suggesting the state needs to add upwards of 40,000 homes within the next five years. Davisson said Stonecrop will get Middlebury off to a nice start meeting its portion of that target: 560 homes.

“We’re going to build half of those, but we need these homes matched one-for-one by other builders and developers in that timeframe,” Davisson said.

Alex Farrell, commissioner of the Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development, said the state can reach the daunting 40,000 goal if every community and county builds its share.

Failure to advance housing

growth would be a bad move, according to Maura Collins, executive director of the VHFA. She said some Vermont employers are so desperate for workers that they’re building housing as an inducement to fill job vacancies.

She applauded the Stonecrop stakeholders for joining forces to make the project a reality.

“You’ve made my job so much easier,” she said. “Now, when we get calls about what can be done and what is possible, I have been pointing everyone to Middlebury every turn I get.”

Gus Seelig, longtime executive director of the VHCB, saluted what he called “the conspiracy of goodwill to make (Stonecrop) happen.”

He invited the various stakeholders to look beyond Stonecrop’s bricks and mortar. He recalled the late U.S. Rep. and Civil Rights leader John R. Lewis, and the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion he had applied to government programs and opportunity — principles he noted the Trump administration is now scrubbing from federal programs and bureaucracy.

“We’re not just going to break ground for a building today; we’re going to be building a foundation for community,” Seelig said. “And how important is that in these really, really divisive times? What (Stonecrop)

is about, is inclusion. It’s about equity — meaning fairness, for all of us. It is what our state motto is: Freedom and Unity. We’re going to create freedom for people by building them homes, they’re going to buy them and rent them, become productive members of this community — whether the volunteer for the library, the PTA, the fire department, the ambulance squad. We’re enriching ourselves with this investment that we’re making.”

John Flowers is at [johnf@addisonindependent.com](mailto:johnf@addisonindependent.com).

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— Summit COO Zeke Davisson

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# Middlebury

*(Continued from Page 1A)*  
Middlebury selectboard Chair Brian Carpenter is a major proponent of perpetuating the local option tax, also known as a LOT.

“The (LOT) surplus has only grown during the past decade,” he said. “For the community, it’s our largest opportunity to have outside users contribute to the infrastructure costs to maintain such a beautiful shire town. So it would be shortsighted, in my mind, to *not* keep (the LOT) going, because it’s such a great benefit to the community.”

How much of a benefit? Middlebury Town Manager Mark Pruhenski, Assistant Town Manager David Sophrin, Director of Administration Crystal Grant, and Finance Director Nicholas Gill recently gave the *Independent* the tale of the tape on the local option tax.

Here’s what we found out:  
• A little more than halfway through fiscal year 2025, the tax has raised \$16 million — ironically, the price tag of the Cross Street Bridge project — since Middlebury voters OK’d the tax in 2008.

It should be noted that Middlebury College is contributing \$600,000 annually to pay down the Cross Street Bridge project debt, an arrangement approved under former college President Ron Liebowitz.

• Use of LOT surplus this year has shaved around 13 cents off Middlebury’s municipal property rate, assuming the town would have otherwise proceeded with its capital projects program relying just on property taxes, according to Gill. Middlebury’s municipal tax rate stands at 88.9 cents per \$100 in property value. A penny on Middlebury’s tax rate raises around \$100,000.

• The LOT surplus is growing annually as debt service declines for the Cross Street Bridge. Gill said the tax has been generating around \$500,000 more than is needed each year for the bridge’s bond payback and maintenance.

When it was clear there’d be a recurring and ballooning annual LOT surplus, the selectboard agreed to ask voters’ permission each year

to use some or all the surplus to soften the impact of capital projects — such as roads, bridges, culverts and special projects — that would otherwise add to the local property tax toll.

“If the voters haven’t explicitly said we can take this money out of the Cross Street Bridge reserve (fund), it stays there. If we raise more money than we anticipated, it gets tucked away for a future decision,” Gill said.

That reserve fund is expected to grow to around \$2.2 million by June 30, according to Gill. The selectboard is trying to keep a minimum of \$1 million in that fund, in large part to maintain a strong

financial cushion for Cross Street Bridge maintenance and to address any unforeseen repairs the span might require.

Special projects that have recently received LOT surplus funding include \$1 million toward the soon-to-be-installed Chipman Hill water tower; \$295,000 to acquire the former Maverick gas station that will be razed to realign the Court Street/Monroe Street/Charles Avenue intersection in front of Middlebury Union High School; \$131,264 to help offset debt for repurposing a series of former wastewater treatment plant buildings for police department use; and \$125,000 toward the costs of

a planned bike-pedestrian path on Exchange Street.

Plans also call for \$5.8 million in LOT surplus to be allocated, over a 20-year period, to the \$17 million Ilsley Library renovation and expansion that’s now underway.

But the costliest capital project in Middlebury’s history might not qualify for LOT support.

Local voters on March 4 will field a proposed \$50 million overhaul of the 24-year-old Middlebury wastewater treatment plant at 243 Industrial Ave. Gill and Grant said it’s unlikely LOT surplus could be used to draw down that debt, as the sewer system — like the water system — is run through an

enterprise fund that’s largely based on user fees.

“(Enterprise funds) should almost operate like an independent business, paid by users,” Gill said.

Middlebury is one of 32 Vermont communities to have adopted a local option tax. Stowe’s special 1% tax on rooms, meals and alcohol harvested around \$525,000

between January and March of 2024, according to the *Stowe Reporter*.

Middlebury officials are hoping residents agree to keep the LOT in place.

“I think it’s extremely invaluable, at this point. I don’t think we could do nearly what we do currently without it,” Gill said.



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Submit your photo along with a short description online at [addisonindependent.com/contests](http://addisonindependent.com/contests) or by mail to 58 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT 05753.

*All entries must be received by February 7th. Winners will be announced in the February 13th edition of the Addison Independent.*

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**Package 3:** Prizes from Lincoln Peak Vineyard, Middlebury Sweets, and Cole’s Flowers

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# Porter

(Continued from Page 1A)  
patient revenues.  
“We were fortunate we didn’t have any budget reductions from the GMCB here; the budget didn’t have to change at all, which was great,” Ortmyer said.

That allowed Porter officials to focus more on internal improvements, which have produced — among other things — abundant new patient slots in a variety of Porter physicians practices that until last year were booked solid.

Porter’s primary care physicians have handled 778 more patient visits thus far in fiscal year 2025 (which began this past Oct. 1), than during the same period of FY24, according to Ortmyer. Practices in pediatrics (400 additional visits); OB/GYN (330); and ear, nose & throat (500) have also ramped up operations this fiscal year, PMC officials noted.

PMC primary care practices collectively saw 10,810 patient visits between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, 2024, according to Porter officials.  
“It’s going really well,” Ortmyer said. “Our practices were closed to all new patients when I got here (in September 2023), and at the start of the fiscal year. They all got opened up in September. We’ve added more than 1,000 new patients into our practices.”

How’d they do it?  
Through a recent culling of the physicians’ patient rolls — aka “panels” — that has freed up space for new patients. By removing from the rolls patients who’ve left the area, passed on, or who haven’t made an appointment for three years, Porter physicians can replenish and add to their client ranks.

“It’s had a very positive impact on our practices,” Ortmyer said, adding officials are now culling panels within Porter’s pediatrics division. He acknowledged that having more patients who are actively making appointments has made physicians practices busier.

The size of a panel varies from provider to provider, according to Ortmyer.

Not all the news has been good at Porter Medical Center. The Helen Porter nursing home continues to



BOB ORTMYER

run deficits that must be covered by solvent PMC enterprises. And Helen Porter is not unique in its financial challenges. It, like other nursing homes that dutifully serve patients subsidized through federal Medicare and Medicaid programs, see reimbursement rates that don’t cover the true cost of care.

Middlebury is also home to two retirement communities, but they are beyond the financial reach of lower wage earners in the county.

According to Porter officials, Helen Porter lost around \$5.5 million during FY22, \$6.5 million in FY23, and \$5.1 million in FY24.

Ortmyer said the losses are concerning, but added PMC is committed to preserving the service as a long-term care option for the county’s most frail, as well as for shorter-term stays for those rehabbing from injuries or major operations.

“The nursing homes across our network are all part of what we call our ‘post-acute strategy’ — any kind of placement that’s outside our hospital,” he said. “At Helen Porter, we have beds that are long-term care, some that are post-acute, and a memory care area for longer care.”

The UVM Health Network last July hired the consulting firm Strategic Care Solutions (SCS) to bring together operational management of the network’s five nursing home/rehab facilities: Helen Porter; Home Health & Hospice, Colchester; Woodridge Rehabilitation & Nursing in Berlin; the Alice Center, in Malone, N.Y.; and Skilled Nursing Unit at Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital, in Plattsburgh, N.Y.

Consolidating management of all the nursing home operations

makes sense, Ortmyer said, because of the disparate ways things are done right now. He noted all nursing homes in the network do their own billing, electronic records and admissions processes.

“Does that make sense?” he asked rhetorically. “How can we become more consistent across the board and reduce that variation?”

Ortmyer said SCS issued a series of recommendations to make the nursing homes more efficient in staffing and other areas. Helen Porter will be assigned a new supervisor once SCS has done its work, according to Ortmyer. The consultant has a two-year contract. Christine Werneke is currently presiding over Helen Porter operations, officials said.

Porter officials declined to provide details on the exit late last year of former Helen Porter top Administrator Mary Jane Nottonson.

In other recent PMC news, Ortmyer noted:

- Increasing partnerships between Porter and Elizabethtown Community Hospital across Lake Champlain. The two hospitals are already served jointly by Ortmyer, Chief Financial Officer Scott Comeau, and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Jun Chon.

- The addition of three physicians to the medical center staff. They include Drs. Kate Geschwind (Primary Care Vergennes), Tyler Wark (cardiologist) and Devon Anderson (orthopedic surgeon). Anderson is also the designated orthopedist for Middlebury College sports teams.

Porter now counts 98 employed health care providers, including 63 physicians and 35 practice providers. Those providers are now serving a combined 12,221 patients.

- Porter still employs more than 60 traveling healthcare workers, who are paid a premium to fill patient-facing jobs that the hospital is unable to fill.

Porter current has around 740 employees in all departments.

“It’s hard to (recruit healthcare workers),” Ortmyer lamented. “We can’t get people to work here, because there’s nowhere to live.”

But there’s better news coming on that front; state and local officials on Monday heralded the launch of a new neighborhood in Middlebury (see article on Page 1A).

- Plans are underway for a Porter Medical Center 100th birthday bash that’s being planned for later this year. The *Independent* will report details as they become available.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

# Want to write a book? Come learn how

MONKTON — Budding and aspiring authors should plan on attending the presentation, “So, you want to write a book” on Thursday, Feb. 13, at 7 p.m., at the Russell Memorial Library in Monkton. The speakers will be Eugenie Doyle and Ivor Hughes.

It’s a thrilling thought, isn’t it? To create a world, to give life to characters, to share ideas that flicker and dance in your mind. But where to begin? Every book starts with a spark of inspiration, a moment of clarity or curiosity or a premise, so seize it. Writing is as much about persistence as it is about creativity. What do you want to communicate or explore, what is the narrative?

The speakers will discuss a typical roadmap, offering direction while still allowing for exploration and spontaneity. Participants will be encouraged to write regularly and set realistic goals and celebrate small victories. Understand that the first draft is just the beginning. Editing and revising are where a book truly takes shape. Writers need to embrace feedback, but trust



EUGENIE DOYLE

their own vision. Writing a book is a personal journey of discovery. With passion and perseverance, a story can resonate and inspire.

Doyle and Hughes will share their personal journeys and experiences on the road to publication. These authentic stories will highlight that while each writer’s journey is distinct, they all encounter similar hurdles and triumphs.



IVOR HUGHES

Determination and enthusiasm are essential, and that every word penned brings the writer closer to their aspirations. Doyle and Hughes will address both fiction and nonfiction and explore various paths to publication — whether it’s traditional, self-publishing or digital media. After the session a copy of the presentation will be made available to attendees.

# Ferrisburgh

(Continued from Page 1A)  
all things were equal, the higher spending could raise Ferrisburgh’s municipal (non-school) property tax rate by about 3.8 cents.

But, Cousino said, all things are not equal, and the actual tax impact of the budget might not be known until the summer.

For one thing, the town is sitting on an undesignated fund balance of about \$840,000 that the selectboard could use to offset a tax increase.

Cousino said about half of those funds are due to the town being awarded paving grants. Ferrisburgh budgeted to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to pave roads in recent years, she said, but then received grant money to fund the work.

Town Treasurer Allison Brigger told the *Independent* some of the rest of that undesignated fund balance comes from the sale of two town-owned properties, a parcel of land at the junction of Routes 22A and 7, and the so-called Brown Church next to the town office building.

Money is essentially parked in that fund balance line item until it is ready to be used, she said; the selectboard has already earmarked the Brown Church money for a purpose to benefit the town — to be determined later with public input, per Selectboard Chair Clark Hinsdale.

Hinsdale also told the *Independent* the selectboard will discuss the fund balance at town meeting, but would prefer to wait until the board sets the tax rate this summer — the new fiscal year begins on July 1 — to decide whether to apply some of that surplus toward lowering the tax rate.

“We did discuss that. We also discussed whether we would

lower that amount we were going to spend, and if we did more, to cover it with the undesignated fund balance,” he said. “But we preferred to show the taxpayers the (7.9%) increase we think we really need, and then in the summer, in June, when we set the tax rate, we might dial it back in terms of what we’re going to raise in taxes.”

He said the board wants to make sure to have some money in reserve, as recommended several years ago by the town’s auditors. But at this point the town has more than met that goal and thus has gained flexibility with the fund balance.

“Now it seems to be a little higher than maybe it needs to be,” Hinsdale said.

There are reasons to wait to the summer to decide. One, Cousino said, is that town officials are expecting at least some growth in Ferrisburgh’s grand list of taxable property. If the town’s property value has increased in value, that would mean more tax revenue to support spending. Cousino said the effect could be a drop of a penny or so on the municipal rate.

The town is undergoing a property reappraisal, but Cousino said it would not be completed in time to affect FY2026 tax rates.

Also, according to Addison Northwest School District estimates, Ferrisburgh’s homestead school tax rate will decrease by 6 cents if district voters back the ANWSD board’s \$27.653 million budget proposal on March 4. Hinsdale noted that is still an estimate, but by the time selectboard members must set the town’s municipal rate they should have a better idea of where the town’s FY2026 school tax rates stand.

“We’ll keep an eye on how the

school tax rate evolves,” Hinsdale said.

## LOSING 60 YEARS

One of the proposals in the selectboard budget is to add a town administrative position, a recommendation the board makes especially because of the plans to step down later this year of both Cousino, who had decades of experience as an assistant clerk in Ferrisburgh before taking over as clerk, and longtime road foreman John Bull.

Hinsdale is a proponent of hiring an administrator, although the town budget has funding for an 80% position (\$48,000), a compromise that reflects slightly differing opinions on the board.

He noted, for example, at a January meeting that neighboring Monkton, with about 600 fewer residents than Ferrisburgh’s 2,775, has a town administrator, and told the *Independent* that Ferrisburgh, Addison County’s third-most populous community, is “going to lose “60-some years of municipal experience in 2025.”

Members of the selectboard acknowledge Cousino and Bull have gone above and beyond their duties, especially in effective grant-writing for Ferrisburgh. Hinsdale said thus an important duty for a town administrator would be grant writing, and that the fund balance could give the board flexibility in filling the position.

“We’re pretty much committed to hiring, whether it’s 80% time or 100% time. It’s time for a town administrator,” he said.

Other changes in the budget range from modest to substantial. Notable among them are:

- Under “Other Administration,” the personnel contingency was raised by \$23,000 to \$48,000 to reflect that potential hire, and \$17,388 was added to match grants.

- There was little change in highway department line items — an increase of about \$6,000 in all to \$793,738. But listed separately under “Debt Service” was \$52,000, the first payment on a new truck for the department.

- A \$21,456 increase in the expense of providing health insurance boosted the overall of Employee Benefits/Insurance to \$237,670.

- The overall cost of providing for Public Safety rose due to increases in the line items for the Ferrisburgh Fire Department (\$7,700), Vergennes Fire Department (\$22,324), and Vergennes Area Rescue Squad (\$26,805). The latter two increases were negotiated among multiple communities.

- Under Payroll, the highway department’s is projected to rise by about \$28,000 to \$330,512, but overtime pay to drop by about \$10,000 to \$35,000.

The town office payroll is budgeted to rise by a bit less than \$9,000 to nearly \$258,000. That figure does not include the contingency money for an administrator.

The town office’s operating spending is projected to drop by about \$10,000 to \$207,564, but town office utilities and maintenance to increase by about \$6,000 to \$25,522.

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THIS BUILDING IS the first constructed at the Deer View Business Park in New Haven. It's expected to be around 10,000 square feet and completed in a couple months if all goes to plan.  
Independent photo/Steve James

## Business park

(Continued from Page 1A)  
recently may have noticed a new building taking shape. Crews are framing the structure, which is expected to be completed in the next couple of months if all goes to plan.  
“As far as the vision goes and what could be there, my wife and I feel that could be ideal for a variety of businesses. It could be a coffee shop, it could be someone that does woodworking,” Bill Sinks said of the building currently under construction. “We’re not quite sure how that’s going to shake out over time, but we’re looking to make it some kind of a destination.”

The building under construction on Lot 1 will be around 10,000 square feet divided into multiple “flex-space” units, which include both storefront space as well as “back-of-house” space for storage or a workshop.

Work at the site is being tackled by Sinks’s construction and contracting company, Multy Builders.

Sinks pointed to various aspects of the building, which could fit the needs of different businesses. For example, the building features 10-foot-high walls in the front and 18-foot-high walls in the back, which could accommodate a mezzanine or second floor.

He said the building’s first tenant will be a giftshop/book shop combination and that he and Karrie are looking for more tenants.

“Since we’ve started building, we’ve had a lot of interest; where that goes, I don’t know yet, but we’ve had a lot of phone calls about ‘Hey what are you doing, my business might fit that,’” Sinks said.

“It could be a doctor’s office; it could be a cohabit space for offices.”

Sinks said the goal is to have the first structure completed in the next couple months, depending on the weather and other circumstances. Ideally, work on a second building would also begin in a few months.

“That’ll be depending on my crew’s ability to do that work, but our intention is to complete two buildings this year,” Sinks said.

That second building would be identical to the first structure and located on Lot 2. Buildings on the site’s other lots could be bigger — potentially around 15,000-20,000 square feet with the flexibility to accommodate businesses that need a machine shop or larger workshop space.

Sinks said his crew is looking to build in an environmentally friendly a manner as possible. Plans call for installing electric vehicle charging stations, and they’re currently exploring the potential of accessing Vermont Gas at the property.

Sinks added that the team wants to make sure the finished project looks good and fits in with the surrounding landscape.

“We want it to be attractive, and we want it to be as much as possible Vermont-finished and themed,” he said. “So, it’s not commercial in the sense that it’s something you’d see in downtown Burlington.”

He pointed to several other businesses flourishing nearby, including Lester Farm & Market across the highway, Greenhaven Gardens & Nursery north of the police barracks, and Munroe Tractor. “In my mind, (the area) is open to

## By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)  
its state of transition. “Our goal was to document the 1977 and 1988 additions, which will be demolished, and to preserve a sense of the library at this special moment in time,” Hart said. You can view the photos of the library here ([tinyurl.com/54p4tdpu](https://tinyurl.com/54p4tdpu)).

The Middlebury Dog Park will be the beneficiary of Hannaford Supermarket’s book sale, beginning on March 1 and as long as donations from supporters continue to flow. So please, if you have unwanted books in very good condition (no textbooks nor children’s books needed), consider donating them to this effort. You can deliver your book donations to the service window at Hannaford (in The Centre shopping plaza off Court Street Extension) beginning March 1 and until further notice. Please label them “For the Dog Park.” Or you can arrange a pick up or early drop-off of your books by calling/texting 802-989-3701. The popular, 1.5-acre Middlebury Dog Park, off Collins Drive, is a fenced-in facility that’s 100% donor-funded and volunteer-run.

Grants are now available through the South Lake Champlain Fund at the Vermont Community Foundation to support projects focused on education and research about the cultural and ecological history and heritage of Southern Lake Champlain. The fund supports projects focused on the area of Lake Champlain south of Crown Point in both Vermont and New York, with a preference for projects directly on the lake or in close proximity. School-based projects are encouraged. The fund also aims to support projects that involve experts and others living in the southern Lake Champlain region. Matching funds are encouraged but not required. Applications

must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 18. Please visit [vermontcf.org/slcf](https://vermontcf.org/slcf) for more information or to apply.

Vermont Secretary of Administration Sarah Clark has released Vermont’s revenue results for December 2024, and they show that the state’s General, Transportation and Education funds all missed their monthly cash flow targets. Combined receipts for those three funds were \$279.6 million in December, falling \$4.4 million (1.6%) short of the target. Total General Fund revenues were \$196.4 million, which was \$2.3 million less than anticipated. The Transportation Fund underperformed its \$25 million target by \$170,000. And December’s Education Fund harvest of \$58.4 million was \$1.9 million (3.2%) below expectations. “December marked a small, across-the-board reversal of the trend over the first half of the state’s fiscal year of receipts exceeding targets,” Clark said. “We enter the second half of the fiscal year in a solid financial position, although December’s results remind us that we operate in a fluid economic environment. As always, we have to be careful to control expenses in the event of a change in the flow of revenue.”

