



## Cut & paste

No, not with a mouse. College students have collected a century of scrapbooks. See Arts + Leisure.



## Ice time

Both Tiger hockey teams hosted tough opponents on Feb. 14. See how they fared on Page 1B.



## Down the road

The food business Gilfeathers will move into a bigger space in Ferrisburgh. See Page 2A.

# ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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## A born entertainer

MIDDLEBURY FIGURE SKATING Club member Marigold Prentice glides through a number called “Love Story” during the Winter Carnival Ice Show on Sunday. See more photos on Pages 4A & 10A. Independent photo/Steve James

## Prosecutor draws scrutiny

Victims, advocates cite Vekos for mistakes, poor treatment

Part 1 of 2

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — As she prepares to defend herself against a DUI charge this spring, Addison County State’s Attorney Eva Vekos is touting a major rebound in her office.

In a recent press release, she specifically pointed to the hiring of a new deputy prosecutor, attorney Kai Hardy, and major advances in casework since she started the job. The county prosecutor’s office has shrunk, from 44.29% to 14.32%, its backlog of cases; reduced by 8% the volume of criminal cases, and seen a 70% decline in the number of pending criminal cases awaiting prosecution.

“Since March 2023 and today, our office has averaged a clearance rate of 112% per month,” Vekos stated in the release. “This means that for every new case that is brought to court, 1.12 cases are resolved (closed).”



EVA VEKOS

But not everyone is crowing about her accomplishments.

Numerous victims in criminal cases prosecuted by Vekos — particularly survivors of domestic and sexual assault cases — told the *Independent* they were dissatisfied with the way their cases were handled by the county’s top

prosecutor.

The *Independent* interviewed five victims and/or family members of victims associated with cases handled by Vekos. Those interviewed claimed that since she took office more than two years ago, Vekos has been late for court proceedings, unprepared for court business, at times addressed victims in a condescending manner, and seemed preoccupied with clearing the caseload at the expense of what they believed should be a harsher punishment for the defendant.

In addition to interviewing Vekos and several of those whose cases she handled, the *Independent* spoke with local victims’ advocates, lawmakers and officials involved in county courthouse proceedings. They shared their observations and, in some cases, correspondence between themselves and Vekos that they said demonstrates a level of (See Vekos, Page 12A)

## Scott’s plan targets Vt.’s career centers

Hannaford chief predicts major impacts

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Vermont Agency of Education officials and Gov. Phil Scott are touting a revamp of the state’s Career Technical Education (CTE) system that they believe will improve the quality and efficiency of the state’s 17 CTE hubs — including Addison County’s Patricia Hannaford Career Center (PHCC).

But Nicole MacTavish, PHCC superintendent, has a far different point of view.

“The details of his proposal ... would unfortunately do the opposite, resulting in significantly diminished CTE opportunities for Vermont students,” she wrote in a Feb. 11 email to leaders of the Addison County Chamber (See Career Ctr., Page 13A)

## Three vie for MAUSD board seats in Bristol

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — Bristol’s Town Meeting Day ballot on March 4 will feature a three-person race for two seats representing the town on the Mount Abraham Unified School District Board.

Elizabeth Sayre, Meredith Rossignol and Chanin Hill are running for the two available three-year terms. Rossignol and Sayre

currently serve on the panel.

The *Independent* reached out to the three candidates to hear more about their candidacy, experience and thoughts on key issues and changes to the state’s education funding system.

Their answers are printed below. Responses from Sayre were not available as the *Independent* went (See Bristol, Page 18A)



## Parenting on the fly

ERIN WOLCOTT MAKES the most of Sunday’s snow by pulling her 2-year-old daughter, Angie Mae Spencer, while skiing down South Maple Street in Vergennes.

Photo by Chris Spencer

## By the way



Bristol residents are invited to a Tuesday, Feb. 25, forum at Holley Hall titled, “Bristol Town Forum: Federal Policy and (See By the way, Page 18A)

## Eight seek spots on selectboard in Monkton

By MARIN HOWELL

MONKTON — Highlighting Town Meeting Day voting in Monkton are races for three seats on the town’s selectboard, which have opened up after a few longtime members decided to step down from their posts.