Jeanne Montross, who runs the group Helping Overcome Poverty’s Effect and its food shelf on Boardman Street in Middlebury, is worried that some of HOPE’s clients may be confused by recent reporting (by other media outlets) that a local food shelf is moving to Middlebury’s Exchange Street. She told us that it is CVOEO’s Addison Community Action Food Shelf that has moved to Exchange Street, not HOPE’s Addison County Food Shelf. HOPE’s food shelf, which serves over 3,000 people each year, has not moved from 282 Boardman St.



THE DEER VIEW Business Park is a 65-acre property located off Route 7 in New Haven that’s owned by Weybridge residents Karrie and Bill Sinks, shown here at the site Wednesday. Work is underway on the first building located at the parcel, which the pair feels could be an ideal spot for a variety of businesses.  
Independent photo/Steve James



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# Vermont kids

(Continued from Page 1A)  
childhood system that promotes healthy child development and family stability.”  
Gov. Phil Scott emphasized the importance of the new BBF report in its foreword.  
“In times of political division and transition, it can be easy to lose track of what we have in common. So, together, we’ll have to rise above the polarization and keep our focus on what is best for Vermonters of all ages. We all want our children to be safe, healthy, and to have the support they need to learn and grow,” he said. “In a cradle-to-career system, strong early childhood programs are the first foundational step and are



DARLA SENECAL

essential to lifelong success.”  
The report includes a treasure trove of local and statewide data. The *Independent* combed through present and past BBF statistical profiles off Addison County. Here’s some of what we found:  
• There were 2,895 children under age 9 in our area in 2017; the current BBF report lists 3,119 children under 10 (as of 2023).  
• An estimated 37.7% (980) of Addison County children younger than 6 were living in poverty in 2017. An estimated 25% (722) children under 12 met that criterion in 2023.  
• There were 18 local children in out-of-home custody in 2024. There were 34 children younger than 9 meeting that criterion in 2019.  
• The most recent data also show that 82.5% of current Addison

County children were immunized by age 2.  
• 34 children younger than 13 were receiving homelessness supports in the most recent data.  
• Approximately 88% of children were deemed “ready for kindergarten” (as defined by the Vermont Agency of Education) in the Addison Northwest School District during the fall of 2023, while 86% were deemed ready in Addison Central and 78% in the Mount Abraham Unified School District, according to the report.  
Building Bright Futures officials noted — and praised — Vermont’s commitment to universal school meals and its recent passage of a 2023 childcare law (Act 76) that provides additional funding for childcare centers, educators and scholarship assistance. But they noted some young kids are still going hungry or haven’t landed a spot in a childcare facility.  
“(Act 76) is moving the needle in the right direction,” said Darla Senecal, BBF’s regional manager for Bennington, Addison, and Rutland counties. She noted a new childcare center opened last year in Salisbury, and Middlebury’s Otter Creek Child Care Center this spring will open a major new addition with additional slots. But it will be a while before there are enough slots to meet demand in Addison County and beyond, Senecal stressed.  
“We know there are still not enough childcare spaces. We’ve

### Bite out of crime?

GUINNESS, THE NEW Middlebury police k-9 officer, sat in at the selectboard meeting on Jan. 28. The three-year-old pup gets to gnaw on this special toy every time he “does his job.” Police Chief Jason Covey introduced three new officers — Nathaniel Hudson, Amanda Ferrone and Aiden Alnwick (Guinness’s handler) — to the selectboard, but they were all quickly upstaged by the dog.

Independent photo/ Megan James

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added some in Addison County and there are more coming... but finding staff to fill the (childcare) jobs [is] difficult. We are seeing people come into the teaching field, but there’s still a need for more,” she said.  
**TRENDS IN VERMONT**  
The BBF report outlines some sobering statewide trends, including:  
• The number of people in

households with children under 18 who were experiencing homelessness tripled from pre-pandemic levels, from 372 in January 2020 to 1,125 in January 2024.  
• In 2019, the inflation-adjusted median primary home sale price in Vermont was \$271,563, while in 2023, the median home sale price was \$325,000 — a 17.9% increase. Over the same period, median family household income increased by only 6.3%.  
• To meet expected demand and address extremely low vacancy rates, Vermont’s 2025 Housing Needs Assessment reports that Vermont will need 36,000 more primary homes by 2030. This means adding 5,000 to 7,000 more homes to Vermont’s primary home market each year, well above the 2,456 home permits that were issued in 2023. Currently, Vermont has an estimated 339,218 homes, of which 59% (196,446) are owned, 23% (76,262) are rentals, and 15% (51,474) are used as seasonal or vacation homes.  
• There’s been a 14% decrease in the percent of Vermont’s families with children under 12 living below 185% of the federal poverty line (which is currently \$59,477 for a family of four) — from 27.5% in 2018, to 23.8% in 2023. At the same time, BFF pointed to the Economic Policy Institute’s Family Budget Calculator, which posits that in Addison County, Vt., the necessary annual income to meet the basic needs of a household with two adults and two children (before taxes) is \$120,589. The calculator “measures the income a family needs in order to attain a modest yet adequate standard of living.”  
• During the 2023–2024 school year, 47.8% of Vermont children were eligible for free and reduced-price lunch, a 31% increase from the 2022–2023 school year (34.9%).  
• In June of 2024, 3SquaresVT, Vermont’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), served 19,695 children younger than 18. Average monthly benefits decreased from \$258 in July 2022–June 2023, to \$192 in July 2023–June 2024 following the expiration of emergency allotments in March 2023.  
• In Vermont, 47% of birthing parents returning to work after having a child do not have paid leave.  
Building Bright Futures officials are recommending that the state’s policymakers, among other things:  
• Enact a “strong paid family and medical leave insurance program.”  
• Create more “safe and secure” housing for families.  
• “Monitor to ensure equitable access” for all 3- and 4-year-olds in Vermont’s Universal Pre-K Program.  
• Expand the availability of mental health services to families.  
Senecal wants people to remember the faces behind the statistics in the report.  
“The stories behind the data are also important. I feel like this report can be a spoke in the wheel of a decision making process,” she said.  
John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

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SPORTS

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Girls' hockey  
earns big win  
Tigers top first-place  
T-Birds on the road

By ANDY KIRKALDY  
SWANTON — The Middlebury Union High School girls' hockey team picked up a 5-2 road win at Missisquoi on Saturday. The Tigers improved to 9-3-1 heading into a challenging Wednesday evening home game vs. St. Albans. That game was played after the deadline for this edition of the *Independent*.  
The Tigers have games at the Kingdom Blades on Saturday and Champlain Valley next Wednesday before returning home to face Rice at 5 p.m. on Feb. 14.  
Their victory over Missisquoi was significant — the T-Birds are in first place in Division II, and the setback was their first in D-II play.  
*(See Road win, Page 2B)*

Score  
BOARD

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS		
Girls' Basketball		
1/29 Mt Abe vs MUHS.....	46-45	
1/30 Rutland vs OV.....	50-26	
2/1 Mt Abe vs Milton.....	54-46	
2/1 MUHS vs Enosburg.....	35-26	
2/1 VUHS vs Colchester.....	53-36	
2/4 Milton vs VUHS.....	58-44	
2/4 MUHS vs Colchester.....	59-24	
2/4 Mt Abe vs Missisquoi.....	48-38	
2/4 OV vs MSJ.....	47-31	
Boys' Basketball		
1/29 OV vs Brattleboro.....	73-46	
1/30 MUHS vs Mt Abe.....	51-45	
1/31 OV vs Windsor.....	60-37	
1/31 VUHS vs Missisquoi.....	60-29	
2/1 MUHS vs Mt Anthony.....	56-36	
2/1 Winooski vs Mt Abe.....	63-38	
2/3 OV vs Proctor.....	64-44	
2/5 VUHS at Mt Abe.....	Late	
2/5 Enosburg at MUHS.....	Late	
Boys' Hockey		
1/29 MUHS vs Colchester.....	6-2	
2/1 CVU vs MUHS.....	2-1	
2/5 Rutland at MUHS.....	Late	
Girls' Hockey		
2/1 MUHS vs Missisquoi.....	5-2	
2/5 MUHS vs St. Albans.....	Late	
COLLEGE SPORTS		
Men's Basketball		
2/1 Midd vs Bates.....	92-84 (OT)	
2/4 Midd vs Johnson.....	97-70	
Women's Basketball		
2/2 Bates vs Midd.....	56-46	
Women's Hockey		
2/4 Midd vs Suffolk.....	4-1	
Men's Hockey		
1/31 Tufts vs Midd.....	3-2	
2/1 Midd vs Conn.....	6-0	

Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS		
Girls' Basketball		
2/7 Missisquoi at VUHS.....	7 PM	
2/7 Rutland at Mt Abe.....	7 PM	
2/8 MUHS at Milton.....	11:30 AM	
2/8 Springfield at OV.....	1 PM	
2/10 West Rutland at OV.....	7 PM	
2/12 Enosburg at Mt Abe.....	7 PM	
2/12 MUHS at VUHS.....	7 PM	
2/13 OV at Hartford.....	7 PM	
2/14 Missisquoi at MUHS.....	7 PM	
2/14 VUHS at Mt Abe.....	7 PM	
2/15 MUHS at Milton.....	7 PM	
Boys' Basketball		
2/8 Missisquoi at MUHS.....	12:30 PM	
2/8 Mt Abe at Enosburg.....	2:30 PM	
2/8 Milton at VUHS.....	2:30 PM	
2/8 Bellows Falls at OV.....	4:30 PM	
2/11 OV at Windsor.....	7 PM	
2/11 Mt Abe at Milton.....	7 PM	
2/11 VUHS at MUHS.....	7 PM	
2/13 Missisquoi at Mt Abe.....	7 PM	
2/13 VUHS at Enosburg.....	7 PM	
2/14 MUHS at Milton.....	7 PM	
2/15 MSJ at OV.....	2:30 PM	
Boys' Hockey		
2/8 MUHS at Rice.....	2:45 PM	
2/10 MUHS at Rutland.....	6 PM	
2/14 Hartford at MUHS.....	7 PM	
Girls' Hockey		
2/8 MUHS at Kingdom Blades.....	3 PM	
2/8 MUHS at CVU.....	5:15 PM	
2/14 Rice at MUHS.....	5 PM	
Wrestling		
2/8.....	MUHS/Mt Abe at MAU Duals	
2/8.....	VUHS at Plymouth NH Tourney.	
2/15.....	North/South Duals at Springfield	

*(See Schedule, Page 2B)*



EAGLE GUARD HAYDEN Lutz, above, drives into the lane against the defense of Tiger forward Brady Lloyd during Thursday's boys' basketball game at Mount Abraham. Tiger forward Cooke Riney, left, grabs this rebound despite the best efforts of Mount Abe's Aricin Griffin (No. 5) during Thursday's boys' basketball game on the Eagle court.

Independent photos/Steve James

Boys' hoop: Tigers top Eagles; OV, VUHS prevail

By ANDY KIRKALDY  
ADDISON COUNTY — In recent high school boys' hoop action, Middlebury topped host Mount Abraham in a game covered by addisonindependent.com on Jan. 31, and went on to win a Saturday game.  
The Eagles also lost their ensuing outing. Vergennes won the only game on its schedule between Jan. 29 and Feb. 4, and Otter Valley swept three games to remain near the top of the Division II standings.  
**Eagles-tigers**

On Jan. 31 in the Mount Abraham gym, visiting Middlebury rallied in the fourth quarter to defeat the host Eagles, 51-45.  
It was Tigers' third victory in four outings; they improved to 5-8. The Eagles had won three straight, but dropped to 6-6 with the setback.  
Both teams have been defending well. On offense, the Eagles have relied on guard play — in one recent win, seniors **Hayden Lutz** and **Aricin Griffin** and junior **Charlie Germon** combined for 40 points.

The Tigers have more size, notably junior post player **Cooke Riney**, and have relied more on rebounding and inside scoring.  
Coaches knew the outcome would hinge on how well the Tiger backcourt handled the Eagle guards, and whether the Eagles could deal with the MUHS size advantage.  
It was close, but the edge went to the Tigers. Lutz scored 22, but had to work hard against the defense of Tiger guard **Cam Whitlock**, who most often drew the assignment, with plenty of help on picks in the

MUHS man-to-man defense.  
Meanwhile, the rest of the Eagle starting guards combined for 13 points, eight from Griffin and five each from **Kyle Johnston**, **Jacob Prouty** and **Chase Atkins**.  
At the other end, Riney scored 17 in the paint and helped the Tigers to an edge on the boards in the second half. Counting team rebounds, Mount Abe had a 19-12 edge in the first half, but the Tigers earned a 15-6 advantage after the break.  
The Tiger guards also chipped in offensively: 10 points from

Whitlock, and six from two decisive late threes from **Ryan Brouillard**. Forward **Brady Lloyd** scored 12.  
Whitlock talked about the Tiger defense.  
"The game plan tonight was to get on 23 (Lutz), play good defense, get over screens on him," Whitlock said.  
The Tigers also took better care of the ball in the second half (six turnovers) than in the first half (11 turnovers).  
"We've been getting our  
*(See Boys' hoop, Page 3B)*



TIGER SOPHOMORE ISABEL Quinn, her team's second-highest scorer on Tuesday, attacks the Colchester defense during the evening's basketball game in Middlebury.

Independent photo/Steve James

Tiger girls thump Lakers; move to 9-4

By ANDY KIRKALDY  
MIDDLEBURY — The host Middlebury Union High School girls' basketball team ended suspense early on Tuesday against injury-plagued visitor Colchester, bolting to a 17-2 lead after one period on the way to a 59-24 victory.  
If there were any drama left in the contest, Tiger junior forward Solstice Binder erased it. With the Lakers apparently more concerned with defending high-scoring freshman Louisa Orten and senior three-point specialist Lexi Whitney, Binder broke loose for 17 of her game-high 25 points in the second period to help propel the Tigers to a 40-10 halftime lead.  
Binder scored in transition, on short jumpers, on putbacks, from the free-throw line, on two layups on feeds from Orten, and on a quarter-opening three-pointer.  
Binder, a junior co-captain,

talked more about the team's success afterward — the Tigers improved to 9-4, good for seventh place in Division II. They have won eight of their past 10 outings after a 1-2 start, and will all but certainly win more games this winter than the past two seasons combined (11).  
But, yeah, Binder enjoyed that second quarter.  
"I was feeling pretty good. My shots don't usually fall like that, so I was thinking it was really good," she said. "It was a really fun game."  
How did she feel about the team's play against the Lakers, who started the game with one starter injured and lost another during the second quarter?  
"We put forth a really good effort today," Binder said. "I think we're just really building up our confidence. These wins are really big for us, and they help us move up in the standings. And I think

we did a really good job today with our defense and our offense."  
The Tigers started quickly after the tipoff. Binder drove for two, sophomore Isabel Quinn hit a layup, and junior Skyler Choiniere sank a three-pointer, and it was 7-0 with two minutes gone. Laker Lilly Wagoner hit two free throws at 4:46, but the Tigers closed the period on a 10-0 run that included five more points from Quinn, two from Binder and an Orten three.  
Life did not improve for the Lakers in a second quarter in which they were outscored by 24-7. In addition to Binder's outburst Choiniere added five points, and Quinn chipped another two. Dakota Karpinski hit a pair of threes early on for the Lakers, and Emma Cater beat the buzzer with a layup to give Colchester 10 points in the half.  
The Tigers switched from player-to-player defense with a  
*(See Tiger girls, Page 4B)*

Hall names local two  
LaRose, Brown will be enshrined

BRISTOL — Two longtime Bristol residents are among this year's 13 Vermont Sports Hall of Fame inductees, highly accomplished former high school girls' basketball coach **Connie LaRose** and world championship horseshoe pitcher **Debra Brown**.  
They are joined by 11 others in the VSFH class of 2025, which will be formally inducted at the Hall of Fame Induction Dinner and Celebration at the Delta Marriott Burlington Hotel in South Burlington on Saturday, April 26. The evening begins with a reception at 5:30 p.m., with the induction ceremony following dinner.  
Connie LaRose has had an incredible, legendary athletic career in Vermont for over 50 years as both a high school and college student-athlete and a high school coach. She is a 1962 graduate of Bristol High School, where she played basketball and soccer for four years and softball for three years. She went on to win basketball letters at Champlain College before starting her coaching career in 1966, with a year each at Beeman Academy and Bristol High before her successful



CONNIE LAROSE OF Bristol coached many successful high school sports teams over 50 years, including five Division II girls' basketball titles. She will be inducted into the Vermont Sports Hall of Fame this spring.

31-year tenure at Mount Abraham Union High School.  
A pioneer in Vermont women's athletics prior to Title IX, basketball was LaRose's primary sport as a coach, where she amassed a 486-232 career record at three high schools, becoming Vermont's fourth-winningest female hoop coach. Her teams won five Division II girls' basketball titles, including in 2022 — her final year of coaching at Mount Abraham.  
Her Eagle teams reached 16 D-II final fours and 11 title games. LaRose is one of only seven women coaches selected for induction (2014) into the Vermont Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame. Many of her Eagles through the years went on to play college basketball.  
She also coached the Mount Abe girls' soccer team from 1989 to 2010, and coached softball at Middlebury College for three years before moving over to the Middlebury Union High School softball team from 1996 to 2004. She also coached youth sports in Bristol for many years.  
LaRose's full VSHOF bio is  
*(See Famers, Page 5B)*



NEW VERMONT SPORTS Hall of Fame member **Debra Brown** has won dozens of Vermont state horseshoe pitching titles and was world champion, as well. The Bristol resident has also mentored generations of younger athletes.

Independent file photo/Steve James

# Essex tops gymnasts, but Tigers once again show improvement

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — Once again setting its highest team score of the season, the Middlebury Union High School gymnastics team took second place in a three-team meet on Jan. 29, an event the team hosted in the MUMS gymnasium.

Perennial Vermont high school gymnastic power Essex won with 131.65 points, followed by MUHS with 107.3 and Montpelier with 29.65.

Alixis Williams led the Tigers with a fourth-place finish on the beam and a fifth in the all-around, while also taking seventh in two disciplines. Vergennes independent Isabella Audy finished sixth in the all-around, and Tiger Anni Broderson was seventh.

MUHS Coach Natalia Little pointed out that athletes who finished lower in individual events continued to show improvement. On vault alone, Broderson (7.55), Lila Hescocock (6.8), Leah Warner (6.9), and Maya Jacobs (6.8) posted their highest scores of the winter.

The top scorers by event were:

VAULT: 1. Anna Kinney & Jill Diehl (Essex) 8.50; 3. Ollie Estrin (Twinfield independent) & Riley Hammond (Essex) 8.40; 5. Maybel Lyon-Horne (Essex) 8.3; 6. Mallory Supan (Montpelier) 8.25; 7. Williams (MUHS) 8.20.

BARS: 1. Leah Frisbie (Essex) 8.6; 2. Hammond (Essex) 7.93; 3. Sarai Crowley (Essex); 4. Diehl & Kinney (Essex) 7.2; 6. Emmerson Marcckres (Essex) 6.4; 7. Alixis Williams (MUHS) 5.6.

BEAM: 1. Kinney (Essex) 9.25; 2. Hammond (Essex) 9.0; Leah Frisbie (Essex) 8.44; Alixis Williams (MUHS) 8.2.

FLOOR: 1. Estrin (Twinfield) 8.45; Supan (Montpelier) 8.1; 3. Hammond & Kinney (Essex) 8.05.

ALL-AROUND: 1. Hammond (Essex) 33.35; 2. Kinney (Essex) 33.00; 3. Emerson Marcckres (Essex) 30.40; 4. Estrin (Ind. Twinfield) 30.05; 5 Alixis Williams (MUHS) 29.6; Isabella Audy (VUHS) 28.0; 7; Broderson (MUHS) 26.95.

# Boys’ hockey splits pair

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School boys’ hockey team split two recent games and carried a 3-10 record into a Wednesday night home game vs. Rutland. That game was played after deadline for this issue.

The Tigers will next play at Rice on Saturday and at Rutland on Monday before hosting Hartford at 7 p.m. on Feb. 14.

On Jan. 29, the Tigers outskated visiting Colchester, 6-2, as Gabe Quesnel (two assists) and Adrien Malhotra each scored twice. Joe Sullivan and Quinn Collins (assist) added a goal apiece. Tyler Munson

chipped in two assists, and Asa Pratt, Case Pitner, Caleb Foster and Logan McNulty added an assist apiece. MUHS goalie TJ Baron made 22 saves.

Avan Maestas and Gunnar Navari each scored for the Lakers, and goalie Boden Gamage stopped 22 shots.

On Saturday host CVU edged the Tigers, 2-1. The Redhawks got goals from Ronan Evans and Brady Jones and 10 saves from goalie Tommy Barnes.

Quesnel scored for the Tigers, and Baron had a strong game with 31 saves.



**Free throwers**

ST. AMBROSE PARISH had a great turnout for its 2025 K of C Free Throw Contest following last week’s MAUHS Milton game. Winners and finalists include, from left to right: Carson Rockwood, 2nd, 9-yr-old Boys (Bristol); Nolan Tierney, 1st Place, 9-yr-old Boys (Bristol); Dane Vincelette, 1st Place, 10-yr-old Boys (Bristol); Owen Marshall, 2nd, 10-yr-old Boys (Bristol); Lusha Hallock, 1st Place, 10-yr-old Girls (Bristol); Jane Park, 2nd, 11-yr-old Girls (Bristol); Zoey Audy, 1st Place, 11-yr-old Girls (Starksboro); Desta Deas, 1st Place, 11-yr-old Boys (Bristol); Tucker Provost, 2nd, 12-yr-old Boys (Lincoln); Noah Gingras, 1st Place, 12-yr-old Boys (Bristol); Aurelia Urban, 1st Place, 12-yr-old Girls (Bristol); Kinsley Seymour, 3rd, 12-yr-old Girls (New Haven); Kendall Huizenga, 1st Place, 13-yr-old Girls (Starksboro); and Shane Zeno, 1st Place, 13-yr-old Boys (Starksboro).

Photo courtesy of Gary Russell

# Girls’ basketball teams see positive results

## Mount Abe edges MUHS; all four local squads post at least one victory

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — In recent local high school girls’ basketball play, Mount Abraham kept winning, including a dramatic home victory over Middlebury and a triumph on the road. In other action, MUHS won one road game and also hosted another on Tuesday (see story on Page 1B) and Vergennes and Otter Valley each split two games. The Addison

County teams all played Lake Division games.

**MUHS at Mt Abe**

On Jan. 29 host Mount Abe eked out a 46-45 victory over the Tigers in a back-and-forth battle. The Tigers took an eight-point lead into halftime, but the Eagles erupted for 20 points in the third quarter to lead by five entering the fourth quarter and set up a dramatic finish.

The Tigers came back by getting key three-pointers from **Lexi Whitney** and **Louisa Orten** and by hitting four of five free throws in the final period. The Eagles countered with eight points from **Mackenzie Griner** in the quarter, and it was a one-point game with less than a minute to go.

With 38 seconds left, Orten hit a layup to give MUHS a 45-44 lead. The Eagles responded with a Griner post move with 16 seconds to go on a feed from **Abba Parker**, and the Eagles led, 46-45. The Eagles

fouled with 1.8 seconds left, but the Tigers were not yet shooting the bonus. After a timeout, the Tigers missed a final shot at the buzzer, and Mount Abe escaped with the victory.

Griner led the Eagles with 18 points and 12 rebounds, and **Louisa Painter** (five steals) and **Hazel Guilmette** added nine points apiece as Mount Abe moved to 9-2.

The Tigers dropped to 7-4 despite 17 points from Orten and 13 from **Solstice Binder**.

**EAGLES**

On Saturday the Eagles outlasted host Milton, 54-46, as Griner (16 points), Guilmette (14) and Painter (13) combined for 43 points. Marlie Bushey (21 points, seven rebounds, six assists) had a big game for the Yellowjackets.

On Tuesday the Eagles improved to 11-2 and unofficially held onto second place in D-II with a 48-38 victory at Missisquoi.

Griner (13 points) and Guilmette (seven points, four assists) led a team-wide effort.

**TIGERS**

On Saturday, MUHS got past host Enosburg, 35-26. Orten’s 15 points led Middlebury, and Lisey Robtoy paced the Hornets with nine points.

The Tigers moved to 8-4 heading into their Tuesday home game vs.

Colchester.

**COMMODORES**

Also on Saturday, the Commodores outscored visiting Colchester, 53-36. **Ashtin Stearns** erupted for 27 points, and **Kendra Jackson** added 10 points inside to pace VUHS. Dakota Karpinski led the Lakers with 15.

On Tuesday host Milton defeated VUHS as Yellowjacket Marlie Bushey racked up 20 points, 13 rebounds and 12 steals, and teammate Evelyn Bushey added 18 points and 11 rebounds.

**Ava Francis** paced the Commodores with 14 points, and Stearns added 12. VUHS dipped to 6-7.

**OTTERS**

On Jan. 30 host Rutland defeated the Otters, 50-26. **Tegan Boynton** led OV with 11 points.

On Tuesday the Otters shrugged off an early 9-0 deficit at Mount St. Joseph and rolled to a 47-31 victory.

**Matelin Laporte** hit four three-pointers, including three in the first quarter as the Otters rallied to take the lead. She finished with 16 points to lead OV. **Breanna Bovey** scored 10 points for the Otters, and Boynton added six as they improved to 3-10. Three wins equals the program’s total from the 2023-2024 season with seven games to go. MSJ dropped to 8-6.

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# Road win

(Continued from Page 1B)

It also moved the Tigers into third place in the D-II standings.

The victory was no fluke: The Tigers outshot Missisquoi, 39-

28. McKenna Raymond and Lia Calzini sparked the attack with two goals apiece, and Julia Morrissey scored once. Nova Bojanowski and Sawyer Witscher each had two assists, and Becka Seeley notched one. Goalie Ruby Hubbell made 26 saves for MUHS.

Rory Schreindorfer and Lilliana Fournier scored for MVU, and goalie Jadyan Lapan stopped 34 shots.

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### Upcoming Events

Thursday, February 6: 9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating	Tuesday, February 11: 9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating	Thursday, February 13: 9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating	Tuesday, February 18: 9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating	Thursday, February 20: 9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating	Tuesday, February 25: 9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating	Thursday, February 27: 9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating
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## Schedule

(Continued from Page 1B)

**Gymnastics**

2/7 MUHS at Burlington ..... 7:30 PM

**Dance**

2/8 MUHS at Mt Mansfield ..... 1 PM

2/15 ..... State Competition at VUHS

**Cheer**

2/15 ..... State Competition at VUHS

**COLLEGE SPORTS**

**Men’s Basketball**

2/7 Bowdoin at Midd..... 7 PM

2/8 Colby at Midd ..... 3 PM

2/14 Midd at Amherst ..... 7 PM

2/15 Midd at Hamilton ..... 3 PM

**Women’s Basketball**

2/7 Midd at Bowdoin ..... 7 PM

2/8 Midd at Colby ..... 3 PM

2/14 Amherst at Midd ..... 7 PM

2/15 Hamilton at Midd ..... 3 PM

**Women’s Hockey**

2/7 Trinity at Midd ..... 7 PM

2/8 Trinity at Midd ..... 3 PM

2/14 Williams at Midd ..... 7 PM

2/15 Midd at Williams ..... 7 PM

**Men’s Hockey**

2/7 Midd at Trinity ..... 7:30

2/8 Midd at Wesleyan ..... 3 PM

2/21 Amherst at Midd ..... 7 PM

2/22 Hamilton at Midd ..... 3 PM

Boys’ hoop

(Continued from Page 1B) turnover count down,” Whitlock said. “We’re trusting each other as a team.”

MUHS Coach Chris Altemose agreed defense was an important factor.

“It was a team effort. Everybody did a nice job,” he said.

He was also pleased the Tigers worked the ball in to Riney, and that they sank a few jumpers, as they had in a big home win over Milton on Jan. 29.

“Our strength is inside, and we tried to play to that,” Altemose said. “I thought we did a better job at that tonight than maybe we had been doing. Our pieces are coming. We hit a couple from outside tonight late, which was great.”

The Eagles bolted to a 7-0 lead in the first 1:30 on a drives by Lutz and Griffin and a Johnston three-pointer. But the Tigers responded with a 14-4 surge to lead by 14-11 after the opening quarter.

Riney closed the period with three buckets inside, and Whitlock and Lloyd each scored four points. At the other end, Lutz added a three pointer and Griffin a free throw to keep the Eagles’ close.

In the second period, the Eagles switched to a 2-3 zone that made it harder for the Tigers to feed Riney, and MUHS went scoreless for the first 4:35. Meanwhile, the Eagles went on an 11-0 run that included three-pointers from Prouty, Griffin and Atkins, a Johnston drive and two Lutz free throws, and Mount Abe led by 26-17.

But the Tigers closed the period with a 12-4 run, and the Eagle lead was only 28-26 at the half. Riney chipped in three buckets, turning one into a three-point play. Lloyd hit a three, and Tassilo Luksch drove for two. Lutz countered with four free throws.

In the first half, the Tigers were careless with the ball and the Eagles outrebounded them. But in the second half, they reversed those numbers.

The Tigers made no headway as defense ruled in a third quarter: The Eagles outscored them, 8-6, and led by 36-32 entering the fourth. Riney scored four early on to give MUHS a 30-28 lead, but free throws from Griffin and Lutz put Mount Abe back on top. A Whitlock move to the hoop tied the game again at 2:15, but four straight points by Lutz, a layup on a Prouty feed and another off a steal, restored the Eagle lead.

Then the Eagles committed three turnovers to open the fourth quarter



EAGLE GUARD ARICIN Griffin attacks the paint while Tiger guard Cam Whitlock provides the resistance during Thursday’s boys’ basketball game at Mount Abraham.

Independent photo/Steve James

(of just four in the half). Meanwhile, Lloyd hit a three, Whitlock sank a short jumper, and the Tigers led, 39-36. They never trailed again.

The teams traded buckets until a Lutz jumper pulled the Eagles within 41-40. Enter Brouillard. The sophomore hit a three at 3:05, and the Tiger lead was 44-40. Lutz answered from behind the arc: 44-43.

But Brouillard nailed another three at 2:50: 47-43, Tigers — and those would prove to be the winning points.

Lutz converted a layup after a Griffin steal, and the Eagles were within two with 1:06 left. But Mount Abe missed two three-pointers in the final minute, and Taylor Altemose added four Tiger free throws for the final score.

Eagle Coach Martin Clark credited both teams.

“It was just a hard-fought game,” he said. “They did a good job trying to get it into their big guy. We, of course, had to collapse on him and do what we could to hold him off, and he really got us more on the rebounding than anything.”

Overall, he’s pleased with the Eagles’ progress.

“I love the way we’ve been playing and really gelling defensively and working hard,”

Clark said.

Coach Altemose was happy with the Tigers’ resiliency.

“We had to dig out of a hole twice tonight. I think that says a lot about us,” he said.

Whitlock was asked why the Tigers have recently improved their

record.

“We love playing together,” he said. “Every game we bring real tough defense and really good rebounding. And now that we’re putting our offensive pieces together and starting to control the ball, the sky’s the limit.”

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OTTERS

On Jan. 29, the Otters dropped a 32-5 first quarter on visiting Brattleboro on the way to a 73-46 victory. Lucas Politano sparked the early onslaught with four three-pointers in the first eight minutes and finished with 19 points. Drew Pelkey (14 points) and Brody Lathrop (12 points) also reached double figures for the Otters.

This past Friday, the Otters coasted past visiting Windsor, 60-37, with another balanced scoring output. Connor Denis led with 17 points, with Pelkey (16 points) and Logan Letourneau (12) also reaching double figures. The Yellowjackets fell to 3-10.

On Monday, the Otters overmatched another team, host D-IV Proctor, 64-44. Politano helped OV overcome an early deficit by hitting four of his five three-pointers in the first quarter, and OV rolled from there. Politano finished with 19 points to lead OV, followed by Pelkey with 17 and Letourneau with 14. Proctor, led by Jordan Cole’s 18 points, dropped to 5-9.

The Otters remained in the top four in the D-II standings with the three victories. They’re seeking the school’s first basketball title.

COMMODORES

This past Friday, the Commodores sailed past visiting Missisquoi, 60-29. Ryan Wright led the VUHS attack with 16 points, and Theo Elzinga scored eight points, while Cohen Howell chipped in with eight rebounds as the Commodores improved to 9-5 heading into their Wednesday game at Mount Abe, which was played after deadline for the newspaper.

TIGERS

On Saturday, the Tigers kept up their recent winning ways by topping visiting Mt. Anthony, 56-36. MUHS took a 24-7 lead after the first quarter and never looked back. Cooke Riney (19 points) and Taylor Altemose (12) led the scorers as the Tigers improved to 6-8 with their fourth win in five outings.

The Tigers were set to host Enosburg on Wednesday.

EAGLES

On Saturday, D-III Winooski improved to 10-3 by defeating the Eagles, 63-38. Spartan Oliver Mathis-Vallario scored 21 points, 10 in the first quarter, as Winooski took charge.

Germon led Mount Abe with eight points. The Eagles dipped to 6-7, heading into Wednesday’s game against VUHS.

**ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT**

—2025—

## SUPER SUNDAY

— FOOTBALL CONTEST —

**KANSAS CITY CHIEFS VS PHILADELPHIA EAGLES**

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Winners will be chosen based on guess accuracy. Prizes include a Vermont Sun membership + 1 month’s dues, a Greg’s Market & Deli February Meat Pack (\$99.99 value), \$25 gift card to Middlebury Discount Beverage, \$30 merchandise gift certificate to Hare and the Dog, \$30 merchandise gift certificate to Otter Creek Bakery, and \$25 Agway gift card. Winners will be contacted once the contest is over to discuss available prizes. Entries will be accepted through Saturday, February 8th. Winners will be announced in the February 13th edition of the Addy Indy.

---

## SUPER SUNDAY

FOOTBALL CONTEST

**KANSAS CITY CHIEFS VS PHILADELPHIA EAGLES**

Who will win: Chiefs or Eagles? \_\_\_\_\_

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ADDISON COUNTY

## INDEPENDENT

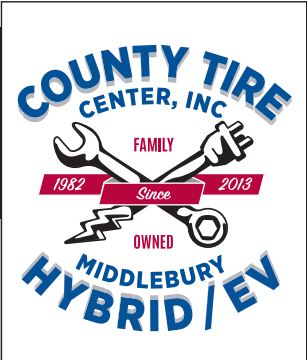
# Tiger girls

(Continued from Page 1B)  
full-court press to a 2-3 zone with a sideline trap in the second half, and the pace slowed, but MUHS still pulled steadily away.  
Karpinski and Wagoner led the Lakers with six points apiece, and Harlow Hier and Emma Cater finished with four each.  
After Binder's 25 points, Quinn was next with 11, followed by Choiniere and Orten with seven apiece, and freshman Sophie Simpson with five, all in the fourth quarter and including a three-pointer.  
The Tigers outrebounded the Lakers, 34-21, including team rebounds. Binder, Choiniere and Quinn appeared to do the most damage on the boards for the Tigers, but individual stats were

not immediately available.  
After the Lakers committed 13 turnovers in the first half, they turned the ball over just five times after the break. Meanwhile, the Tigers committed just two turnovers in each of the first three quarters and four in the fourth when Coach Eric Carter began subbing freely. Ten turnovers is an excellent total for a high school basketball team, and the Tigers were moving the ball well and cutting off the ball.  
Coach Carter called the defensive effort "not bad," pointing to a number of open looks early from three-point range the Lakers missed. But he said the defense on the arc would have been better if senior co-captain Kassidy Brown, whom he called the Tigers' "defensive spark," had not missed the game with an illness.  
"She makes a big difference. She pulls them together. She's a great team player that way," Carter said.  
Without her, he said they quickly adjusted to cover the Lakers' three-point shooting tactics, however.  
"We covered that about halfway through the first quarter. We shut that down," Carter said.  
Carter also said Binder benefitted from the Lakers' defensive focus on Orten and Whitney — not that he was complaining about Colchester giving Binder room to operate.  
"They came out with special coverage. They face-guarded Lou the entire game. I kept waiting for them to pull that off," he said. "And he was obviously concerned about Lexi Whitney, because they were in her face all night."  
Carter said top teams, such as Mount Abe and Fair Haven, have given the Tiger offense trouble, but they have continued to improve and are learning to trust

each other.  
"I think we've executed well," he said. "We're working hard on that, making them talk and play together. That's where that's coming from. You can see it out there. They're finding each other."  
Binder added the defense has been good, and echoed her coach on the team's chemistry and teamwork.  
"We have some good players this year. We have a lot of younger players, so it took a little bit of adjusting and getting used to the speed of the game," Binder said. "But I think we've been executing our offense really well. We've been talking. We've been working together. We've been going over things a lot ... And I think a lot of these early wins have built up our confidence."

**TIGER FRESHMAN GUARD**  
Louisa Orten, right, puts up a shot in the lane during Tuesday's girls' basketball game in Middlebury. MUHS junior forward Solstice Binder, below, blows past a Colchester defender during Tuesday's girls' basketball game.  
Independent photos/Steve James



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# Famers

(Continued from Page 1B)  
availableatwww.vermontsportshall.com/20251arose.html.

Debra Brown has excelled in the widely played sport of horseshoe pitching, which has 15 million competitive participants in the U.S. and Canada (and many others in more than two dozen countries).

Brown has proven to be one of the top pitchers in the state, country and world. She is a 24-time Vermont champion (the most by a woman), who has also claimed nine New England titles (second-most all-time), and posted 10 top-ten finishes in world competitions, including winning the 2015 International Horseshoe Pitching Competition.

That 2015 breakthrough was part of a string of Brown finishes within the top-four in the world in six straight years. She was the International runner up twice (2012 and 2014), finished third twice (2010 and 2013) and fourth once (2011). She is ranked 19th in the world in won-loss percentage.

Brown, who picked up the low-key sport in 1980 by watching her husband, Mike, has been honored with many top national, regional and state awards.

Just a few of them include induction into three Halls of Fame for horseshoes: the National Horseshoe Pitchers Association (2022), the New England Hall (2003) and Vermont Hall (1994). The national hall also honored Brown in 2015 with its Achievement Award for promoting the sport, while she was honored in New England (2004) and Vermont (2003) with awards for her dedication to the sport.

Brown has also been instrumental in the development of the successful Sodbusters Horseshoe Pitching Club in Addison County and has coached or mentored many junior players throughout the years.

Brown has also coached/mentored as many as 16 young players at a time, including two Vermont teens that went on to win World titles for boys (2004) and girls (2012). Her seven-year-old granddaughter won a state title in 2020 making them the first Grandmother/Granddaughter Vermont state champions.

Brown also was president (2011-2022) of the Sodbusters Horseshoe Pitching Club when she helped organize and build a new state-of-the-art home facility that is considered the best in New England

at the Bristol Recreation Field. Brown has also for more than 40 years kept the scorebook for the varsity and JV basketball games at Mount Abraham Union High.

Brown’s full bio is available at [www.vermontsportshall.com/2025brown.html](http://www.vermontsportshall.com/2025brown.html).

## OTHER HALL OF FAMERS

A list of the other inductees follows. Read complete bios online at [www.vermontsportshall.com/2025class.html](http://www.vermontsportshall.com/2025class.html).

• **Kyle Dezotell, Derby, soccer and Nordic skiing:** A record-setting high school and college soccer scorer, Dezotell was also an excellent Nordic skier and a successful NCAA Division III men’s soccer coach.

• **Nini Wuensch Anger, Colchester/St. Albans, gymnastics:** A three-time high school gymnastics champion, Anger went to compete at the NCAA D-I level and became a longtime coach and official of the sport in the state. A 1977 graduate of Colchester High, she went on to compete at D-I Southern Illinois and in the 1978 AIAW National Championships.

• **Lou DiMasi III, Burlington.** The state’s top high school hockey player in 1999, DiMasi went on earn All-American honors Norwich and then play five seasons of professional hockey. He has coached youth and high school teams.

• **Carlie Geer, West Fairlee/South Burlington, rowing:** A 1980 graduate of Dartmouth, where she was an outstanding rower, Geer was a two-time Olympian and earned a silver medal in Los Angeles in 1984. Gear was the first Vermont woman to medal in the Summer Olympics.

• **Jim Holland, Norwich:** A six-time national champion ski jumper, Jim Holland competed in the 1992 and 1994 Winter Olympics.

• **Bill Looker, Rutland,** was one of the state’s top football players and sprinter at Rutland High and UVM. He won five individual outdoor state sprint titles in 1970 and 1971 and anchored winning relay teams. A standout UVM receiver, he was named aa 1974 All-New England and All-Yankee Conference all-star.

• **Tony Orciari, Burke Hollow:** A top basketball guard, Orciari scored more than 1,700 points at St. Johnsbury Academy (1,722) and at UVM (1,743). He led the Hilltoppers to three trips to the D-I final four, winning the 1997 title.

• **Frank Pecora, Northfield:** A baseball coach in the state for nearly

five decades at Northfield High and at Norwich University, Pecora won 15 high school titles.

• **Mike Rochford, South Burlington.** A football, basketball and baseball standout at South Burlington High in early ’80s, Rochford is the only Vermont high schooler to be selected in the Major League draft and reach the major leagues (Red Sox). He pitched SB to the 1981 D-1 title and scored 1,026 career points in hoops.

• **Jack Healey, Rutland, The Mal Boright Media Inductee.** A Vermont broadcast veteran for more than 50 years, Healey has been named Vermont Sportscaster of the

Year 20 times.

• **Leo Papineau, Swanton, St. Albans and Richford.** Athlete-coach-administrator. A standout ice hockey, football and tennis player at St. Michael’s College in the 1920s, Papineau went on to compile a coaching record of 670-216-9 in five sports over 27 years at three Franklin County high schools.