Eight candidates have stepped up to run for the spots. Those on the March 4 ballot are:

- Sam Peisch, lone candidate for the one year remaining on a three-year seat.
  - Matthew Huizenga, Anthony Delgreco, John Dunham and Randall Charboneau, for a two-year term.
  - Tom Steadman, Jessica Demeritt and Scott L. Gordon, for an open three-year seat.
- (See Monkton, Page 17A)

## \$49.5M sewer plant vote is coming

Midd officials say current facility needs makeover

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — You flush your toilet, you move on, right?

Well, people whose sewage ends up at Middlebury’s wastewater treatment plant are about to get a vivid reminder that there’s a lot more to removing waste than flushing.

Shire town residents on March 4 will be asked to endorse a \$49,580,000 makeover of that plant, which has already outlived its intended 20-year lifespan by almost five years

For more than two decades, Middlebury’s wastewater treatment plant has kept a low profile — both literally and figuratively.

Tucked away in a vale at the periphery of Middlebury’s industrial park off Exchange Street, the plant is both nowhere and everywhere; seemingly invisible, yet steadfastly linked to (See Sewer plant, Page 16A)



MIDDLEBURY WASTEWATER TREATMENT plant Superintendent Jeremy Rathbun points to a series of circuit breakers that ensure the facility stays powered up. The breakers are now antiquated, and it can take around four months for a replacement to come in.

Independent photo/Steve James

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# Historic Ferrisburgh church to become new home for Gilfeather’s

**By ANDY KIRKALDY**

FERRISBURGH — Preliminary work has begun to transform the former Ferrisburgh Methodist Church, on Route 7 next to Ferrisburgh’s town office building, into the new home of the nearby Gilfeather’s Fine Provisions, according to Rick and Nan Benson, the owners of the grocery, specialty food and takeout business.

The Bensons, a married couple who are business partners, bought what is commonly known as the Brown Church from the town of Ferrisburgh on Nov. 11 for \$100,000.

They paid that sum for a building on about a half-acre that contains, according to town records, about 2,200 square feet above ground, 1,800 square feet of finished basement, and about 20 parking spaces on a half-acre.

The price took into consideration the property needs major repairs and upgrades, including a new roof and septic system, stabilization of the 1891 building’s tower, lead and asbestos abatement, and some work to its foundation.

Rick Benson told the *Independent* he and his wife and business partner based their offer, which was less than half of a professionally appraised value, on financial considerations, including the cost of renovations and business income projections.

“It needs a lot of work before we can even start to build out our store,” he said.

Ferrisburgh was deeded the church early in 2023, when its dwindling congregation donated the property to the town. A public survey indicated support for conversion of the church into a childcare center, but several childcare providers looked at the property and ultimately decided not to make a bid.

Meanwhile the Bensons maintained an interest — and they made the only offer in June 2024. The board rejected it after a June 18 executive session. But meeting minutes also stated the board would

“consider a counter-offer.” About seven weeks later a deal was struck, and both sides said they were happy with the outcome.

“Everybody was content with it,” Rick Benson said.

Selectboard Chair Clark Hinsdale said ultimately it was the best decision the board could make for the town. He wrote in an email to the *Independent* that the Bensons met the board’s criteria for buyers that would benefit the community.

“Gilfeather’s is viewed as an important business in the village and converting that business from being a tenant to an owner helps secure its future,” Hinsdale wrote. “Additionally, the Bensons plan on making a substantial financial investment in the building.”

The board also pledged to use the proceeds from the sale to create a tangible and lasting benefit for the community, keeping a promise to the congregation, Hinsdale said. He told the *Independent* the selectboard plans after Town Meeting Day to hold one or more public meetings to seek input from residents on ideas for using the \$100,000.