Ticket information for the 2025 dinner will be available soon on at [www.vermontsportshall.com](http://www.vermontsportshall.com). Proceeds from the event go to Prevent Child Abuse Vermont.

*Editor’s note: This story is courtesy of Vermont Sports Hall of Fame.*

## ACT 250 NOTICE MINOR APPLICATION #400008-7A 10 V.S.A. §§ 6000 - 6111

Pike Industries, Inc. has filed application #400008-7A for a project generally described as amendment of existing permit approvals to allow for nighttime operational hours of the previously approved Hot Mix Asphalt Plant on an ongoing, as-needed basis. Nighttime operations will be conducted at the Hot Mix Asphalt Plant only, with no physical or operational changes to existing quarry operations, including crushing, hauling, and blasting, proposed or authorized. Nighttime operations of the Hot Mix Asphalt Plan shall be limited as follows:

- (1) between May 1st-October 31st, annually;
- (2) hours of operation will be limited to Sunday-Friday between 6:00PM-4:00AM, with no nighttime operations to occur on Saturday;
- (3) fifteen total round truck trips per hour and one-hundred total round truck trips each night;
- (4) all abutting landowners shall be notified prior to commencement of nighttime operations; and
- (5) the use of Jake Brakes shall be limited in accordance with Town of New Haven approvals.

The project is located at 326 Campground Road in New Haven, Vermont. The application may be viewed on the Land Use Review Board’s Act 250 Database (<https://anrweb.vt.gov/ANR/Act250/default.aspx>) by entering the project number “400008-7A.”

**No hearing will be held, and a permit may be issued unless, on or before Wednesday, February 26th, 2025, at 4:30pm** a party notifies the District 9 Commission in writing of an issue requiring a hearing, or the Commission sets the matter for a hearing on its own motion. Any person as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6085(c)(1) may request a hearing. Any hearing request must be in writing, must state the criteria or sub-criteria at issue, why a hearing is required, and what additional evidence will be presented at the hearing. Any hearing request by an adjoining property owner or other person eligible for party status under 10 V.S.A. § 6085(c)(1)(E) must include a petition for party status under the Act 250 Rules. To request party status and a hearing, fill out the Party Status Petition Form on the Board’s website: <https://act250.vermont.gov/documents/party-status-petition-form>, and email it to the District 9 Office at: [Act250.Essex@vermont.gov](mailto:Act250.Essex@vermont.gov). Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law may not be prepared unless the Commission holds a public hearing.

For more information contact the District 9 Coordinator listed below.  
Josh Donabedian  
[Joshua.Donabedian@vermont.gov](mailto:Joshua.Donabedian@vermont.gov)  
111 West Street  
Essex Junction, VT 05452

## WARNING TOWN OF PANTON ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATIONAL MEETING MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2025 VOTING TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025

The legal voters of the Town of Panton are hereby notified and warned to meet on **Monday, March 3, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.** to discuss and transact business and to vote on **Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at the Panton Town Hall, second floor.** The polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for voting by Australian ballot.

### ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ARTICLES

ARTICLE 1: To hear the reports of the Town Officers.

**Articles 2 – 6 are for discussion only on Monday night. VOTE TO BE TAKEN BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT ON TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025, BETWEEN 7:00 A.M. AND 7:00 P.M. AT PANTON TOWN HALL, SECOND FLOOR:**

ARTICLE 2: To elect the following officers by Australian Ballot:

Moderator (1 year term)  
Selectboard Member (3-year term)  
Constable (1-year term)  
Dog Warden (1-year term)  
Vergennes-Panton Water District Representative (3-year term)  
Vergennes-Panton Water District Representative  
(2 years-Filling remainder of 2 years term)

ARTICLE 3: Shall the voters adopt the proposed Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026) General Fund Operating Budget in the amount of \$1,119,954 of which \$955,898 shall be raised by taxes and \$164,056 by non-tax revenue, excluding any other amounts authorized by the voters?

**NOTE: Total expenditures will be increased by any separate articles voted independently.**

ARTICLE 4: Shall the voters appropriate the following sums which shall be raised by taxes, to be placed in the Town Reserve Fund accounts as noted:

Emergency Fund	\$2,400
Reappraisal Fund	\$2,000
Total	\$4,400

ARTICLE 5: Shall the voters appropriate \$13,451 of Town Funds to the following organizations in the amounts listed?

Organization	Amount
Adams-Kent Cemetery Association	\$2,500.00
Addison County Court Diversion	\$210.00
Addison County Home Health Hospice	\$800.00
Addison County Parent Child Center	\$800.00
Addison County Readers	\$250.00
Agewell (CV Agency on Aging)	\$650.00
Boys and Girls Club of Vergennes	\$1000.00
Charter House	\$500.00
Counseling Service of Addison	\$850.00
Elderly Services	\$50.00
Green Up Vermont	\$500.00
Homeward Bound	\$500.00
HOPE	\$500.00
John Graham Shelter	\$450.00
Open Door Clinic	\$500.00
RSVP	\$350.00
Tri-Valley Transit	\$691.00
Turning Point Center	\$1000.00
Vermont Family Network	\$250.00
WomenSafe	\$600.00

ARTICLE 6: Shall the Town of Panton, pursuant to 17 V.S.A. Section 2650(b) increase the Board of Selectpersons from three (3) to five (5) members, with the terms of the new members to be two (2) years.

ARTICLE 7: To transact any other non-binding business.

Dated at Panton, County of Addison, and State of Vermont, this 31st day of January 2025.

Howard Hall, Selectboard Chair  
Teresa Boucher, Selectboard Vice-Chair  
Zachary Weaver, Selectboard Member  
Kyle Rowe, Town Clerk & Treasurer

# Public Notices

can be found in this  
***ADDISON INDEPENDENT*** on **Pages 5B, 11B and 12B.**

## ADDISON NORTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT NOTICE TO ALL STUDENTS IN GRADES 8-11 PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL CHOICE

Vergennes Union Middle and High School, along with all other Vermont public high schools, participates in a statewide system of public high school choice. Under this system, students from VUHS may apply to transfer to any other public high school in the state. For the 2025-2026 school year, the maximum number of students eligible to transfer is limited to fifteen (15). The actual number will depend on the number of students selected in prior years to continue their enrollment at other area high schools.

To apply to participate in the program for the 2025-2026 school year (grades 9-12):

- Complete an application available from the VUMHS School Counseling Office
- All applications must be signed by a parent or guardian;
- File the application with the School Counseling Office on or before **February 28, 2025.** Applications received after February 28<sup>n</sup> will not be accepted.

Notification of decisions to all students who have applied to participate will be provided no later than **April 1, 2025.**

Additional school choice information, including a timeline, is available from the School Counseling Office.

A student’s enrollment application may be denied by another receiving school if the student has been expelled or received an extended suspension for violation of Vergennes Union High School’s alcohol, substance abuse, or weapons-in-schools policies during the year prior to enrollment in that regional partnership school. Upon enrollment in the receiving school, students are subject to the disciplinary policies and procedures of the receiving school. If selected to attend another high school in the regional partnership, students shall be guaranteed enrollment in that receiving school until graduation as long as they remain residents of the Addison Northwest School District and are not subject to expulsion as a result of the receiving school’s policy and federal and state law.

## WARNING ADDISON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING FEBRUARY 25, 2025

**Member Districts are Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham, Weybridge**

The legal voters of the Addison Central School District are hereby warned to meet at the Middlebury Union High School in Middlebury, Vermont on Tuesday, February 25, 2025 at 7:00 PM, to transact the following business:

ARTICLE 1: To elect the following officers:

a) A Moderator b) A Treasurer c) A Clerk

ARTICLE 2: To hear and act upon the reports of the school district officers.

ARTICLE 3: To see if the voters of the Addison Central School District will vote to authorize its Board of Directors, under 16 VSA 562 (9), to borrow money by issuance of bonds or notes not in excess of anticipated revenue for the school year.

ARTICLE 4: To do any other business proper to come before said meeting.

## PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING FEBRUARY 25, 2025

The legal voters of the Addison Central School District are hereby warned to meet at the Middlebury Union High School in Middlebury, Vermont on Tuesday, February 25, 2025 at 7:00 PM, for a Public Information meeting to discuss Australian Ballot articles warned for vote on Tuesday, March 4, 2025. Hearing will take place immediately following adjournment of the Annual Meeting of said Addison Central School District.

Mary Gill, Clerk  
Addison Central School District

Barbara Wilson, Chair  
Addison Central School District

**The Addison Central School District Annual Report will be available in the following manner: <https://www.acsdvt.org/district-link/fy26budget> or call 802-382-1274 to request a copy.**

## \*\*\*\*\* TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM 116 – LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM TOWN OFFICES – 77 MAIN STREET Tuesday, February 11, 2025 - 7:00 P.M.

**Also available via Zoom:**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86363588618>  
By Phone: +1 646-558-8656 (not toll-free)  
Webinar ID: 863 6358 8618

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<br>2. *Approval of Agenda<br>3. *Approval of Consent Agenda<br>3a. *Approval of the Minutes of the January 28, 2025 Regular Selectboard Meeting<br>3b. *Acceptance of Selectboard Subcommittee Meeting Minutes<br>3c. *Approval of Applications - Renewal of State Licenses/Permits<br>3d. Consent Agenda Placeholder<br>3e. Consent Agenda Placeholder<br>3f. Consent Agenda Placeholder<br>3g. Town Manager’s Report |
| 7:05 | 4. **Citizen Comments (Opportunity to raise or address issues not otherwise included on this agenda)  |
| 7:10 | 5. **Presentation - Ilsley Library/ReArch - Library Construction - Parking Impact   |
| 7:25 | 6. **Citizen Agenda Request - Vanessa/Rick Buck, Mr. Ups - Parking Impact & Library Construction  |
| 7:35 | 7. *Green Mountain Power - Library Construction & Requested Utility Easement  |
| 7:40 | 8. *Appointment of Downtown Improvement District Commission Members - Two Nominees  |
| 7:45 | 9. **Citizen Agenda Request - Ed Kemon - Geoengineering Concerns  |
| 7:55 | 10. *Town Encampment Policy - Policy Review Committee - Recommendation to Selectboard   |
| 8:10 | 11. *Town Public Space - Honorary Plaque in Town Green - Selectboard Review   |
| 8:20 | 12. *Public Assemblage Permit Request - Middlebury Summer Festival-On-The-Green   |
| 8:30 | 13. *Ethics Procedure Ordinance - State of Vermont Act 171 Requirements   |
| 8:40 | 14. **Citizen Agenda Request - Turning Point Center of Addison County - Update on Installation of Public Health Vending Machines  |
| 8:50 | 15. *Approval of Check Warrants   |
| 8:55 | 16. **Board Member Concerns   |
| 9:00 | 17. Executive Session - Not Anticipated<br>18. Action on Matters Discussed in Executive Session   |
| 9:05 | 19. *Adjourn  |
|      | *Possible Decision **Discussion   |

## ADDISON COUNTY

# School News


Four local students have been named to the dean’s list at Norwich University for the fall 2024 semester. They include **Anna Kerr** of Brandon, **Alexis Bartlett** and **Kohar Teague** of Middlebury, and **Rhode Miguel** of Vergennes. Full-time undergraduate students who earned a semester grade point average of at least 3.40 are awarded dean’s list honors.

Two other students, **April Lajeunesse** of Bristol and **Madison Ask** of New Haven were recognized on the president’s list, having earned a semester grade point average of 4.0.

Three local students have been named to the fall 2024 dean’s list at Endicott College in Beverly, Mass. They include: **Isabella Shea**, daughter of Erin and Thomas Shea of Bristol, a Psychology major; **Christopher White** of Middlebury, a Business Management major; and **Latham Lomax**, son of Jennifer Hedling of Starksboro, an Exercise Science major.

**Ella Hameline** of Vergennes was named to the College of Charleston fall 2024 dean’s list. Hameline is majoring in Biology.

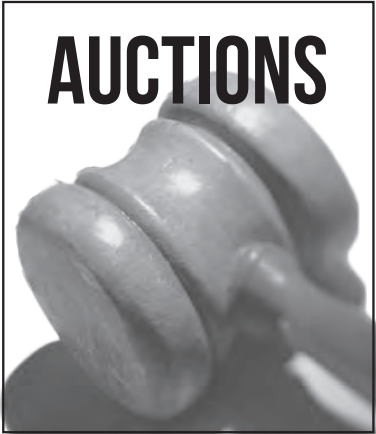
## Contact Your U.S. Senators

 **Sen. Bernie Sanders**  
**1-800-339-9834**  
SRC-2 United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
[www.sanders.senate.gov](http://www.sanders.senate.gov)

 **Sen. Peter Welch**  
**1-800-642-3193**  
124 Russell Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
<https://www.welch.senate.gov/email-peter/>

## Contact Your U.S. Congressman

 **Rep. Becca Balint**  
**1-888-293-9874**  
1510 Longworth House  
Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-4115  
[BalintPress@mail.house.gov](mailto:BalintPress@mail.house.gov)



## MARKET REPORT ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT  
Sales for 1/30/25 & 2/3/25

			COST
BEEF	LBS.	/LB	\$
Westminster	1690	1.53	\$2585.70
D. Whalley	1685	1.50	\$2527.50
Vanderway LP	1945	1.47	\$2859.15
Savello	1625	1.44	\$2340.00
Correia	1750	1.40	\$2450.00

			COST
CALVES	LBS.	/LB	\$
Barnes Bros.	101	8.60	\$868.60
Vanderway LP	87	8.60	\$748.20
Conants	100	8.20	\$820.00
UVM Cream	94	8.20	\$770.80
Woodnotch	86	6.00 (H)	\$516.00
L. Garvey	94	6.00 (H)	\$564.00

**Total Beef - 165    Total Calves - 197**  
We value our faithful customers.  
**Sales at 3 pm - Mon. & Thurs.**  
call 1-802-388-2661

Ferrisburgh

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

NEWS

FERRISBURGH — Rokeby will host Julie Anderson, multi-Emmy and Peabody award winner and Academy-nominated Film executive for non-fiction documentaries, to talk about her personal experiences in researching, creating, and producing her work. Her experience includes overseeing the development and production of work that has appeared on HBO, AppleTV, ESPN, PBS, and CNN, among others. This virtual event will be held on Monday, Feb. 10, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. The event is free, but registration is required. For more information visit [www.rokeby.org](http://www.rokeby.org).

Rokeby Museum’s series of Winter Book Discussions continues Tuesday, February 18 will be the graphic narrative of “The Life of Frederick Douglass” by David Walker, Damon Smyth, and Marissa Louise. March 18th’s book discussion will be on “Sleeping with the Ancestors” authored by Joseph McGill, Jr. and Herb Frazier. There is no charge and the format is virtual Registration in advance is required, however attendance at all three discussions is not required to register. Visit [www.ropkeby.org](http://www.ropkeby.org) for more information on the full book discussion series.

Rokeby is seeking volunteers to be trained as tour guides for the 2025 season (May 10-Oct. 12.) Guides will introduce small groups of visitors to the historic house and farm where four generations of the Robinsons made their home. Rokeby Museum is on the National Historic Register as a documented stop on the Underground Railroad. Guiding is a rewarding way to tell this important history to people from around the U.S. and the world. Tours are offered twice daily, at 11:00 and 1:30, six days a week (except Tuesday.) Contact [jgorman@rokeby.org](mailto:jgorman@rokeby.org) to learn more.

Fight Cabin Fever with a winter visit to Rokeby. Learn about the Underground Railroad and the Robinson Family on the free museum day of Saturday, February

15. Also, Rokeby’s trails are open for walking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing – a map is available at [www.rokeby.org](http://www.rokeby.org)

Lake Champlain Maritime Museum is now taking registrations for summer camps and expeditions. Day camps are available for children ages 7-14 and there are openings for the teen expeditions and kayak building. These camps offer rowing, fishing, history and archeology, boat building and many more experiences for children and youth. Some of the camps are already filling up so visit [www.lamm.org](http://www.lamm.org) soon to register.

The Ferrisburgh Skate Rink is now open and will be available for skating as long as the weather cooperates. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped flood the rink and prepare the ice. Be aware that the wooden boards of past years for hockey playing are not in place. Loaner skates will be made available at the shed. For more information on ice conditions and rink availability, look for posts on Front Porch Forum or email to [Martha Davis at marthand@gmavt.net](mailto:Martha Davis at marthand@gmavt.net).

Bixby Library invites us all to the viewing of the first movie in the “Lord of the Rings” series and feast on recipes from the world of Middle-Earth. This after-hours adventure begins at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 21, in the cozy armchairs of the Bixby Library’s Community Room. From Lembas bread to honey cakes and the Prancing Pony’s potato and garlic soup, head to [rhubarbandlavender.com/themes/lord-of-the-rings/](http://rhubarbandlavender.com/themes/lord-of-the-rings/) or visit the library and look through our “Recipes from the World of Tolkien” cookbook to find recipes that would delight even the heartiest of hobbits. Send word to [cedar.winslow@bixbylibrary.org](mailto:cedar.winslow@bixbylibrary.org) to join the fellowship and let us know what dish you’ll bring to the table. Themed dishes are encouraged, but not required to join in the merriment.

The Bixby will hold another (See Ferrisburgh, Page 12B)



feb 6

THURSDAY

**Read to a Therapy Dog, Charlie Girl in Starksboro.** Thursday, Feb. 6, 3:30 p.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Come read with Therapy Dog Charlie Girl and with Ms. Myriah, who is Robinson Elementary School’s kindergarten teacher. **“Exploring Climate Change in Vermont through the Lenses of Vulnerability and Inclusion” in Salisbury.** Thursday, Feb. 6, 7 p.m., Salisbury Meeting House, 853 Maple St. Vermont State Climatologist Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux will discuss her research and teaching about climate change concepts and response strategies, emphasizing human and geographic vulnerabilities. Free and open to the public.

feb 8

SATURDAY

**Crafts and cocoa Valentine’s Day edition in Starksboro.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Come to the library and create a special Valentine’s craft while enjoying some yummy hot cocoa. **“The Dalrymple Brothers of Vergennes” in Ferrisburgh.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 11 a.m., Cross Life Church, 1759 Route 7. Vergennes Historian Susan Ferland will give a talk about the Dalrymple Brothers, who operated a dry goods stores in Vergennes and owned a summer camp on Kimball Dock Road. Ferland will draw from their personal diaries. **Bingo in Vergennes.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 5 p.m., St Peter’s Parish Hall, 85 S. Maple St. Doors open at 5 p.m. and games start at 6 p.m. A family friendly event. All cash prizes, 50/50 raffle. Refreshments sold. Sponsored by the St. Peter’s Historic Preservation Committee to benefit the ongoing restoration efforts for the bell tower and the church. **Contra Dance in Cornwall.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 7-9:30 p.m., Cornwall Town Hall, Route 30. Peter Stix will be calling with live music performed by Red Dog Riley. Beginners welcome! All dances will be taught. \$5 to \$10 or pay what you can.

feb 9

SUNDAY

**Charity fundraising breakfast in Bristol.** Sunday, Feb. 9, 7:30-10 a.m., Libanus Lodge, corner of North and Elm streets. Menu includes sausage gravy with homemade biscuits, scrambled eggs (or over easy if you ask us to flip them), bacon, sausage patties, sausage links, home fries, pancakes, blueberry pancakes, French toast, all with Vermont maple syrup and butter, assorted juices and apple bread pudding. Coffee from Vermont Coffee Company. Cost \$9 adults/ and children under 12 \$5. All profits are donated to a person or group in need within the Five Town Area. **Breakfast buffet in Vergennes.** Sunday, Feb. 9, 8-10 a.m., St. Peter’s Parish Hall. 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. \$13 adults. \$8 children 8 to 12 years. No cap/cost on family. Sponsor: Vergennes Council Knights of Columbus.

feb 10

MONDAY

**Legislative breakfast in Vergennes.** Monday, Feb. 10, 7-8:45 a.m., St. Peter’s Parish Hall, 85 S. Maple St. Join Addison County Farm Bureau for a meal with your neighbors, a chance to connect with your local legislators, and an opportunity to learn more about the ongoing topics in Montpelier. Donation for a breakfast; RSVP to Bill Scott at [wjscottjr@comcast.net](mailto:wjscottjr@comcast.net) so they can get a headcount for food. **American Red Cross blood donation in Brandon.** Monday, Feb. 10, noon-4:30 p.m., Brandon American Legion, 550 Franklin St. Give blood or platelets now to help protect the blood supply from the ongoing impact of severe winter weather and wildfires. Donors of all blood types — particularly type O negative blood donors and those giving platelets — are needed. Book a time by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). **Virtual presentation by documentary-maker Julie Anderson.** Monday, Feb. 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m., ZOOM. Rokeby Museum hosts Julie Anderson, multi-Emmy and Peabody award winner and Academy-Award-nominated film executive for non-fiction documentaries. Anderson will talk about her personal experiences in researching, creating, and producing her work. **Cribbage in Bristol.** Monday, Feb. 10, 7 p.m., Libanus Lodge, corner of North and Elm St. No charge and all are welcome.

feb 11

TUESDAY

**Family sing-along with Liz in Starksboro.** Tuesday, Feb. 11, 10:30 a.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Liz Buchanan sings and plays imaginative, high-energy tunes for kids and their families. Join for this monthly event. Everyone welcome. No registration required.

feb 12

WEDNESDAY

**Mad Freedom Advocates community gathering in Middlebury.** Wednesday, Feb. 12, 4 p.m., Interlude, 99 Maple St. #16, Marble Works. This public meeting provides a space to build connections, exchange ideas and meet others in the mad community. Open to all — pizza provided.

feb 13

THURSDAY

**American Red Cross blood donation in Middlebury.** Thursday, Feb. 13, noon-4:30 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. Give blood or platelets now to help protect the blood supply from the ongoing impact



The buzz on mosquitos

Biologist Craig Zondag will give the talk, “Mosquitos: The Good and the Bad” in Salisbury on Thursday, Feb. 13, at 7 p.m., Salisbury Meeting House, 853 Maple St., as part of the Salisbury Conservation Commission’s Thursday Presentation Series.