The deal also includes provisions that the new owners dedicate 24 square feet inside their new business home to honoring the church’s rich history in the town, and that they also allow Ferrisburgh to use some of the property’s 20 parking places during Town Meeting Days and for special events at town hall’s community meeting room.

Hinsdale also in his earlier email noted the contract includes a provision that will allow the town “a degree of design control to protect the historic appearance of the church.” In a conversation this week he said the selectboard could review the plans, or possibly the town’s board of zoning authority could handle that task as part of its review of a required conditional use permit.

**BENSONS’ PLANS**

While the town’s plans might be a little uncertain, the Bensons’ motives are crystal clear. Rick Benson, who like his wife has years of experience in food service, said they need the space to grow their business. They



**GILFEATHER’S FINE PROVISIONS** will make the former Ferrisburgh Methodist Church, on Route 7 next to Ferrisburgh’s town hall, its new home by the end of the year. Gilfeather’s co-owners Rick and Nan Benson are lining up contractors to renovate the Ferrisburgh Methodist Church in their hometown of Ferrisburgh to be the new home of their nearby business. They plan to complete a historically sensitive renovation of the 1891 structure and to move their business there by the end of 2025.

Independent file photo/Steve James



**GILFEATHER’S FINE PROVISIONS’** owners Rick and Nan Benson pose behind the counter of the current home for their specialty food, grocery and takeout food business in Ferrisburgh. It is just down Route 7 from the former Ferrisburgh Methodist Church they plan to renovate and expand to by the end of the year. Independent photo/Andy Kirkaldy

have done well in 1,500 square feet, but more room will mean more basic grocery inventory, kitchen space, and employees.

Benson previously described Gilfeather’s to the *Independent* as “a specialty food market featuring restaurant-quality prepared foods to go” while also offering “fine wines, craft beers, artisanal cheeses, charcuterie, mustards, jams, chocolates, preserves and many more unique items from Vermont and beyond.”

While giving a quick tour of the premises on Tuesday, Benson said Gilfeather’s would add cases for meat and fish and expand into produce at its new home.

“We’re just scaling up what we do. We’re going to triple the size of our grocery offerings, and we’re going to basically quintuple the firepower of our kitchen,” he said.

Gilfeather’s remains known for its takeout food, with a regular menu of to-go sandwiches. Benson said the most popular are lobster rolls and spicy blueberry grilled cheese sandwiches.

They now have just one fulltime employee, Drew Price, and they hope to add up to four more full- and part-time employees when they open Gilfeather’s in the Brown Church.

“We want to make it so we don’t have to close the store when we want to take a break,” Benson said. “We can be open seven days a week. We can be open longer

*“We’re going to triple the size of our grocery offerings, and we’re going to basically quintuple the firepower of our kitchen.”*

— Rick Benson

hours.” Current hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

They also plan to add a full-size commercial entrance facing Route 7 and “a big deck” on the south side, according to Benson.

In addition to owning their own building rather than paying rent, Benson said the move and expense will be justified by the expansion of Gilfeather’s grocery offerings.

“The grocery section is the biggest part of our business. Yes, we do value-added food. We do sandwiches (and) all kinds of meals to go. We do pastries. But the biggest thing is groceries,” Benson said. “And this place is just limited in what we can offer. This will nearly triple our grocery offerings up there.”

All of the above will be in the upstairs and accessed from the front. The Bensons say they have no immediate plans for the basement other than storage, for business and construction purposes.

Certainly, the Bensons have

the experience to manage a larger operation. Rick Benson said he started out in a “fine dining French restaurant” in West Dover, and worked next in a café in Manchester, where the Bensons met and then operated for 12 years. After that, the couple made food service stops in the Magic Mountain Ski Area and a guest ranch in Montana.

Back in Vermont, Benson said Nan went into nursing, while he worked for restaurants in Burlington and a catering business before they opened a waterfront restaurant in Burlington.

They closed that venture in the 2008 recession, when they moved to Ferrisburgh and focused on what had been a secondary business, the Little Garden Market in Shelburne. Eventually they changed course again and signed a lease for Gilfeather’s when its tenants moved to another location.