Photo courtesy of Otter Creek Audubon Society

of severe winter weather and wildfires. Donors of all blood types — particularly type O negative blood donors and those giving platelets — are needed. Book a time by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

**Valentine’s Day after school party in Starksboro.** Thursday, Feb. 13, 3:15 p.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Celebrate Valentine’s Day early with afterschool cookie decorating, snacks, drinks and crafts.

**No Man’s Land Film Festival in Middlebury.** Thursday, Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m., Dana Auditorium, 356 College St. As the premier all-women and genderqueer adventure film festival, No Man’s Land Film Festival has celebrated the full scope of athletes and adventurers by un-defining femininity in adventure, sport, conservation, and film since 2015. Admission is free. This event is hosted by Middlebury Outdoor Programs and will open its doors at 6:30 p.m. The event will kick off with raffles benefiting Middlebury Outdoor Programs, followed by a 7 p.m. showtime.

**“Mosquitos: The Good and the Bad” in Salisbury.** Thursday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m., Salisbury Meeting House, 853 Maple St. Craig Zondag, the field coordinator and biologist for the Lemon Fair Insect Control District will talk about mosquito biology, measures used to monitor and control them, and what makes a good year for them and a bad year for us. Q&A following presentation. Part of the Salisbury Conservation Commission’s Thursday Presentation Series. Free and open to the public.

feb 14

FRIDAY

**Lasagna dinner and basket raffle in Shoreham.** Friday, Feb. 14, 5-7 p.m., Shoreham Congregational Church, Scholl Rd. Enjoy fellowship with your friends as you feast on lasagna (either meat or vegetarian), tossed salad, garlic bread, and beverages, with ice cream and Vermont strawberries for dessert. \$12 for adults, \$6 for children.

feb 15

SATURDAY

**Cocoa and crafts in Starksboro.** Saturday, Feb. 15, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Bring the kids for cocoa and crafts. **Read to a therapy dog, Charlie Girl in Starksboro.** Saturday, Feb. 15, 10:30 a.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Come read with Therapy Dog Charlie Girl and Ms. Myriah, Robinson Elementary School kindergarten teacher. **Mel and Friends in Middlebury.** 3-6 p.m., VFW, 530 Exchange St. Come hear bluegrass with a twist, played by a four-piece band. Kitchen open from 3-5 p.m. Free and open to the public. Any proceeds benefit veterans programs. **Valentine’s dance in Vergennes.** Saturday, Feb. 15, 6 p.m., American Legion Post 14, Armory Lane. Come dance the night away to the music of The Hitmen. Cash Bar. Light Snacks. Open to the public. Tickets \$15, sold at the door.

feb 16

SUNDAY

**All-you-can-eat pancake breakfast in Addison.** Sunday, Feb. 16, 7-11 a.m., Addison Fire Station, jct. Routes 17 & 22A. Menu includes plain and blueberry pancakes, locally made maple syrup, sausage, bacon, home fries, coffee, hot chocolate and orange juice. \$10 adults/\$7 kids under 12. Benefit of the Addison Volunteer Fire Department. Funds will be used to purchase equipment. More info at 802-759-2237. **“Four Hebrew Prophets: Hosea” lecture in Middlebury.** Sunday, Feb. 16, noon, St. Stephen’s Church, 3 Main St. In the first lecture in a four-part series on four biblical books, Shalom Goldman, Professor of Religion at Middlebury College, will explore the historical and cultural context of these Old Testament figures and delve into the timeless relevance of their messages. Free and open to the public. Come early for refreshments. Series continues Feb. 23, March 16, and March 23

feb 17

MONDAY

**Bristol Elementary School 6th grade fundraiser in Bristol.** Monday, Feb. 17, 4-7 p.m., Cubbers Pizza, Main St. In support of the Bristol 6th grade end of the year promotion and class trip fundraising efforts, Cubbers will sell 100 pizzas only. Phones will open at 3 p.m. for pre-ordering. Call 802-453-2400 to order your pizza. **“Red Scare in the Green Mountains” presentation in Monkton.** Monday, Feb. 17, 7 p.m., Monkton Town Hall, 92 Monkton Ridge. What happened in Vermont when the anti-Communist fear known as the “Red Scare” swept the country? Quite a bit, as it turns out. Rick Winston, author of the recently published “Red Scare in the Green Mountains: Vermont in the McCarthy Era,” explores some forgotten history as we see how a small, rural “rock-ribbed Republican” state with a historically libertarian streak handled the hysteria of the time.

feb 18

TUESDAY

**“The Life of Frederick Douglass” virtual book discussion.** Tuesday, Feb. 18, 6-7 p.m., ZOOM. The Rokeby Winter book discussion series continues with this graphic novel by David Walker, Damon Smyth and Marissa Louise. Registration and ZOOM link at [www.ropkeby.org](http://www.ropkeby.org).

feb 19

WEDNESDAY

**Festival on the Green Planning Meeting in Middlebury.** Wednesday, Feb. 19, 6:30 p.m., St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, 3 Main St. We need your help to ensure this year’s Festival on the Green, to be held July 13-19, is a resounding success. Meet fellow community members, current volunteers, and Festival organizers. Learn how you can get involved. More information email [info@festivalonthegreen.org](mailto:info@festivalonthegreen.org). Festival officers, board members and volunteers will be there to warmly welcome you.

**Armchair Naturalist talk in New Haven.** Wednesday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m., New Haven Town Offices, 78 North St. In the first talk in the New Haven Conservation Commission winter speaker series, Alexis Mychajliw, assistant professor of Biology and Environmental Studies at Middlebury College, along with her student assistant, Max Zeltsar, will present camera tracking methodology and data collection from their participation in the national survey with Snapshot USA, Bristol Conservation Commission and Middlebury Area Land Trust.

feb 22

SATURDAY

**Cocoa and crafts in Starksboro.** Saturday, Feb. 22, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Bring the kids for cocoa and crafts.

feb 23

SUNDAY

**“Four Hebrew Prophets: Joel” lecture in Middlebury.** Sunday, Feb. 23, noon, St. Stephen’s Church, 3 Main St. In the second lecture in a four-part series on four biblical books, Shalom Goldman, Professor of Religion at Middlebury College, will explore the historical and cultural context of these Old Testament figures and delve into the timeless relevance of their messages. Free and open to the public. Come early for refreshments. Series continues March 16, and March 23.

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR

CALENDAR  
ONLINE

[addisonindependent.com](http://addisonindependent.com)





**Addison County  
Parent/Child Center**  
[info@addisoncountypcc.org](mailto:info@addisoncountypcc.org) • [addisoncountypcc.org](http://addisoncountypcc.org)  
388-3171

- Community Playgroups
- Parent Education Classes
- Home Visits
- Pregnancy Prevention Programs
- Parent Training & Child Center

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Questions: [students@nenpa.com](mailto:students@nenpa.com)  
Deadline to apply March 14, 2025

**Reader Comments**

**Here’s what one reader has to say about us!**

**A subscriber from N. Ferrisburgh writes:**

**“Good paper — keep it going!”**

Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.



**ADDISON COUNTY  
INDEPENDENT**



## Learn about the Dalrymple Bros. on Feb. 8

FERRISBURGH — Vergennes Historian Susan Ferland will be giving a talk about the Dalrymple Brothers of Vergennes on Saturday, Feb. 8, at 11 a.m., at the Cross Life Church, 1759 Route 7 in Ferrisburgh.

Ferland has transcribed an 1871

diary of theirs and will speak about what she's learned.

The Dalrymple brothers were born in Ferrisburgh in the middle of the 1800's and went on to operate dry goods stores in Vergennes. One store was on Water Street and the other was on Main Street. In

addition, the Dalrymples owned a summer camp on Kimball Dock Road, which was sold out of the family for the first time a few years ago.

The Seth Warner — Rhoda Farrand Chapter of the DAR is hosting the program.

## ACT NOW funding pool open for farmers

VERMONT — The Vermont Natural Resource Conservation Service just opened an ACT NOW fund pool, which provides payments to farmers for common conservation and planning activities.

Select EQIP conservation practices on cropland, such as cover crop, no till, reduced till and nutrient management, as well as many planning activities such as forest management plans and comprehensive nutrient management plans are eligible for this cycle of ACT NOW funding.

ACT NOW allows NRCS to pre-approve a ranked EQIP application, if that application meets or exceeds the state determined minimum threshold ranking score. This means there could be less waiting time from when farms submit an application to signing a potential contract.

ACT NOW fund pools are separate from other NRCS fund pools. The funds are available on a first come, first served basis. Participants applying need to be registered and eligible with the

Farm Service Agency.

FY2025 EQIP contracts will not be subject to the payment limitations identified in the 2018 Farm Bill; however, the regulatory contract limits still apply. If you have maxed out on 2018 Farm Bill payment limitation, this is an exciting opportunity to receive funding.

Contact your local NRCS Center if you would like to apply for the ACT NOW fund pool at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/find-a-service-center](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/find-a-service-center).



**IN THEIR FIRST** year as a Lego robotics team, The ELP Mad Catters have won a berth in Vermont's final competition this month. Pictured are, back row, Assistant Coach Sam Schoendorf, left, Assistant Coach Caleb Elder, and Head Coach Jodi Pierce; front row, Toby Hamilton, left, Ezra Hamilton, Draco Lewis, Alex Rousseau, Will Rousseau, Jordyn Ringey and Caden Smith.

Photo courtesy of John Amory

## Mad Catters robotics team wins event

BRISTOL — The MAUSD ELP Middle School Robotics team, The Mad Catters, came together in the fall of 2024 under the leadership of Jodi Pierce to compete in the First Lego League robotics competition, a statewide event open to teams of students in 5th-8th grades. This was the group's first year as a team, which included seven students from all four MAUSD elementary schools as well as the Mt. Abe Middle School.

Over 12 weeks team members bonded over different robotics challenges from FLL, starting with building their robot and continuing through adjusting the design, writing a presentation to explain their thinking, coming up with their team name and logo, and working together as a team.

The Mad Catters confidently entered the qualifying competition in Shelburne in early December ready to compete. They went up against 23 other

teams from around the state, many of whom had competed in this event for over a decade. After a full, grueling day of presentations on their design, on-board robotics challenges against other teams, and countless nail-biting moments, the team was awarded the Design Award for the best design at the competition. With this win the Mad Catters continued on to the final state competition in mid-January against nine other teams.

## Scholarships available to area high school seniors

MONTPELIER —The League of Women Voters of Vermont Education Fund is now accepting applications for its Winona Smith Scholarship program. Created in 1998 to honor the legacy of League leader Winona Smith, the scholarship is awarded annually to Vermont high school seniors who embody the characteristics and qualities Smith displayed of civic participation and community service.

Three \$2,000 scholarships

will be awarded to students who demonstrate financial need and scholastic achievement, and who come highly recommended by their teacher.

Applications, due on April 30, must be completed online ([bit.ly/LWVScholarshipDetails](http://bit.ly/LWVScholarshipDetails)). Students need to submit two essays of 300-500 words, one on issues concerning voting rights, and the other on the impact of a recent civic, national, or world event. A letter of recommendation

from a teacher is also required. ([bit.ly/LWVTeacherRec](http://bit.ly/LWVTeacherRec)).

The scholarship can be applied towards continuation of education in an accredited vocational, technical, or trade school and two- or four-year college or university. Scholarship recipients will be announced on June 1.

Questions can be directed to Scholarship Coordinator Audrey Grant, [lwvofvt.edfund@gmail.com](mailto:lwvofvt.edfund@gmail.com).

## Lincoln

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

### NEWS

LINCOLN — The Lincoln Library will be co-hosting a community café and book discussion on Saturday, Feb. 15, from 10 a.m. to noon. Join Vermont Humanities facilitator Rachel Cohen for a discussion of this year's book chosen for the Vermont Reads program: "Gather" by Kenneth M. Cadow. Multiple copies of the book are available at the library to check out. There will be hot drinks and goodies available. Come enjoy a book café. This event is co-hosted by the Starksboro Library and is sponsored by Vermont Humanities.

The 5 Town Friends of the Arts

and the Lincoln Library present the second annual Winter-Into-Spring Library Concert Series, featuring Tim McKenzie, on Thursday, Feb. 20, from 7:30-8:30 p.m. Tim hails from Burlington and is a founding member of Pine Island, Vermont's premier bluegrass/swing band of the 70's. Tim has shared the stage or billing with Emmylou Harris, Vassar Clements, Ricky Skaggs and Doc Watson, as well as many of Vermont's finest. After a long hiatus from the Green Mountain State, he returned several years ago and has embarked on a solo career. Don't miss him! This is a free event and all are welcome. Light refreshments will be available.

The kindergarten class at Lincoln Community School is looking for buttons. If you have a collection you no longer need and are willing to part with, please contact the school or drop them off in the office.

### REMINDER

A children's craft session for Valentine's Day will be held at the library on Wednesday, Feb. 12, from 3-5 p.m. Crafters will be decorating a bag and making valentines.

Until next time ... Don't Be Afraid To Try. Nothing Can Bring You Peace But Yourself. What Feels Like The End Is Often The Beginning.

# STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

## Mount Abraham Union High School

### Hazel Guilmette

Mount Abraham Union High School introduces Hazel Guilmette, our Student of the Week. Hazel lives in Monkton with her parents, older sister, and two dogs. Throughout high school, Hazel has excelled academically, consistently earning high or highest honors every semester. Her favorite subjects are math and science, which she finds both beneficial and challenging, helping to sharpen her critical thinking skills.

In addition to her academic achievements, Hazel is very involved in the school community. She served as the captain of the varsity soccer team in the fall and was awarded the Lake Division Second Team honor during her junior and senior years. Currently, she is a key player on the varsity basketball team, and has participated on a club team. Hazel is also a member of the Eagle Leadership Society, showcasing her commitment to leadership and community involvement.

Outside of school, Hazel works as a counselor at Camp Common Ground in Starksboro and volunteers for the American Legion. Her dedication to service is evident through her participation in various volunteer activities, including the Share the Warmth event and organizing a volleyball fundraiser for the girls' soccer team. In her spare time, Hazel enjoys hiking, playing basketball, reading, paddleboarding and spending time with friends and family.

Reflecting on her experiences, Hazel says, "My word of advice is to focus on what feels right to you. It doesn't matter what other people think of you and it's important to be present by not letting the past weigh you down. A lot of things that I thought were a big deal early in high school, I realize now, aren't really that deep. I value stepping outside your comfort zone and taking advantage of the many opportunities given to you. It's key to not be afraid, to embrace not knowing everything and to just let things fall into place."

Looking ahead, Hazel plans to attend college and pursue a degree in Occupational Therapy. The Mount Abraham community wishes her all the best in her future endeavors.



Hazel Guilmette  
MAUHS

## Otter Valley Union High School

### Ivy Manchester

Otter Valley Union High School's latest Student of the Week is Ivy Manchester. Ivy lives with her parents, two brothers, her dog and her cat. She says it's a pretty chaotic house, but she loves it.

For three years, Ivy has participated in Otter Valley's Moosalamoo Program, an ecological course with a curriculum motivated by the natural world and the local community, and she says it's her favorite class. Through Moosalamoo, Ivy is academically challenged and gets to pair her studies with outdoor-based learning and activities. She says the program has changed her life in ways she never imagined. This year she is teacher Josh Hardt's assistant.

Ivy is a member of Otter Valley's rock-climbing team, which she joined last year. She enjoys being able to improve her climbing skills and to meet other climbers from around the state. She also enjoys hiking, backpacking and art. She loves making art that makes people smile.

Ivy has learned many important life lessons at Otter Valley. She says the most important one has been learning how to take opportunities and risks. As a small child Ivy was very nervous and shy, but school has taught her to take any opportunity that has come her way, and it has led to doing amazing things.

After high-school, Ivy is considering taking a gap year or two to explore the world with her best friend. Then she plans on returning to school and pursuing a degree in outdoor education. Her ultimate goal is to start her own Moosalamoo-style program.

All of us at Otter Valley wish her the best.



Ivy Manchester  
OVUHS

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Students of the Week from all area high schools are entered into a raffle to win a \$100 gift card to The Vermont Book Shop.

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

Students of the Week are chosen by school teachers and administration.

Best of luck to all Addison County students!

If you are interested in advertising in Student of the Week contact [advertising@addisonindependent.com](mailto:advertising@addisonindependent.com)

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Public Meetings

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Public Meetings

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Public Meetings

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Public Meetings

their rejection of it, without having to accept anyone else's beliefs or having to deny their own. Meetings are held with a high regard for compassion and inclusion without judgment or exception. If you think we can help, please join us on Thursdays at 6pm by contacting [Vergennes-freethinkers@gmail.com](mailto:Vergennes-freethinkers@gmail.com) for Zoom and in-person meeting information.

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Help Wanted

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Help Wanted

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# Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

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For Rent

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For Rent

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Help Wanted

Help Wanted



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INDEPENDENT**

For Rent

**COMMERCIAL/OFFICE SPACE** - 3000 sq ft - Middlebury. Loading dock. Tall ceilings. \$2,500.00 p/ month. 802-558-6092.

For Rent

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

For Rent

**STUDIO APARTMENT** in Brandon Village. All inclusive, no pets. Security required. \$1,000 monthly. 802-247-6829.

Help Wanted

**CORNWALL-UPSTAIRS 2** bedroom apt., all inclusive, washer/dryer hookup, no pets, no smoking. \$1,700 per month. 802-989-2283.

Help Wanted



### Experienced Project Foreman/Lead Carpenter Wanted!

Are you an experienced Project Foreman/Lead Carpenter in the Addison-Chittenden County (VT) area and looking for a new opportunity to showcase your skills?

Our leading construction company is seeking a talented foreman to join our dynamic team. With a reputation for excellence and a commitment to quality, we offer a rewarding work environment where your expertise will be valued.

We offer competitive pay and a comprehensive benefits package. Please send a resume and brief cover letter outlining your experience to [admin@smithmcclain.com](mailto:admin@smithmcclain.com).

**Come build with us!**



## WATER PLANT OPERATOR

Tri Town Water District provides and maintains the drinking water system for the towns of Addison, Bridport, and Shoreham. We currently have a full time Plant Operator position available. Candidates for this position should have basic plumbing and electrical skills. You must also be proficient in high school math and have basic computer skills. This position also performs general maintenance of buildings and property. Employment does require sharing on-call duties and that you have a valid Drivers' License. VT state water operator license-class 4C needs to be obtained within 3 years. Competitive wages and benefits package including Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement, medical and paid time off; starting pay \$18-\$25 per hour depending on experience. **Send resume to: Darwin Pratt, Tri-Town Water District No. 1, P.O. Box 85, Bridport, VT 05734 or email to: [tritownwater@gmavt.net](mailto:tritownwater@gmavt.net).**

## HAY FOR SALE

\$4 First Cut. \$5 Second Cut. 802-453-5626


**HAY FOR SALE** Over 1500 square bales of 1st cut hay for sale. \$4 per bale. Also 300+/- bales of 2nd cut hay on tarped wagons - \$4 per bale. Located at 864 Smead Rd, Salisbury, VT. First come, first serve. Call 802-352-4686.

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

## Wanted

**WANTED: CAST IRON** cook stove with oven. 802-453-7850 before 6pm.

## Help Wanted



## Addison County Parent/Child Center

### Join the Parent/Child Center Team EARLY INTERVENTIONIST

We are seeking an **Early Interventionist** to work with young families as an outreach worker on our highly skilled, creative and energetic team.

You will work in coordination with parents in the home, community, and in our program in Middlebury in order to ensure that children are growing healthy and strong.

Candidates must have a solid understanding of child development, early intervention Part C, family systems, communication skills and flexibility. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in a related field is required.

Please contact **Donna Bailey** [d Bailey@addisoncountypcc.org](mailto:d Bailey@addisoncountypcc.org)

**Email your Public Notices** to [legals@addisonindependent.com](mailto:legals@addisonindependent.com) and Jenna makes sure it gets in the paper.

## TOWN OF BRISTOL PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Bristol Development Review Board will hold the following hearings on February 25, 2025, beginning at 7:00 P.M. The hearings will be held in person at the Town Office, located at 1 South Street. The hearings will also be available via Zoom and login information is below.

Permit #24-402: **Calihan Butler** of South 116 Road (Parcel #110141-001) is requesting a preliminary plat review for a 4-lot subdivision subject to Bristol Unified Development Regulations.

Copies of the zoning permit applications and decisions are available for review at the Bristol Town Office during regular business hours.

**Remote Access: via Zoom**  
**<https://zoom.us/j/87551027651>** • Meeting ID: 857 8676 1083 • Passcode: 805823  
**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87551027651?pwd=mJnqmMaORm2lufotvEEBidxO4bjJLJ11>** Phone In: +1 646 931 3860

# Public Notices Index

Public Notices for the following can be found in this **ADDISON INDEPENDENT** on Pages 5B, 11B and 12B.

Act 250 (1)  
Addison (1)  
Addison Central School District (3)  
Addison Northwest School District (3)  
Bristol (1)  
Mt. Abraham Unified School District (1)  
Middlebury (3)  
Monkton (1)  
Panton (1)  
Stewart Construction (1)

## REQUEST FOR BIDS

Stewart Construction located in Essex Junction, Vermont is seeking bids from qualified subcontractors for a fast-paced, multi-family construction project off Seminary Street Extension in the town of Middlebury, Vermont. The scopes of work available for bids include but are not limited to: Sitework, Concrete, Wood Framing, Mechanical/Plumbing, Electrical, Fire Suppression, and Finishes – both interior and exterior. Minority, Women, Small Owned, & Section 3 Businesses are encouraged to respond. Interested subcontractors must not be debarred from receiving State or Federal funding and must be capable of processing certified payroll with Davis-Bacon wages.

Please reach out to [info@stewart-construction.com](mailto:info@stewart-construction.com) for access to Townhome 1 bid documents; bids will be accepted until February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

## TOWN OF MONKTON NOTICE OF VACANCY January 28, 2025

In accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 961(a), the Selectboard of the Town of Monkton hereby gives notice of a continued vacancy on the Selectboard.

The Selectboard, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 963 will make an appointment to fill this vacancy at its meeting on February 11, 2025 at 7:00 pm or at a meeting thereafter until filled. The person appointed will serve until Town Meeting Day (March 4, 2025) unless a special election is called. If you are interested in the position, please indicate your interest by emailing the Selectboard at [Selectboard@monktonvt.com](mailto:Selectboard@monktonvt.com) or advising the Town Administrator at 802-453-3800.

**CITIZENS' RIGHT TO PETITION FOR VOTE:** Titles 17 V.S.A. § 2643 and 24 V.S.A. § 963 grant citizens the right to petition for a vote to replace the Selectboard's appointee at a special town meeting. If a special town meeting is called, the newly elected town officer will remain in office for the balance of the unexpired term. If a special town meeting is not called, the Selectboard's appointee will remain in office until the next annual town meeting.

To exercise this right, citizens must present a petition calling for an election for this office signed by five percent of the legal voters of the Town to the Town Clerk prior to the next annual Town Meeting.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION pertaining to this notice and its contents may be obtained by contacting Marikate Kelley at [mkelley@monktonvt.com](mailto:mkelley@monktonvt.com).

Dated this 30th day of January, 2025.

Marikate Kelley /s/  
Selectboard Vice Chair

## TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Middlebury Development Review Board will hold a public hearing(s) at the Middlebury Municipal Offices, Large Conference Room, 77 Main Street, Middlebury VT on Monday February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, beginning at 7:00 p.m. to consider the following application(s). The hearing will be available to participants via a Zoom video link. The Zoom link will be provided on the meeting agenda posted on the Town's website.

- Application (file #2025-007:016.001-waiver) is a request by Kristin Mitchell for a setback waiver for a proposed single-family dwelling at 140 Birchard Park in Middlebury. The subject parcel was the sole new lot created from a subdivision approved by the DRB on 1/10/24. The applicant commenced construction of this structure without a zoning permit and has stopped work. Because the as-built foundation encroaches into the 10' minimum rear and side setbacks in two locations, the Applicant is requesting two (2) setback waivers in order to obtain an after-the-fact permit and resume construction. Separately, the parcel is subject to a boundary line adjustment between it and a second lot (PID# 007016.000) owned by the Applicant. The subject property is identified as parcel #007016.001 in the Residential-4 Zoning district.

The applications will be heard in the order listed. Plans and additional information may be viewed at the Planning and Zoning Office in the Town Offices or by calling 388-8100, Ext 226. Participation in this public hearing is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal as an "interested person(s)". Interested persons wishing to participate in this hearing may do so by contacting J.R. Christ at 388-8100, Ext 226 or email to [jrchrist@townofmiddlebury.org](mailto:jrchrist@townofmiddlebury.org).

J.R. Christ  
DRB Coordinator, AZA

## TOWN OF ADDISON DRB PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town of Addison Development Review Board will convene a public hearing on Monday, February 24, 2025 at 6:00PM at the former Addison Central School located at VT Rte 22A and VT Rte 17 West, Addison, VT.

- Application (#24-25) Charlene Goodell requesting approval for a 2-lot subdivision of 5. +/- acres from 19.2 acres located on the front South side of lot to be zoned as residential. The property is located on VT Rte 22A and meets the setback requirements. Pending to proceed.
- Application (#24-30) John & Thomas Spencer requesting a 2-lot subdivision of 5.02 +/--acres from an 82.64-acre parcel. The property is located at 3580 VT Rte 22A, Addison, VT. Parcel ID# VA3580.
- Application (# 25-01) Harry Scheuawalf and Elizabeth McGunk requesting a Conditional-Use permit for a Cottage Industry – Retail local craft products and antiques. The property is located in the LDR/A District located on VT Rte 22A, Addison. Parcel ID# VA7718.
- Application (# 25-02) Raymond Dykema requesting a Subdivision/ PUD permit to separate the shop and house he no longer owns. The property is located on Norton Town Road, Addison. Parcel ID# NT0973. Needs to meet frontage requirements.

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,  
Alden Harwood, Chair  
Starr Phillips, Board Secretary  
Daniel Rossignol, Zoning Administrator



Real Estate

Exhibits

Entertainment

Music

Calendar

Feature Interviews

# ARTS+LEISURE

The Addison Independent

February 6, 2025

## NO MAN'S LAND

EXTREME ADVENTURE, REAL REPRESENTATION:  
OUTDOOR FILM FEST LANDS IN MIDDLEBURY

SEE STORY ON PAGE 3

*"Going to Greenland" will be one of the films featured in the film festival "No Man's Land," which is coming to Dana Auditorium on the Middlebury College campus courtesy of the Middlebury Outdoor Programs. The one day event, on Thursday, Feb 13, from 6:30-9:30 p.m., is free and open to all.*

PHOTO / SOPHIE DANISON



# THE MONTH IN POETRY



Susan Jeffs is a poet, editor, and writing mentor from the southern Adirondacks. Her poetry book, *Breathing Lessons*, was published fall of 2023 by Shanti Arts Publishers of Maine and can be found on the publisher's site, the usual online outlets, and in local bookstores. Her poems have been published in many anthologies and journals throughout the country. She is currently taking new clients for editing manuscripts and individual works, and offers workshops using poetry to explore our connections to the vital wisdom of the natural world. Her website is [SusanJeffs.com](http://SusanJeffs.com)

As someone who lives at the edge of a forest full of its own shine and lure, I relate to this poem's sentiments. Living in such a place can give you a sense of being sequestered away, protected, with no need to "scramble our signal" as the speaker says; who could know we're here?

This might work for a while, but of course we can be found anywhere these days and we're all vulnerable to threats. It takes only one well aimed microburst or a series of mishaps to remember your vulnerability. But I love the idea of "mucking up the markets," of choosing not to participate in the game of unchecked capitalism run amok. Of disrupting business as usual.

And there are the more subtle, more enduring truths in the poem. Those days of watching the sun "move from one horizon to the other" are real. Whatever indoor or outdoor work you're doing in between, you are constantly aware of these greater presences. Whole mornings can go by watching the sky change shape and color.

On the second or third reading, I start to feel a heightening of energy in the poem when the speaker finds himself yearning to be like the sun, "radiant and removed." Radiant, yet lit with an "inner privacy." This image suggest shade to me; it suggests protection and safety, that place in each of us that when cultivated cannot be touched, let alone coopted, branded, or posted on Instagram. It feels like a source of inner power.

And when we remember we are comprised of the very same materials as the universe, including solar atoms, or when we consider the

teachings of the ancients who say that within us are mini solar systems with our hearts at the center as small suns, that light and power starts to feel very real.

To activate even a tiny fraction of the sun's material and spiritual power that we carry within us, can be enough to infuse and change our lives. To merge that with the rays of millions of others, well, that could be enough to change the fabric of the world.

**The Stevens Farmstead in Sudbury**  
is offering 12 weeks of professionally  
prepared, locally sourced meals, delivered  
every Tuesday to your door!

Email us to preview the menu or to sign up!  
[thestevensfarmstead@gmail.com](mailto:thestevensfarmstead@gmail.com)  
Deliveries begin March 11

Numerous options,  
including vegetarian  
and gluten free!

Brandon  
Leicester  
Salisbury  
Sudbury  
Whiting



## ON THE EDGE OF EMPIRE

### UNDER THE RADAR

*I'm so low on the priority list  
I'm almost trackless.  
I don't use stealth.  
I don't scramble my signals.  
I don't have a double message.  
I'm simply living off the grid,  
mucking up the markets, gifting  
whatever I make to anyone  
with a private grudge against  
business as usual, a private  
ache for the anarchist heart.  
Is that life enough? That's  
a question each answers  
alone. I like it here on the edge  
of empire. The sun  
seems to move from one  
horizon to the other  
where it rests and shines.  
I'd like to move like that -  
radiant and removed,  
lit with an inner privacy  
that sometimes hides  
under a bushel,  
sometimes shines  
outward as a green  
ray at sunset,  
sometimes bursts  
in auroras that  
erase all Earth's  
transmissions.*

— By Neil Shepard

Neil Shepard's ninth collection, *The Book of Failures*, came out in January 2024 from Madville Publishing. *How It Is: Selected Poems*, was published in 2018 by Salmon Poetry (Ireland), and in 2019, he edited *Vermont Poets & Their Craft* (Green Writers Press, VT). His poems appear online at *Poetry Daily*, *Verse Daily* and *Poem-a-Day*, as well as in several hundred literary magazines. He founded and edited for a quarter century the *Green Mountains Review*, and he currently edits the online literary magazine *Plant-Human Quarterly*. These days, he splits his time between Vermont and NYC, where he teaches at Poets House.

# Adventure without limits: ‘No Man’s Land Film Festival’ comes to Middlebury

**W**atching pretty much any outdoor sports film riles up an energy; a feeling of “I’m doing this.” It’s like *you’re* plummeting down that craggy pitch and carving wide into a cloud of untracked powder; *you’re* launching a bike high over that mountain stream; *you’re* inhaling the thin air of those high peaks.

BY **ELSIE**  
LYNN PARINI

But really, let’s be honest, *you’re* sitting in a comfy seat, snacking on something salty (or sweet) and staring at a screen. But here’s the thing, *you* don’t have to do the extreme sport to push the limits. That’s one of the goals of the film fest coming to Middlebury College’s Dana Auditorium on Thursday, Feb. 13, for a screening of six films.

No Man’s Land Film Festival (NMLFF) was founded in 2015 as a response to the lack of women-representation in the larger outdoor media, and has grown to become the premier adventure film festival for women and gender non-conforming athletes and filmmakers.

“We strive to create a history of motivating audiences to implement and inspire change through human collaboration,” reads the NMLFF About Us page. “Our mission transcends the films presented; this festival acts as a platform for progressive thought and movement in the outdoor industry.”

A mission that is shared by Middlebury College’s Outdoor Programs leaders.

“This event can be a gateway and a conversation opener,” said Outdoor Programs Assistant Rick Walker (’27.5). “As a male person (identify as a BIPOC) I can totally understand the feeling of not really belonging in the outdoor space — it’s a very white, male-dominated space. So the need for creating a space for everyone is really important. We’re seeing a lot of progress made, but there’s a definite need to reassure and reaffirm people that they are celebrated and they do belong.”

“We also want these events to be more accessible to the wider community,” added Maya Henning (’25) who has been involved with Outdoor Programs since her first year at Middlebury, and is now the Climbing Wall Coordinator. “Middlebury has some amazing resources and the abilities to bring incredible opportunities to the area... We want to encourage everyone to come... it would be really cool to hear insights from other voices.”

Doors for the NMLFF open at 6:30 p.m., on Thursday the 13th; showtime is 7 p.m. The event runs until 9:30 p.m. This is a free event, open to

“WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO COME... IT WOULD BE REALLY COOL TO HEAR INSIGHTS FROM OTHER VOICES.”

— Maya Henning (’25)

all, with a suggested donation of \$5.

NMLFF is coming to Middlebury for the first time following its 9th Annual Flagship Film Festival last spring. Each year after the Flagship Festival, NMLFF reaches out for its World Tour; this year’s tour showcases 10 unique film programs and over 55 films. Middlebury Outdoor Programs will be screening the “Winter Program” on Feb. 13, which features “Going Greenland” (23:13), “The Destiny of a Sherpa Woman” (12:07), “The Fabulous Life of Nancy Greene Raine” (10:01), “Re” (5:48), “CYCLES” (12:28) and “Earthside” (33:11).

SEE NO MAN’S ON PAGE 13


“THIS EVENT CAN BE A GATEWAY AND A CONVERSATION OPENER.”

— Rick Walker (’27.5)




A daring skier drops in on “Earthside” a film that follows four athletes on The North Face team, as they climb and ski epic first descents on Baffin Island, Canada. See this and five other films during “No Man’s Land Film Festival” on Thursday, Feb. 13, at Dana Auditorium. Free and open to all.

PHOTO / DREW SMITH




MIDDLEBURY  
PERFORMING  
ARTS SERIES




**AUGUST WILSON'S  
TWO TRAINS RUNNING  
THE ACTING COMPANY**

Thursday, February 13 • 7:30 PM  
Wright Memorial Theatre • \$25/20/10/5



Tickets on sale now  
[go.middlebury.edu/pas](https://go.middlebury.edu/pas)



Funded in part by the New England States Touring program of the New England Foundation for the Arts, made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts Regional Touring Program and the six New England state arts agencies.

## WINE WEDNESDAYS

5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Bar Only

Starting Jan. 8, 2025

Jessica's Blue Bar  
Swift House Inn



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Ever wondered what makes a wine so special? Let Ella the Sommelier take you on a tasting journey every Wednesday throughout the winter.

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SWIFTHOUSEINN.COM

## The Acting Company returns to Middlebury to perform August Wilson's 'Two Trains Running'

**A**claimed New York-based ensemble The Acting Company returns to Middlebury College on Thursday, Feb. 13, with their

extraordinary production of August Wilson's "Two Trains Running." Part of Wilson's Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winning 10-play Century Cycle — which also includes "The Piano Lesson," "Fences," and "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom"— "Two Trains Running" tells the story of Memphis Lee, a diner owner in Pittsburgh in 1969 who must decide if he should allow the government to take over his building or sell the property to a ruthless businessman. Full of vivid characters, joy, hope, love, and perseverance, this play celebrates the spirit, laughter, heart, and resilience of the people who make our country great even when faced with overwhelming odds.

The Acting Company's production, helmed by award-winning director Lili-Anne Brown, is the first touring production authorized by the Wilson estate, and comes to Middlebury as part of a year-long exploration of the playwright and his work. The performance will be followed by a Q&A with the artists.

*"Wilson makes poetry out of the mundane minutiae of daily African American life without forgetting how the past is present, alive and immediate like the melody of a song played by a piano that seems to have sprung to life."*

— New York Times

### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Founded in 1972 by John Houseman and Margot Harley with the first graduating class of the Drama Division of The Juilliard School, The Acting Company has launched the careers of some 400 actors, including Kevin Kline, Patti LuPone, Rainn Wilson, Lorraine Toussaint, Jeffrey Wright, Hamish Linklater, Jesse L. Martin, and Roslyn Ruff, among many others, while bringing sophisticated theater to hundreds of communities from coast to coast. The company has been honored with a Tony Award for Excellence in Theatre. The Acting Company last visited Middlebury in 1983.

Today, the Company has also committed to serving as a cultural institution dedicated to serving the social good. Part of that responsibility is to shape the present and future by becoming actively anti-racist and pro-BIPOC.

SEE TRAINS ON PAGE 8



Robert Cornelius, Brian D. Coats, Michael A. Shepperd, James Milord, DeAnna Supplee, and Chuckie Benson in August Wilson's "Two Trains Running," performed by The Acting Company, on Thursday, Feb. 13, at Wright Memorial Theatre.

PHOTO / LORE PHOTOGRAPHY VENTURA

# ART ON EXHIBIT

## BIXBY MEMORIAL FREE LIBRARY

258 Main Street, Vergennes

For more info visit [bixbylibrary.org](http://bixbylibrary.org) or call 802-877-2211.

**"This Place Called Home: A Photography Collaboration"** documents the beauty of Vermont today; and captures the essence of the geography, people, land and experiences that make this place our home. It is a joint project linking VUHS Vermont Studies Class taught by Becca Coffey and the Vergennes LEOS — a teen community service organization led by Cookie Steponaitis. On view through February.

**"Biosphere in Your Backyard"** follows the themes of explore, enrich, enjoy and interprets the library's records through a biosphere lens, considering how the landscape around us can influence the history we create. On view in the Kerr Room, with accompanying book displays in both the Vermont Room and the Children's Room, through February.

## EDGEWATER AT THE FALLS

1 Mill Street, Middlebury

For more info visit [edgewatergallery.com](http://edgewatergallery.com), call

802-458-0098 or email [info@edgewatergallery-vt.com](mailto:info@edgewatergallery-vt.com).

**"New Work for a New Year"** featuring new work from Victoria Blewer and Holly Friesen. The winter is a uniquely beautiful time of year in Vermont but it is also a season with long nights, limited sunshine, cold temperatures and a limited landscape palette. Both artists featured at the gallery by the falls provide a panacea to the monochrome through work that is done in vibrant hues that give a contemporary twist to two traditional subject matters. Victoria Blewer — hand colored and mixed media photography. Holly Friesen — wilderness landscapes in acrylic. On view January and February.

## EDGEWATER ON THE GREEN

6 Merchants Row, Middlebury

For more info visit [edgewatergallery.com](http://edgewatergallery.com), call

802-989-7419 or email [info@edgewatergallery-vt.com](mailto:info@edgewatergallery-vt.com).

**"Winter's Gold"**, featuring winter-y scenes from artists Kathleen Kolb, William B. Hoyt, Rory Jackson, and Dennis Sheehan. An exhibition to honor the inherent beauty of Vermont winter. Though the landscape might appear monotone at times, it glistens when the sunlight strikes against the snow and ice. This exhibit also includes new work by Molly Doe Wensberg. Her oil paintings celebrate the landscape through bold tones and decisive brushstrokes. On view Feb. 7-22.

## PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street, Middlebury

For more info visit [photoplacegallery.com](http://photoplacegallery.com).

**"Monochrome"** explores the beauty and powerful

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 15

# Cosmic Forecast

**ARIES:** March 21/April 20. A good first impression is really important right now, Aries. Be sure to wear your best clothes and check out your appearance before you meet up with anyone this week.

**TAURUS:** April 21/May 21. Taurus, you are bound to have a lot of fun this week, and you will spread cheerfulness to others. You might host a party or plan some sort of night out with friends.

**GEMINI:** May 22/June 21. None of the usual strategies to confront family issues are working right now, Gemini. You may need to take a step away and give others distance for the time being until things cool off.

**CANCER:** June 22/July 22. Cancer, some tech upgrades can help ensure an exciting new project starts off on the right foot. Enlist others to help and welcome any insight.

**LEO:** July 23/Aug. 23. This week is your chance to take a break and let someone else take center stage for a bit while you enjoy time out of the spotlight, Leo. Right now you may need a little alone time.

**VIRGO:** Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, you know what you have to get done, so it is well past time to put one foot in front of the other and get moving. Others have helped, but you have to see it to completion.

**LIBRA:** Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Focus all of your energy on the important people in your life right now, Libra. Other things can wait for the time being.

Don't be too hard on yourself for not getting everything done.

**SCORPIO:** Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Scorpio, as things in your life continue to evolve, you may be tempted to jump into something new. You might want to slow the pace and exercise due diligence first.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Nov. 23/Dec. 21. Sagittarius, have you bitten off more than you can chew this week? If so, you probably have to ask for some helpers to step up and pitch in. Teamwork is a good thing.

**CAPRICORN:** Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Some tough decisions are ahead of you, Capricorn. It might be best to think things through logically and leave emotion out of the equation for the time being.

**AQUARIUS:** Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Aquarius, it can be dangerous to think you know everything. This week, listen to what others have to say before deciding if their ideas have merit. This approach can benefit all involved.

**PISCES:** Feb. 19/March 20. Step up this week with confidence, Pisces. Now is not the time to be inflexible or shy. Go with the flow as much as possible, and learn and listen along the way.

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## FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

FEB. 8 — Kate Chopin, author (d)  
FEB. 9 — Alice Walker, writer (81)  
FEB. 10 — Uzo Aduba, actor (44)

FEB. 11 — Damien Lewis, actor (54)  
FEB. 12 — Charles Darwin, naturalist (d)  
FEB. 13 — Peter Gabriel, singer (75)  
FEB. 14 — Renee Fleming, soprano (66)

# CALENDAR

FEB. 6-13  
2025



## THURSDAY, FEB. 6

**“THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER” ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Feb. 6, 1 p.m., Middlebury Marquis, 65 Main St. The latest Middlebury Classic Film Club offering stars Monty Woolley, Bette Davis, Ann Sheridan, Jimmy Durante and Richard Travis. Join fellow community film lovers to see the films at the theater, followed by the usual short discussion of the film. As always, the popcorn is on us.