Since then, Benson said business has been good at Gilfeather’s, which they will operate in place for the rest of 2025, and then, if all goes smoothly, move a couple hundred yards up north. Rick Benson is doing some basic demo and construction prep now to lay the groundwork for the historically sensitive renovations.

“We’ll be there by the end of the year, but we’re just getting started,” Benson said. “We’ve got a year now. We’ve got until the end of the year not to get in there. It might happen sooner, but it won’t happen later.”

## Transgender forum upsets some on Middlebury College campus

MIDDLEBURY — An upcoming discussion on what role the government should play in transgender people’s lives is getting the blood flowing on the Middlebury College campus.

A group called the Alexander Hamilton Forum is sponsoring “What is the Right Approach on Public Policy and Transgender Medicine?” in Wilson Hall this Thursday, Feb. 20, at 5 p.m. Only Middlebury College ID card holders will be let in to the talk.

Speaking will be Leor Sapir of the Manhattan Institute and Brianna Wu, the executive director of Rebellion PAC. Sponsors said the goal is to help the community think through the question put forth in the title of the presentation.


At the same time, a counter presentation will be held in Wilson Café, which is in the same building as the Alexander Hamilton Forum event.

A “Big Trans Dance Party” will begin at 4:30 p.m. outside McCullough Student Center (Wilson Hall) and then at 5 p.m. there will be a panel discussion “Trans Healthcare and Politics” in the café, announced Middlebury

senior Elio Farley, who describes himself as a community organizer with experience in queer youth nonprofit work.

A lively discussion on Reddit describes Sapir as a political scientist who insists trans suicide statistics are made up. Some people describe Brianna Wu as a transgender woman who casts skepticism on the efficacy of trans healthcare.

Others on the forum support the speakers, or at least support hearing what they have to say as a way to hold a dialogue with people who disagree.




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HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE gather on the Bristol green (above) and Middlebury Court Square (below) Monday seeking an end to the chaos engendered by President Trump, who is challenging federal laws. Photos courtesy of Jim Mendell, Tom Pollak and Dorothy Mammen

# President sparks big protests

Hundreds gather in cold demanding Trump follow laws



ELLEN POWELL, MAX KINDLUND AND WES, EMERSON AND BABY MILO



SARAH STOTT

ADDISON COUNTY — Monday saw several hundred local people recognize Presidents Day, an official federal holiday, by protesting the work of President Donald Trump and his increasingly powerful associate, Elon Musk.

Uncounted passersby cheered them on at rallies in Bristol and Middlebury.

One observer in Middlebury reported that 120-150 people braved windchill temperatures down to 0 degrees Fahrenheit to ring Court Square with posters, songs, chants and waving, in protest of many actions of the presidential administration, Musk and his self-created agency, which he calls the “Department of Government Efficiency,” or DOGE.

The rally was sponsored by Indivisible Middlebury, and it was one of hundreds of similar protests happening across the country.

Cars rounding the square honked and waved back. The rally provided a way for area residents to express their deep concerns, to support each other by coming together, and also to raise the visibility of Indivisible Middlebury, which was formed to take action in response to what it deems to be illegal and unconstitutional acts. Anyone interested in receiving update emails from Indivisible Middlebury can drop the group an email at [indivisiblemiddlebury@gmail.com](mailto:indivisiblemiddlebury@gmail.com).

In the same spirit, Northeast Addison County Indivisible rolled out around 100 people on the Bristol Town Green on Monday at noon. The signs’ wording ranged from one word — “Resist” — to a banner saying, “Musk is coming for us all.”

“Americans are furious and terrified by what Trump is doing,” said Sarah Stott, one of the organizers. “Today’s rally enabled folks to come together to express their outrage, share their concerns with their neighbors and think about what power we do have to stop the dismantling of our democracy.”

Protesters in Middlebury were equally fired up.

“Democracy dies in silence. Silence is complicity. We will not be complicit,” said Jack Mayer, saying Trump and Musk have quickly created chaos and damaged American institutions.