**HEART STRINGS: MCMC FACULTY BENEFIT CONCERT IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Feb. 6, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The faculty of the Middlebury Community Music Center will take to the Town Hall Theater stage to perform an inspiring concert, all to benefit student scholarships. More info and tickets at [mcmcv.org](http://mcmcv.org).

## FRIDAY, FEB. 7

**MIDDLEBURY ACTING COMPANY GENERAL AUDITIONS IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Feb. 7, 5-8 p.m., Town Hall Theater Center for Learning and Engagement, 68 S. Pleasant St. MACo is holding auditions for its 25th season, including for Tiny Tim, for our 2025 production of “A Christmas Carol,” as well as roles for MACo shows and staged readings, including “Parents on Board.” Get more on shows and roles at [www.middleburyactors.org](http://www.middleburyactors.org), then email Melissa at [melissa@middleburyactors.org](mailto:melissa@middleburyactors.org) to schedule your 15-minute audition appointment.

**ART OPENING IN BRANDON.** Friday, Feb. 7, 5-7 p.m., Brandon Artists Guild, 7 Center St. An exhibition of student artwork from Lothrop, Otter Creek

Academy, Barstow, Neshobe, and Otter Valley Middle and High School. Come celebrate the community’s young artists.

**ART OPENING IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Feb. 7, 5-7 p.m., Jackson Gallery, Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Opening reception for “Landscape Complexions: Paintings by H. Keith Wagner.” Show runs through March 15.

**MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY MUSIC CENTER FACULTY BENEFIT RECITAL IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Feb. 7, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. A special event to celebrate MCMC’s 10th year.

**“WAKE UP, GLOUCESTER” ON STAGE IN WAITSFIELD.** Friday, Feb. 7, 7 p.m., Valley Players Theater, 4254 Main St. This play by Jeanne Beckwith takes place in late August 1939, and deals with the lives, hopes, loves and fears of a group of people who come together at The Dancing Duck, a tavern in Gloucester, Mass. Tickets 414, available at [www.valleyplayers.com/wakeupgloucester](http://www.valleyplayers.com/wakeupgloucester).

**FRIDAY NIGHT MOVIE IN FERRISBURGH.** Friday, Feb. 7, 7 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall, Route 7. The Union Meeting Hall hosts this screening of “The Sandlot,” about a game of baseball that turns out to be anything but ordinary. Follow the film’s memorable characters as they overcome obstacles, the “beast” and more. Come to enjoy a good movie, munch on the popcorn, and visit with your neighbors in a fun way to offset cabin fever. Free.

## SATURDAY, FEB. 8

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE**

**OR SNOWSHOE IN SHELBURNE.** Saturday, Feb. 8, Shelburne Farms. Hike the Farm Trail from the Welcome Center. Moderately difficult; 6.75 miles with 350-foot elevation gain. Bring a snack or lunch, water, and dress to the weather in thermal layers. Windbreaker, ankle gaiters and hiking poles are recommended. Be prepared for ice and snow with boot traction, aka microspikes. For details including meeting time and possible carpooling from the Middlebury area, contact leader Ruth Penfield at 802-458-1116 or [ruthpenfield@gmail.com](mailto:ruthpenfield@gmail.com). More at [gmcbreadloaf.org](http://gmcbreadloaf.org).

**FAMILY-FRIENDLY ICE FISHING CLINIC IN CROWN POINT, N.Y.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 8 a.m.-1 p.m., Crown Point State Historic Site, 21 Grandview Dr. Bundle up the kids and take a short hop over the Lake Champlain Bridge where staff and volunteers will teach the basics of ice fishing for beginners, with all the gear you’ll need for the day. Dress warmly and in layers: a hat, gloves, and waterproof boots. Some warm and cold drinks will be available. Snacks or a bag lunch are strongly recommended. Free.

**MAKING VALENTINES COMMUNITY WORKSHOP IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 10 a.m.-noon, Middlebury Studio School, 63 Maple St., 8A, Marble Works. Join Middlebury Studio School for a fun, creative morning making Valentines. Enjoy using a wide variety of art and craft materials with guidance and tutorials from MSS instructors. Free. Drop in, no registration needed. All are welcome.

**MIDDLEBURY ACTING COMPANY GENERAL AUDITIONS IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Feb. 8, noon-3 p.m., Town Hall Theater Mainstage, 68 S. Pleasant St.

See Feb. 7 listing.

**CONTRA DANCE IN CORNWALL.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 7-9:30 p.m., Cornwall Town Hall, Route 30. Peter Stix will be calling with live music by Red Dog Riley. Beginners welcome! All dances will be taught. \$5 to \$10 or pay what you can.

**“WAKE UP, GLOUCESTER” ON STAGE IN WAITSFIELD.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 7 p.m., Valley Players Theater, 4254 Main St. See Feb. 7 listing.

**LC JAZZ “WINTER THAW” IN VERGENNES.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m., Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. Shake off those winter blues and grab your dancing shoes. This fun show features all your favorite jazz standards with soloists Corinna Ellis and Tony Panella backed by the incredible band of local talented brass and rhythm musicians. Free. Donations toward the LC Jazz Scholarship Fund gratefully accepted. Doors and cash bar open at 6:30 p.m. The band will begin playing at 7:30. General seating with an open dance floor.

**ELI WEST IN LINCOLN.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m., Burnham Hall, 52 E. River Rd. Burnham Presents. Doors open at 7 p.m. Homemade refreshments available. Tickets \$20-\$25 sliding scale. More info at [burnhampresents.org](http://burnhampresents.org).

**THE GREAT AMERICAN LYRICISTS CABARET IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m., Doug and Debby Anderson Studio, Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Join Doug and Debby Anderson for the opening of their eponymous studio in the new Town Hall

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

MCTV SCHEDULE Channels 1071 & 1091		MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY TELEVISION: P.O. Box 785, Middlebury, Vt. 05753		Please see the MCTV website, <a href="http://www.middleburycommunitytv.org">www.middleburycommunitytv.org</a> , 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.	
<b>Channel 1071</b> <b>Through the Night:</b> Statehouse, Public Affairs <b>Friday, February 7</b> 6:30 a.m. Energy Week 7:30 a.m. Congregational Church Service 9 a.m. Gov. Scott 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Church Service 5:30 p.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 9 p.m. Alzheimers Assoc. Symposium <b>Saturday, February 8</b> 5 a.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 8 a.m. Alzheimers Symposium 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 5:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Bulletin Board, Public Affairs 11 p.m. Energy Week <b>Sunday, February 9</b> 5 a.m. Energy Week	6:05 a.m. Peoples Law School 8 a.m. Gov. Scott 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 12:30 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Congregational Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:45 p.m. Vermont State House <b>Monday, February 10</b> 4:30 a.m. Energy Week 5:30 a.m. Eckankar 6:05 a.m. Press Conferences 10 a.m. Selectboard, State House 5 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 8 p.m. Alzheimers Symposium <b>Tuesday, February 11</b> 7 a.m. Press Conferences 9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Congregational Service 5:30 p.m. Gov. Scott 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs <b>Wednesday, February 12</b> 5 a.m. Press Conferences	7:30 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Energy Week 5 p.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 7 p.m. Selectboard 10 p.m. Energy Week, Public Affairs <b>Thursday, February 13</b> 5 a.m. Selectboard 8 a.m. Congregational Service 12 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 8 p.m. Energy Week 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10:05 p.m. Statehouse  <b>Channel 1091</b> <b>Through the Night:</b> Arts, Science & Education Programs <b>Friday, February 7</b> 4:30 a.m. Festival On the Green 6 a.m. Yoga 7 a.m. Tai Chi 7:30 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 2 p.m. Sharpe Takes 2:45 p.m. Science and Nature	4:30 p.m. Authors and Poets 8 p.m. Sharpe Takes <b>Saturday, February 8</b> 5 a.m. Science, Nature & Gardening 7:30 a.m. Montpelier Chamber Orchestra 9 a.m. State Board of Education 3:30 p.m. Authors and Poets 5 p.m. Sharpe Takes 8 p.m. Festival On the Green <b>Sunday, February 9</b> 5 a.m. Montpelier Chamber Orchestra 6:30 a.m. Science, Nature & Gardening 8:30 a.m. Sharpe Takes 10 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 6 p.m. Sharpe Takes 7 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 8 p.m. Festival On the Green <b>Monday, February 10</b> 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 a.m. Sharpe Takes 6:35 a.m. Tai Chi 7 a.m. Chair Yoga 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s	6:30 p.m. ACSD Board Meeting (LIVE) 9:30 p.m. Montpelier Chamber Orchestra 11 p.m. Sharpe Takes <b>Tuesday, February 11</b> 5 a.m. Sharpe Takes 5:35 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 12 p.m. Montpelier Chamber Orchestra 6 p.m. Sharpe Takes 7 p.m. School Board Meeting/s <b>Wednesday, February 12</b> 6:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6:55 a.m. Chair Yoga 8 a.m. State Board of Education 4 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 5 p.m. Tai Chi 7 p.m. School Board Meeting/s <b>Thursday, February 13</b> 6:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6:55 a.m. Yoga 8 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 5 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 10 p.m. Sharpe Takes	

Theater wing. Doors will open one hour in advance to give audience members a chance to tour of the entire complex. For tickets go to [townhalltheater.org](http://townhalltheater.org).

## SUNDAY, FEB. 9,

**"THE THIN BLUE LINE" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY.** Sunday, Feb. 9, 3 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. MNFF Selects series focuses this year on neo-noir films. Errol Morris's documentary "The Thin Blue Line" explores the death of Dallas police officer Robert Wood after pulling over a car driven by teenager David Harris and his passenger Randall Dale Adams. Tickets \$17 per film or \$60 series pass. More info at [townhalltheater.org](http://townhalltheater.org).

**THE GREAT AMERICAN LYRICISTS CABARET IN MIDDLEBURY.** Sunday, Feb. 9, 4 and 7:30 p.m., Doug and Debby Anderson Studio, Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Feb. 8 listing.

**"WAKE UP, GLOUCESTER" ON STAGE IN WAITSFIELD.** Sunday, Feb. 9, 2 p.m., Valley Players Theater, 4254 Main St. See Feb. 7 listing.

## MONDAY, FEB. 10

**FIBER ARTS CIRCLE IN STARKSBORO.** Monday, Feb. 10, 1 p.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Join us for a weekly gathering dedicated to the Fiber Arts. All fiber crafts welcome. You do not need to be an expert to come knit, crochet, weave, embroider, sew,

or quilt with us. All levels welcome. Bring a friend or two and come learn a new stitch or technique and share your current projects. No registration required. People from all towns welcome.

**VIRTUAL PRESENTATION BY DOCUMENTARY-MAKER JULIE ANDERSON.** Monday, Feb. 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m., ZOOM. Rokeby hosts Julie Anderson, multi-Emmy- and Peabody-award winner and Academy-Award-nominated film executive for non-fiction documentaries. Anderson will talk about her personal experiences in researching, creating, and producing her work.

**KOREAN DRUMMING CLASSES AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE.** Begins Monday, Feb. 10, 7 p.m., Freeman International Center, Room 121. Learn to play the traditional Korean percussion genre samulnori. Samulnori blends traditional Korean rhythms into dynamic pieces using four Korean percussion instruments. Participants will start by learning technique and basic rhythms and progress to more complex rhythms and sequences. No experience needed. Classes will be held weekly on Mondays through May

## TUESDAY, FEB. 11

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE OR SNOWSHOE IN HANCOCK.** Tuesday, Feb. 11, the Snowbowl. A moderate 3-mile snowshoe with some elevation gain in and about the alpine ski trails.

Contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926 for more information. More at [gmcbreadloaf.org](http://gmcbreadloaf.org).

**CLOSE TO NATURE LANDSCAPE DESIGN TALK IN MIDDLEBURY.** Tuesday, Feb. 11, 1 p.m., Residence at Otter Creek 350 Lodge Rd. Award-winning landscape designer Silvia Jope of Old World Gardens will teach the basic steps behind landscape planning while approaching it through the lens of ecology and sustainability. Free and open to the public. A Middlebury Garden Club event.

**BOOK CLUB IN VERGENNES.** Tuesday, Feb. 11, 6-7 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Come discuss "The Bear and the Nightingale" by Middlebury College Alum Katherine Arden. Dive into this historical fantasy novel set in the frigid landscape of medieval Russia. Copies of the books are available at the Circulation Desk for all who want one — those attending book club as well as those reading on their own. For more information, contact Book Club leader Martha Sanborn at [martha.sanborn@bixbylibrary.org](mailto:martha.sanborn@bixbylibrary.org)

## WEDNESDAY, FEB. 12

**"MY ARCHITECT" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY.** Wednesday, Feb. 12, 11 a.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. THT's Great Art Wednesday series continues with "My Architect: A Son's Quest Unveils Kahn's Genius and Ghosts," which takes us on a

heartbreaking yet humorous journey as Nathaniel attempts to reconnect with his deceased father. Tickets \$15, available at [townhalltheater.org](http://townhalltheater.org).

## THURSDAY, FEB. 13

**NO MAN'S LAND FILM FESTIVAL IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m., Dana Auditorium, 356 College St. As the premier all-women and genderqueer adventure film festival, No Man's Land Film Festival, or NMLFF, has celebrated the full scope of athletes and adventurers by un-defining femininity in adventure, sport, conservation and film since 2015. Admission is free. This event is hosted by Middlebury Outdoor Programs and will open its doors at 6:30 p.m. The event will kick off with raffles benefiting Middlebury Outdoor Programs, followed by a 7 p.m. showtime.

**"SO YOU WANT TO WRITE A BOOK" PRESENTATION IN MONKTON.** Thursday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m., Russell Memorial Library, 92 Monkton Ridge. All you budding and aspiring authors should plan on attending this presentation. Speakers will be Eugenie Doyle and Ivor Hughes. Additional information contact Russell Memorial Library, 802-453-4417 or email [russellmemlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:russellmemlibrary@gmail.com).

**AUGUST WILSON'S "TWO TRAINS RUNNING" IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m., Wright Theatre, Chateau Rd. See story page 4.



# LOVE LINES

## Share the love

Send a special message to your Valentine through *The Addison Independent*.

Messages will be published on Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>.

**IT'S FREE!**

HOW:

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Online: [addisonindependent.com/reader-submissions](http://addisonindependent.com/reader-submissions)  
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**ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT**

**DEADLINE:**  
Friday, Feb. 7

# UPCOMING MUSIC

## Celebrate Big Love with Dwight + Nicole on Valentine's Day

The second annual House of Jazz Series returns to Town Hall Theater presented with Jazz Middlebury with a Valentine's Day offering starring married couple Dwight + Nicole, accompanied by a full-scale band.

"This gorgeous Valentine's Day show offers an intimate evening of live music in Town Hall Theater's lounge-seating arrangement. Dwight, Nicole and their ensemble will feature an electric mix of music with superb showmanship that adds up to a magical evening," said Lisa Mitchell, Executive and Artistic Director.

The Friday, Feb. 14 show, Big Love with Dwight + Nicole, will feature the genre-defying Dwight Ritcher and Nicole Nelson whose musical roots

connect to blues, R&B, and soul with a little roots rock, alternative, and Americana sprinkled in. Ritcher and Nelson will be joined by Ezra Oklan on drums, and Leon Campos on keys, as well as horns and back-up singers. The show begins at 8 p.m.

Dwight + Nicole have been nominated for 10 Boston Music Awards, 10 New England Music Awards, and 11 Daysies awards, winning multiple "Band of the Year," "Vocalist of the Year," "Best Blues/R&B Band," "Female Vocalist of the Year," "Blues Act of the Year" and "Video of the Year."

Tickets are available for purchase by visiting [townhalltheater.org](http://townhalltheater.org) or by calling 802-382-



*This Valentine's Day, celebrate Big Love with Dwight + Nicole at Town Hall Theater. Show starts at 8 p.m.*

COURTESY PHOTO

9222. THT's Cady Fund offers ticket subsidies to ensure cost is not a barrier to access. This series would not be possible without the sponsorship and partnership of Jazz Middlebury.

## TRAINS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

For them, that means living up to ever-evolving standards of equity, diversity, inclusivity, and justice.

Playwright August Wilson has been called "theater's poet of Black America," and is considered one of the most important voices in modern theater. His Century Cycle plays explore the heritage and experience of African Americans, decade by decade, over the

course of the 20th century. Wilson's plays have been produced at regional theaters across the country, on Broadway, and throughout the world, garnering significant honors including two Pulitzer Prizes, Tony, Olivier, and Drama Critics Circle Awards.

## ASSOCIATED EVENTS

Members of The Acting Company will offer a free theatre workshop "Acting Clues in Wilson's Language" for participants from both on- and off-campus on Thursday, Feb. 13, at 3:45 p.m. For details and to sign up, visit [go.middlebury.edu/2TrainsWorkshop](http://go.middlebury.edu/2TrainsWorkshop).

## PERFORMANCE DETAILS

The Acting Company will perform "Two Trains Running" at Wright Memorial Theatre on Thursday, Feb. 13, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 for the general public, \$20 for Middlebury faculty/staff and alumni, \$10 for youth, and \$5 for Middlebury College students. For information on free and discounted ticket programs visit [go.middlebury.edu/freetickets](http://go.middlebury.edu/freetickets). For regular admission and information visit [middlebury.edu/arts](http://middlebury.edu/arts) or call (802) 443-MIDD (6433).

*Please note this production is for mature audiences — it contains adult themes, racially-charged language, and use of a prop firearm.*



DeAnna Supplee, Laney Allen, and Michael A. Shepperd star in August Wilson's "Two Trains Running," performed by The Acting Company, on Thursday, Feb. 13, at Wright Memorial Theatre.

PHOTO / LORE PHOTOGRAPHY VENTURA

# PUZZLES

sponsored by SPARROW ART SUPPLY

**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. "The Las Vegas of the East"
- 6. Cook
- 10. Manning and Wallach are two
- 14. Chameleon
- 15. A way to fill up
- 17. What MLBers hope to play in
- 19. Unhappy
- 20. Indefinite period of time
- 21. Excites
- 22. Males
- 23. Mongol leader Genghis
- 24. Turfs
- 26. Soda comes in them
- 29. Not nice
- 31. Professional organization

- 32. Part of a play
- 34. Sea eagle
- 35. Emily Blunt's character in "Sicario"
- 37. Beige
- 38. Mental sharpness
- 39. Valley
- 40. Alcyone's husband
- 41. A place to gamble
- 43. Flightless Australian birds
- 45. Call out somebody's name over a P.A. system
- 46. US spy group
- 47. Pancakes from buckwheat flour
- 49. Swiss river
- 50. Disfigure
- 53. Have surgery
- 57. Formal withdrawal
- 58. Early English council

- 59. Square measures
- 60. 2,000 lbs.
- 61. Siskel and \_\_\_, critics

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Mouths
- 2. Buffalo
- 3. You plug it in
- 4. Each
- 5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- 6. King of Thebes
- 7. English name meaning "mythical hunter"
- 8. Indicates near
- 9. More herbaceous
- 10. Gas-powered cars need one
- 11. Dishonest individual
- 12. Systems, doctrines, theories

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15				16				
17						18								
19						20				21				
					22				23					
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	47	48						49					50	51
53							54				55	56		
57											58			
59						60					61			

8	6		4					9
			9					
	1	3	8			4		
		1						
	9				3		5	7
3	8							1
			5		7	9		
5					1	6		
	4	7	2					

## Sudoku

Each Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 grid that has been subdivided into nine smaller grids of 3x3 squares. To solve the puzzle each row, column and box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9. Puzzles come in three grades: easy, medium and difficult.

**Level: Medium**

- 13. The woman
- 16. The whole of one's holdings
- 18. Witnesses
- 22. Doctor
- 23. Paul \_\_\_, Swiss painter
- 24. Kids look for him on December 24
- 25. Single
- 27. Competitions
- 28. Predict the future
- 29. Cage for trained hawks
- 30. Musician Clapton
- 31. Frozen water
- 33. Semiformal men's evening attire
- 35. Most worn
- 36. Common soap ingredient
- 37. Former EU monetary unit
- 39. Provisions
- 42. Book parts
- 43. Republic of Ireland
- 44. Partner to "Pa"
- 46. Sammy \_\_\_, songwriter
- 47. Dutch colonist
- 48. Clare Booth \_\_\_, American writer
- 49. Solar disk in Egyptian mythology
- 50. Minute arachnid
- 51. From a distance
- 52. Monthly apartment cost
- 53. Young women's association
- 54. Tourist destination
- 55. "Woman" in Ojibwe language
- 56. Pointed end of a pen

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 12.



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## ALL THAT GLITTERS

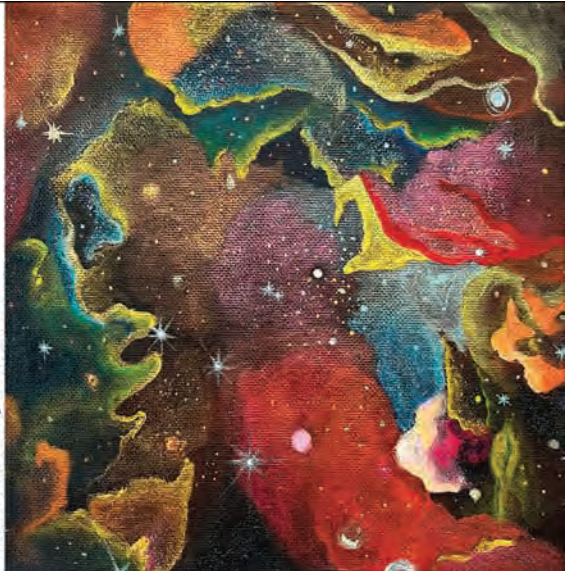
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# ASK A MASTER GARDENER

## HOW TO PLAN A NEW GARDEN

**T**he middle of winter with snow covering brick-hard, frozen ground may seem like an odd time to plan a new garden bed, but it's the best time. If you make decisions now, you'll be ready when the weather warms and the ground is workable.

**BY DEBORAH J. BENOIT** Putting in a new garden bed takes a lot of effort, and nothing is as frustrating as forgetting something you'll need to proceed. Taking the time now to consider what you want to do will also give you the time to determine what supplies you'll need to make the project a success.

After you've done a bit of mid-winter daydreaming and maybe made a wish list of

plants you want in your garden this year, it's time to plan. Look at the available space in your yard and select a spot.

Keep in mind not only the amount of sunlight your new garden bed will receive, but also how far it is from a water source. At least until plants are established, you'll want to be sure they are well watered. That could mean toting water.

Taking measurements and using graph paper will enable you to draw your new bed to scale, but even a rough sketch with estimated measurements can provide a head start on garden renovations when spring arrives.

Will you be planting in the ground? If you're planning to build a raised bed, determine the



*Deborah J. Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from North Adams, Mass., who is part of the Bennington County Chapter.*

materials needed as well as the amount of soil mix to fill it. Make sure you have the necessary tools at hand.

If the area is currently lawn or weeds, how do you plan to clear it? You could dig up what's growing there. You could cover it with newspaper or cardboard and mulch using a sheet mulching technique (see <https://go.uvm.edu/spring-garden>), or you could smother it with a tarp (see <https://go.uvm.edu/garden-tarping>).

Will you want to fence in the area to keep unwanted critters away from the plants? Now is a great time to check out options, compare prices and find pre-season bargains.

If you haven't already, decide what it is that you want to grow. Will the bed be decorative or productive? Flowers? Vegetables? Annuals? Perennials? If your chosen plants will need support (such as tomato cages or a trellis), check out available options.

Make a plant wish list if you haven't already. Browse through seed catalogs and garden books. Select plants that will thrive in the new bed's growing conditions. Have fun considering the possibilities.

SEE GARDEN ON NEXT PAGE



*Sketching out a new garden bed on paper will make design and plant placement easy when it comes time to plant this spring.*

PHOTO / KSENIA CHERNAYA/PEXELS



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## GARDEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

such as available light, height and size. Keep in mind the amount of space the mature plant will occupy. Place taller plants to the rear or north side so they don't block shorter

With your wish list in hand, choose plants that will fit the location

Get out that pencil and paper, maybe a packet of colored markers, and make a rough sketch of the garden bed. Start placing plants in your sketch using a simple symbol. Rearrange or replace plants as your design evolves. You've got plenty of time to make your final choices.

On a lazy Sunday afternoon when the weather outside is less than welcoming, grab a garden catalog or hop online to peruse seed and plant sources for inspiration. Get to work planning a new garden bed. When spring arrives, you'll have plans in hand, ready to go.



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## Pet of the WEEK

What is  
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Here at the Addy Indy we LOVE our pets. We also love publishing here at the local newspaper. So... put them together and you get PET OF THE WEEK, where we publish the news of how fabulous your pets are for FREE!

All you have to do, dear reader with opposable thumb, is send a picture to our news team with a short description of your best buds.

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of your pet!

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## Paws To Consider

with Dr. Bri Letaw, Medical Director,  
Bristol Animal Hospital



Q: Is dental care really necessary for my cat?

A: Yes - for both cats and dogs! Dental health affects every other organ in the body. The mouth harbors dangerous bacteria, and tooth decay is painful and can result in weight loss and secondary infections. Getting full mouth x-rays and teeth cleaning with your vet in addition to regular brushing and dental care at home is one of the best things you can do to give your pet a long, healthy life.



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# Pets In Need

## HOMEWARD BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society



**Lafayette**

**Lafayette** is a beautiful, long-haired girl. She is sweet but somewhat shy at the shelter. Lafayette has been an indoor/outdoor cat and may like to live the same lifestyle. She gets along well with other cats and has some experience with dogs.



**Sonny**



**Sonny** is a shy but sweet boy. He is an orange tiger and around 1.5 years old. Sonny is looking for a loving but calm home where he can adventure his surroundings at his own pace. He is afraid of dogs but is good with gentle cats.

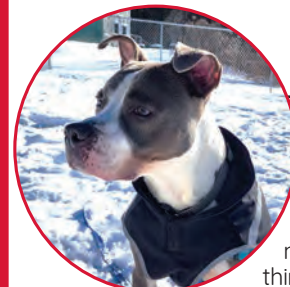


**Ellie**

My name is **Ellie** and I'm the sweetest 1-year-old Terrier mix you've ever met! I'm looking for a family that can take me for walks and give me endless snuggles. Since I'm still young, I have a lot of energy and love to play. I like other dogs and would do best with a canine friend of my own size. Not that I'm clumsy or anything, but I do not always realize how big I am. I'm crate-trained and housebroken. I can live with older children, but I have never been around cats before.



**Maverick**



Hi! My name is **Maverick**! I'm a 3-year-old terrier mix looking for that very special person of my own! I'm a handsome, playful fellow at the very convenient size of 54 pounds. Being near people is my absolute favorite thing in the world, but I also get along with cats and some dogs. I know a few basic commands, I'm housebroken and crate-trained. I would do well in a household with older children. Food is the key to my heart, and I enjoy anything I can get my paws on. I love playing with toys and figure out puzzle toys. If you're looking for a snuggly dog to spend a lot of time with, I'm your boy!



**Bugs Bunny**

Hiya, I'm **Bugs Bunny**! In my previous home, I lived with lots of bunnies, I loved my human family, and even got along with bunny-friendly cats and dogs! I'm a gentle soul who enjoys the simple things in life- soft hay, a cozy hiding spot, and most of all, toys I can chew on and toss in the air like a mini acrobat. I would do best in a calm household, as chaos is not my happy place.



**Homeward Bound**

Addison County's Humane Society



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# Rokeby Museum opens doors for two free Saturdays

What was the Underground Railroad? Find out at Rokeby Museum on **Free Winter Saturdays**. Saturday, Feb. 15, and Saturday, March 15, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Come enjoy the main exhibit, "Seeking Freedom: The Underground Railroad and the Legacy of an Abolitionist Family."

Rokeby Museum is wearing its winter white, and our trails are open. Come any time between dawn and dusk and enjoy skiing, snowshoeing, or walking the trails and the

fields. Admission is free.

Other upcoming events at the Ferrisburgh museum include:

**Monday, Feb. 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m., via Zoom**  
Julie Anderson, multi-Emmy and Peabody award winner and Academy-nominated Film executive for non-fiction documentaries, will talk about her personal experiences in researching, creating, and producing her work.

**Tuesday, Feb. 18, 6-7 p.m., via Zoom**  
Join the Virtual Winter Book Discussion Group to discuss "The Life of Frederick

Douglass" by David F. Walker, Damon Smyth, Marissa Louise.

**Wednesday, Feb. 26, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.**  
Curator For A Day (ages 11-15)

Do you love museums? Have you ever wondered how an exhibit is created? Spend a day "behind the scenes" digging through the archives at Rokeby Museum, examining the historic collection, and creating your very own exhibit.

For details and registration information visit [rokeby.org](http://rokeby.org).

## FILM SCREENING

### Ferrisburgh to host director Jay Craven

The Friends of the Union Meeting Hall in Ferrisburgh will present a special screening of Jay Craven's award-winning 1997 film, "A Stranger in the Kingdom," based on the novel by Howard Frank Mosher. The picture stars David Lansbury ("Michael Clayton," "Scent of a Woman"), Martin Sheen ("Badlands," "Apocalypse Now"), Ernie Hudson ("Ghostbusters," "Oz"), Henry Gibson ("Nashville") and Jean Louisa Kelly ("Mr. Holland's Opus") and will screen at 7 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 15, at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall. Director Craven will introduce the film and lead a post-screen Q & A.

"A Stranger in the Kingdom" tells the story of a small Vermont town whose veneer of peace and tranquility is shattered when a black minister arrives as the town's new pastor and, soon after, finds himself charged with adultery and the murder of a French Canadian

waif passing through town on her way to pursue her Hollywood dream. Young rascal lawyer Charlie Kinneson, the local favorite son, tricks the young Canadian girl into town under false pretenses but he decides to defend the minister, placing himself at odds with family, friends, and a vanishing way of life. The film — and Mosher's novel — were inspired by the true events surrounding the infamous 1968 "Irasburg Affair."

Film critic John Bowman at the Santa Fe New Mexican wrote that the film "Conveys the richness you experience in the literature of writers like Faulkner and Eudora Welty. Set in the 1950s, 'A Stranger in the Kingdom' seamlessly blends rollicking comedy with morally-charged drama and taut suspense. The film is, by turns, lyrical and haunting, hilarious and hard-hitting. Filmmaker Jay Craven revels in the pastoral setting even as



he exposes the hypocritical wrinkles in its craggy inhabitants."

Tickets are available in advance by visiting [unionmeetinghall.org/programming-and-events](http://unionmeetinghall.org/programming-and-events) and may also be purchased at the door. Advance purchase is recommended. For questions email [unionmeetinghall@gmail.com](mailto:unionmeetinghall@gmail.com).

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

FEB. 6, 2025

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Athlete and producer Rachael Burks stars in "Going Greenland."

PHOTO / ERICH ROEPKE

## NO MAN'S

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Neither Henning nor Walker have seen the program yet, but are eager to watch with the rest of the audience.

"I'm excited to see it," Walker said, acknowledging he isn't sure how many people will come because it's not a ticketed event. "We are hoping people will show up. We want people to feel welcome."

Henning encouraged Walker, "Rick is doing a great job; he's on top of everything," said the soon to be graduate, who is off to Hawaii for a year to work with a dive master and then start her doctoral program in coral biology. "I hope the Outdoor Program continues to do things like this — events that form community, and encourage collaboration between clubs. It's important to work toward an inclusive outdoor community that's a positive, communal space."

Badass outdoor films are a good way to start, says NMLFF Executive Director Kathy Karlo: "Starting dialogue is one of the best places to begin when it comes to addressing gender inequality. Showcasing films is the second-best place. These films that our platform is based upon reaffirm our right to tell our own stories. Women, gender non-conforming, Black, Indigenous, and multiracial communities deserve this space."

The goal of this festival is to connect like-minded individuals who are action-oriented, wish to support a shared vision of gender equality, have a desire to experience their passions and environments through a uniquely feminine lens — and above all, love adventure.

A whole new line up of programming will kick off after the 10th Annual Flagship Festival on March 7-8 (yes, March 8 is International Women's Day) in Denver, Colo. Walker hopes that come fall, they'll be planning another screening of NMLFF programming at an even larger venue... stay tuned!

## FILMS

### GOING GREENLAND (23:13)

Director: **Erich Roepke**

Executive Producer: **Jessica Baker**

Producer: **Rachael Burks**

Still Photographer: **Sophie Danison**

What happens when you combine a renewable energy sailboat with an arctic ski expedition in Greenland for the first time ever? Athletes Rachael Burks and Jessica Baker put the idea to test and endure a both harrowing and inspiring journey along Greenland's West coast fjords and towering mountains.

### THE DESTINY OF A SHERPA WOMAN (12:07)

Directors: **Louise Thaller, Stanislas Giroux**

Cast: **Yangji Sherpa, Maya Tamang, Louise Thaller**

Step by step. To the rhythm of Yangji's sure and steady pace, we walk through her life journey, as she returns after many years of absence to the poor village in the Everest region where she grew up. She who turned her back on the mountain as a teenager in the hope of escaping the misery that reigns in the valley of her childhood never thought she would come back, and even less so with the title of mountain guide...

### THE FABULOUS LIFE OF NANCY GREENE RAINE (10:01)

Director: **Andrea Wing**

Producer: **Lainey Mullins**

N.G.R. has spent a lifetime showing the world what it means to love a sport. As a ski racer, coach, Olympic champ, mountain-resort visionary and Canadian Senator, Nancy Greene Raine is an inter-generational household name for many Canadians. But how much do you really know about Sun Peaks' local celebrity?



"Re" features the action sports photographer's career and life's work.

PHOTO / CHLOE JIMENEZ

### RE (5:48)

Director: **Iz La Motte**

Producer: **Michael Brown**

Cast: **Re Wikstrom**

Twenty years ago, Re forged her own path in the outdoor sports community



A still from "The Destiny of a Sherpa Woman."

COURTESY PHOTO

as one of the few women in her field. As an action sports photographer, she is dedicated to working with and showcasing the strength and individual personalities of female athletes. Re landed the first cover shot of a woman for *Backcountry Magazine*. She also secured the first all-female cover shot for *Skiing Magazine*. She views her work as a catalyst, fostering a social shift in the perception of women athletes in popular culture.

### CYCLES (12:28)

Directors: **Johanna Brunner, Anjuna Hartmann**

Producer: **Johanna Brunner**

Cast: **Jana Linicus, Hannah Ziegler, Celina Weber, Anna Baab, Verena Stahl, Inese Grinberga, Helena Launay Orlando, Rosina Friedel**

"Cycles" is a free film project produced by an all-female crew. The film showcases a group of freeriders exploring the stunning mountains of Tyrol. However, it goes beyond just action and athletic performance. The project delves into the female menstrual cycle and the transformative power of living in tune with it.

### EARTHSIDE (33:11)

Director: **Kaki Orr, Rob Wassmer**

Executive Producers: **Kaki Orr, Christina Lusti, Aidan Haley**

In the spring of 2022, four athletes on The North Face team, Emily Harrington, Brette Harrington, Christina Lusti and Hilaree Nelson embarked on the trip of a lifetime. Their expedition to climb and ski epic first descents on Baffin Island, Canada became a celebration — of their accomplishments, of their friendship, and of their lives.

*In loving memory of Hilaree Nelson, 1972-2022.*



LIKENESS ONLY



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**STONECROP MEADOWS**

MLS #5027993 | 2 SEATON LANE  
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MLS #5027991 | 4 SEATON LANE  
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MLS #5028020 | 12 SEATON LANE  
\$430,000 | 3 BD | 3 BA | 2019 SF  
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Special pricing for qualified buyers; inquire with your agent! Stonecrop Meadows is Middlebury's newest neighborhood, located just 1/2 mile from downtown. Energy efficient, with mini split heating and cooling and whole-house ventilation. Open concept living on the first floor with a large kitchen, oversized island with seating, energy star appliances, and direct access to a private deck. Both two- and three-bedroom units are currently available, with 3-bedroom units including primary suites with spacious walk-in closet and en suite bath with double vanity. The lower level offers private garage parking, and a partially finished bonus room. Future community amenities will include green space, community garden and access to trails.



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## EXHIBITS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

expressive ability of monochrome photography. Juror Douglas Beasley selected approximately 35 images for exhibition in the Middlebury gallery, and 40

more for the online gallery. On view Jan. 31-Feb. 21.

### SPARROW ART SUPPLY

44 Main St., Middlebury  
For more info visit  
[sparrowartsupply.com](http://sparrowartsupply.com)

**"All That Glitters."**  
Featuring nearly 40 local artists, this New Year showcase highlights eye-catching metallics, iridescence, and the play of light, with works that

span subtle, soft glints to bold, radiant statements. An opening reception will be held on Wednesday,

Feb. 7, from 5-7 p.m. This free event is open to the public and will feature complimentary wine by

Lincoln Peak Vineyard and sparkling treats by Thistle and Honey Baking. On view through April 5.

## MOVE-IN READY BUNGALOW NEAR VERGENNES



**96 East Road Panton, VT 05491**  
Own a piece of Panton history. This cozy home was built in 1847 and was once a one-room school house. It was moved to this site and given a new purpose. The charming interior has wood walls and ceilings that make you feel like you are in a cozy cabin. The large living/ dining room offers ample space for seating areas and the light-filled windows make it the perfect spot for curling up with a book or inviting friends to watch the big game. The large deck with a hot tub, leads to a pool for the perfect place to enjoy the beautiful views and extensive landscaping. The roof was just replaced and the wood stove and mini split keep you comfortable year round.

**\$405,000**

**MLS#5027720**



Sean Dye,  
802-338-0136



Nancy Larrow,  
802-989-9653



Susan Burdick  
802-989-9058



Cory Foote  
802-349-7101



Galina Mencilr  
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**98 Peterson Terrace, Middlebury  
MLS #5027156 \$365,000**

Come see this spacious 3-bedroom ranch at an in-town location that is walkable to all Middlebury public schools, shopping, and the trail around Middlebury. There is a nice yard for gardening, pets, or anything you might like. Other features of this home: a large kitchen with lots of counter space, a spacious mud room and laundry room, 3 nice bedrooms plus an office, another office and a "man-cave" in the basement, new windows, and a 5-year-old roof. This is a really good in-town Middlebury home!



**Barnes Rd., Whiting  
MLS #5002820 \$229,000**

Imagine building your dream home on a sprawling 56 acre property on a tranquil country road. This expansive piece of land is a picturesque blend of diverse landscapes. Gently rolling pastures and stretches of woodland, a haven for wildlife, perfect for quiet nature walks. The mix of woods and open pastures creates a versatile environment, promising both beauty and utility. The site has been permitted with the state for construction of a three bedroom septic system. 20 minutes to Middlebury.



**Galvin Rd., Whiting  
MLS #5014731 \$175,000**

Build your Vermont dream house on this quiet country road just a short drive from Middlebury. The property features open pasture with beautiful Green Mountain views in the distance, offering plenty of space for building a home, with room for gardens and/or four legged friends. Surrounded by nature and the sounds of the country, it's an ideal spot for those seeking tranquility and a connection to the land. Close to Middlebury College, Brandon, hiking, skiing, and lakes.

**Champlain Valley  
Properties**

**70 Court Street, Middlebury, VT**

**802-989-7522 | [ChamplainValleyProperty.net](http://ChamplainValleyProperty.net)**





So much to love this February!

Opera Company of Middlebury

La Dolce Vita – Love Songs & Sweet Treats

Friday February 14th, 5:30pm

Doors Open at 5:00pm | Concert 5:30pm | Reception 6:30-7:30pm

Anderson Studio in Town Hall Theater’s New Wing  
Tickets: \$60 | Generous Ticket: \$100 (premium seating)

Celebrate love and music this Valentine’s Day with Opera Company of Middlebury! Two real-life couples present a concert of love songs in the brand-new Doug & Debby Anderson Performance Studio, followed by a wine and chocolate reception in the lounge.

With a silent jewelry auction from Jewels with a Purpose and sweet treats from local chocolatiers and bakeries, it is a fabulous evening that supports music in Middlebury!

Featuring Meredith Lustig and Michael Axtell, with OCM Favorites Allison and Cameron Steinmetz.



THT’s House of Jazz in partnership with Jazz Middlebury

Big Love with Dwight + Nicole

Friday February 14th, 8:00pm

Town Hall Theater’s Rothrock Main Stage

Tickets: Student \$15 | General \$25 | Table: \$35

This gorgeous Valentine’s Day show offers an intimate evening of live music in Town Hall Theater’s lounge-seating arrangement. Big Love with Dwight + Nicole features the genre-defying Dwight Ritcher and Nicole Nelson whose musical roots connect to blues, R&B, and soul, rock, alternative, and Americana sprinkled in. Ezra Oklan on drums, and Leon Campos on keys, as well as horns and back-up singers.

Dwight + Nicole have been nominated for 10 Boston Music Awards, 10 New England Music Awards, and 11 Daysies awards, winning multiple “Band of the Year,” “Vocalist of the Year,” “Best Blues/R&B Band,” “Female Vocalist of the Year,” “Blues Act of the Year” and “Video of the Year.”



What’s Coming Up

Jackson Gallery  
Presents  
**Paintings By H. Keith Wagner**  
Through March 15th  
Reception Feb 7 @ 5pm

Doug & Debby Anderson  
Studio Presents  
**The Great American Lyricists**  
Feb 8 @ 7:30pm  
Feb 9 @ 4pm & 7:30pm

MNFF Selects  
Presents  
**The Thin Blue Line**  
Feb 9 @ 3pm

Great Art  
Wednesday  
**My Architect**  
Feb 12 @ 11am

MCP  
**Morning’s At Seven**  
Feb 20 – 22 @ 7:30pm  
Feb 23 @ 2pm

THT’s Wintertide  
Series  
**Vermont Mandolin Trio**  
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