“Democracies die by the indifference of their citizens,” Meyer continued. “Trump won the election by 1.5% of the vote, and less than 50%. Hardly a mandate. Yet he has begun governing as if he has been given carte blanche to rule as an autocrat, with his unelected oligarch tech co-conspirator Elon Musk at his side and following the playbook of Project 2025.”

He urged like-minded people to reach out at [indivisiblemiddlebury@gmail.com](mailto:indivisiblemiddlebury@gmail.com).



## \$3.5M bond OK'd for city/Panton water mains

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — Residents of Vergennes and Panton on Wednesday, Feb. 12, voted in favor of bonds and/or loans of up to \$3.52 million to fund replacing almost a mile of the Vergennes/Panton Water District’s (VPWD’s) most troubled water mains, both in Vergennes and Ferrisburgh.

In balloting held at the VPWD office in Vergennes that Wednesday the tally ran in favor of the district’s request, 57-13.

The lines to be replaced sometime next year run are in three main sections:

- Along Main Street in Vergennes between its intersections with Monkton Road and Green Street, a stretch that VPWD Superintendent Deming said testing showed to be problematic, including “low fire flow issues.”
- From the intersection of Main Street and Monkton Road along

the length of Monkton Road to Route 7, a stretch that has sprung leaks in recent years.

- From the intersection of Route 7 and Monkton Road “all the way out past the railroad tracks” into Ferrisburgh for about a quarter mile “or maybe a little more,” per Deming. The VPWD serves customers in some areas of Ferrisburgh next to Vergennes and Panton.

Deming had said a positive result would mean the project would go out to bid this year and work would begin in 2026.

Deming also said VPWD 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, which is being engineered and will be overseen by Hoyle, Tanner & Associates Inc. of Burlington.

According to Deming, there are

several problems with the lines to be replaced, including simply their age — some date back almost a century. Other lines are only six inches in diameter and will be replaced by to 12-inch pipes. All the new lines, about 5,000 feet in all, will be copper, replacing outdated materials, he said.

One unknown at this point is the exact impact of the bond on ratepayers. The good news, district officials said, is the district is paying off another loan this year with an annual debt service of \$90,000, thus at least in part offsetting any new future bond payments.

VPWD Board Member Patricia Granson said before the vote that “there will be some added capacity with the pipe replacement along Main Street, but this project is mainly intended to improve the existing service and fire response needs.”



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Editorial

Reckless actions, lack of concern, hurt all of us

The slash-and-burn strategy of the Trump administration’s reduction-in-force actions, and its support by this lemming-like Republican Congress, is as wasteful and destructive as it is idiotic.

The destructive waste is demonstrated daily. Employees dealing with nuclear waste and arms are laid off one day by Elon Musk’s DOGE, then frantically tried to be rehired the next day only to find their emails and contact information already trashed and unworkable. Billions of dollars of renewable subsidies put in place these past three years (to lower the nation’s carbon emissions, which benefits the world and our local environment) are suddenly halted and replaced with policies that reverse that progress, plus allow foreign competitors to leapfrog ahead of us in industries that will determine the world’s future. Thousands of national park and national forest service employees are laid off, only to find that they laid off the one employee who has the keys to almost all of Yosemite’s facilities, while two-hour lines formed at the Grand Canyon entranceway the next day because four employees manning the entranceway were fired — and this in an system whose workforce is down 15% since 2010, while visitation has increased 16% to over 100 million annually. Making it worse, Trump’s team halted the hiring of thousands of part-time summer employees with the National Park Service right when those applications should be in process. (In short, the national parks will be a mess this summer and millions of dollars will be lost out of the \$56.5 billion in revenue the parks generated last year).

But that’s just scaping the surface. Thousands of workers whose job it is to improve farm efficiencies, food and health safety were dismissed for no reason, as were employees at the Federal Aviation Administration after a raft of airline accidents caused in part by a shortage of staff. Research grants that make our lives healthier (developing the cure for cancers, and so forth,) and making our industries stronger were cut on a whim, while the decimation of agencies like FEMA won’t be missed until disasters are at our doorsteps — and overwhelmed states are left holding the bag. And on and on and on.

It is one giant obscenity after another.

And yet the MAGA crowd is cheering.

One wonders if they are deaf, dumb and blind — and I apologize for being so rude, but let’s be real. What Trump is doing is harming all Americans and many of our (former) friends around the world.

No one disputes there has been growth in the federal bureaucracy over the past several decades and it could be trimmed. But that’s done with a purposeful strategy, not by destroying agencies first and trying to rebuild them later. That’s idiotic.

And you don’t get rid of agencies like USAID without understanding the value of what they have provided — 60 years of “soft power” that has established democracy as something nations aspire to versus becoming authoritarian — and having an informed discussion with Congress about it. It doesn’t take a genius to understand that the more democratic nations we have in the world who subscribe to the rule of law, the safer America and Americans are. On the contrary, to have Trump discard the importance of humanitarian aid, and embrace the lawlessness of dictatorships, destroys in a heartbeat more than 100 years of successful diplomacy and statecraft.

And trust, once lost, is not easily regained — particularly true when the world watched as the American public narrowly elected a known criminal, a tax cheat, a convicted felon and a president twice impeached, who was also charged with trying to overthrow an election. If this electorate can knowingly elect such a president, and the president turns out to be the demagogic dictator he said he’d be, why would they ever again trust America (at least when Republicans are in power) as a faithful ally?

Adding insult to the injury Trump has already caused, his blatant lie this Wednesday that Ukraine started the war with Russia as a reason he’s favoring Russia over Ukraine is catastrophic — for Ukraine, especially, but also for America’s standing in the world. Trump is now Putin’s lackey. Nor is it smart. You don’t spend \$175 billion dollars (not \$350 billion as Trump erroneously claimed) over the past three years in defense of a friendly country, and Europe, to then throw it away by selling out your ally on multiply counts before peace talks even begin! That’s the worst negotiating ever.

And just in case area readers haven’t heard what our European friends are saying, or watch too much Fox News, here’s a snippet:

“I’m afraid we’ve never been this close to Orwell’s ‘war is peace, freedom is slavery, and ignorance is strength’ before,” said the Czech Republic’s Interior Minister Vit Rakusan.

Or this from Jean-Yves Le Drian, a former French foreign minister: “What’s happening is very bad. It’s a reversal of the state of the world since 1945. It’s our security he’s putting at risk,” he said, referring to Trump’s support of Putin. It is also, he said, an “inversion of the truth... The victim becomes the attacker. It’s the law of the strongest. Tomorrow, it could be Moldova and after tomorrow, it could be Estonia because Putin won’t stop.”

And, of course, it sets the stage for China to invade Taiwan with nary a concern that Trump would stop them.

If Trump’s legacy is to align America with dictators like Russia’s Vladimir Putin and turn our backs on the democracies of Europe and the United Kingdom, it admittedly fits his character and with the spineless leadership of today’s Republican Party, but it betrays the trust of many Americans who voted for him.

Moreover, like so much else with Trump’s actions these first 30 days, what’s so damning is that it’s done without any understanding or recognition of the consequences. The problem for Americans, and for much of the world, is those consequences will likely have negative impacts on us all.

Angelo Lynn



Oh, the artistry

JOE MEHLE SKIMS across the ice in Kenyon Arena on Sunday during the Winter Carnival Ice Show number “Do You Love Me.” His black shirt with white polka dots perfectly complements his fellow skaters’ white skirts with black polka dots.

Independent photo/Steve James

SNL still speaks truth to power

This past weekend, “Saturday Night Live” celebrated 50 years on the air with a series of programs, culminating in Sunday night’s three-hour anniversary special. The show featured a virtual chorus line of past and present cast members, hosts, sketches and characters from its roller coaster half century on NBC.

It was a treat — a testament to the immense creativity and sheer madness of SNL’s unique run. I enjoyed the show immensely but I was not prepared for the grand finale, Paul McCartney performing the medley of songs that closes side two of the Beatles’ classic “Abbey Road” album: “Golden Slumbers,” “Carry That Weight” and “The End.”

This six-minute performance touched me deeply, and to my great surprise, triggered no small amount of sadness as well.

The most obvious reason: The Beatles were the soundtrack of my youth and set rock & roll as the North Star of my life. I’ve always loved “Abbey Road,” and seeing Paul perform it — with admirable energy for an 82-year-old — was utterly inspiring.

Secondly, I had just turned 13 when SNL went on the air in 1975. I devoured it every week for the first few seasons and watched regularly ever since. I had the soundtrack record, I quoted the sketches. That stuff’s in my DNA.

Lastly, we are in an unprecedented and terrifying time in American history. Our nation, the people we love and services we depend on are under threat as never before in my lifetime.

So seeing a great night of comedy close with “And in the end, the love you take/Is equal to the love you make” landed on my heart like a bowling ball. I asked

myself: Is this the end? Have I given enough? Is there more joy and laughter to come, or will the darkness keep encroaching for the rest of my days?

Maybe this was just a Boomer moment; maybe it was more. Music and comedy have given brave artists the chance to call out feckless leaders and urge cultural change for far longer than the last 50 years. And those two streams have never intersected more powerfully or frequently than on SNL. These vital avenues of expression are now under attack by the wanton authoritarianism of the Musk/Trump/Vance administration. They have already squelched major broadcast outlets and signaled their intentions to silence PBS and NPR. How long until our Dear Leader rechristens the Kennedy Center the Trump Center? It may already have happened by the time you read this.

As Sir Paul waved to the adoring crowd, I found myself reflecting on the threat to our liberal society, where free expression and questioning of authority may no longer be tolerated. In a nation that prides itself on protecting freedom, Trump and his minions diminish us all with their dangerous plans to muzzle dissent, literally punishing the exercise of our right to free speech.

Someone should whisper some words of wisdom to Trump: Let Us Be.

Lincoln resident Tom Van Sant is a 22-year employee of the Addison Independent sales staff, and worked for 17 years as a radio personality and programmer in Vermont and California. His first Beatles album was “Revolver.”

Clippings

By Tom Van Sant



At last, winter comes to Vermont

Finally, we’re having a proper Vermont winter.

In contrast, two Februarys ago I was walking on bare trails in the woods. A year ago, Mark and I were playing pickleball outside almost every weekend.

The mild weather was, as I’m sure you’d agree, a nightmare.

I’ll concede that the past few winters, lacking the constant physical discomfort of a typical northern winter, made life easy. Pleasant, even. But that’s not the deal.

My Vermont residency agreement specifically stated that I would be cooped up inside and inconvenienced by bitter weather for up to six months each year. I don’t want to sound litigious, but have you ever heard the phrase “breach of contract”?

Luckily, this year was different from the start. We got seasonably chilly temperatures, a couple inches of snow every few days and a rare white Christmas. We were having the kind of winter that non-Vermonters picture when they think of Vermont: snowy enough to look pretty but not so threatening as to make people gas up their generators.

It was better than nothing.

Then one morning a few weeks ago, I heard a plow scudding by at around 4 a.m. That sound, 50 years

later, still gives me a surge of childhood joy. Snow day!

Now we were getting somewhere.

Last week, I noticed a strange energy among my coworkers and fellow grocery shoppers, an edge I traced to the weather alerts we were all receiving. The National Weather Service had issued an actual winter storm watch for the weekend.

Word spread quickly as we compared forecasts and predictions. Would we get a foot of snow? More? Would there be a damaging ice storm? We spoke in serious tones, but our twinkling eyes revealed our secret giddiness.

Friday, when the storm watch got upgraded to a warning, it was all we could do not to jump around and squeal like contestants on “The Price Is Right.” We stocked up on staples as if 10 inches of snow might cut us off from civilization for weeks rather than just forcing us to drive a little slower in the morning.

Establishments that would normally be open on Sunday closed preemptively. Events got rescheduled. People cancelled their plans. This was it: winter as it was meant to be.

When Mark and I woke up Sunday, we found

(See Jessie, Page 5A)



Around the bend

By Jessie Raymond

Letters to the Editor

Library trustee seeks reelection

I am Elizabeth “Betsy” Almeter, currently a Trustee on the Lawrence Memorial Library Board. I have served a three-year term and am seeking re-election on March 4 as a *write-in* Candidate for a *one-year term*. I will continue to do my best to ensure that Lawrence Memorial Library remains a well-managed and welcoming space for all, and I fully support the Director, Katie Male-Riordan and the staff. I am sincerely dedicated to connecting people with needed resources in a fiscally responsible, socially respectful manner, with integrity, accuracy and confidentiality.

I have lived and volunteered in Bristol for 14 years. Presently, I am a Coordinator for the local Have-A-Heart Food Shelf, I volunteer for the Rec Dept and Rec Club in various capacities, and help serve meals at the Mason’s Senior Lunches. In the past, I volunteered in a Bristol Elementary classroom for several years, and I served on a non-profit board in New York state. I worked in college and high school libraries and have been a devoted library patron in every town I have lived in. Being on the library board is especially appealing to me as libraries, with their books and diverse program offerings, have been a haven for me throughout my life.

Elizabeth “Betsy” Almeter  
Bristol

Many question Gov’s ed plan

The Governor’s education plan falls way short. The changes he and Secretary Saunders propose involve massive disruptions in school administration with enormous implications for students, teachers, families, and communities. You can access the Secretary’s 1/22/25 PowerPoint slide deck at: <https://tinyurl.com/ykes6dt4>.

At Monday’s legislative breakfast, Feb. 10, in Vergennes, Addison County legislators and community members aired many concerns and posed many questions about the education plan. I encourage community members to attend the next legislative breakfast on Monday, Feb. 24 (breakfast at 7 — RSVP, meeting from 7:30-8:45). There is a legislative lunch planned for Middlebury on Saturday, March 8, from 10:30-12:30 (RSVP for lunch that follows), which may fit into work schedules better.

You can access live stream and recorded Legislative Committee meetings here: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/committee/streaming/> The Education Committee meets in the afternoon, and you can access recordings later at your convenience.

As cited in VTDigger, Rep. Peter Conlon, D-Cornwall, the Education Committee’s chair, said, “[The education plan is] very provocative ... and we need provocative.” The plan is certainly provocative, stimulating a great deal of conversation, concern, and speculation about the non-existent details. This plan, and any changes, is sure to significantly impact students, families, teachers, communities. I encourage all who can to participate in the conversation!

Christina Wadsworth  
Weybridge

**ACSD budget merits support**

On March 4, Addison Central School District voters will have the opportunity to vote on the ACSD FY26 spending plan. With the educational changes being discussed in Montpelier, I believe it is especially important to exercise your right to vote to show your support of public education.

To further your understanding of the Board-approved FY26 budget, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight several key aspects of the proposed spending plan.

- The FY26 spending plan was developed to protect and preserve the trust of our voters, advance the

(See Wilson letter, Page 5A)

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# Letters to the Editor

## His kitchen offers a window on majesty of nature

I can see a lot of nature out my kitchen window. It is 4 feet wide and its bottom is low so I can see the ground close by. First is the back yard, with a blue heron walking through, rarely, and lots of birds on the feeder that is suspended from a wire. Beyond the backyard is a creek that floods when a lot of rain comes down. Then 800 feet of hay field and a wooded ridge beyond. Once a heron caught a mouse near the house and executed and ate it.

I used to get a lot more English sparrows that swished their beaks sideways to push seeds onto the ground, attracting rats. A downy woodpecker likes to store seeds by packing them into checks (splits from drying) in the fence post, just left of the feeder, driving them in with its bill. Then a hairy woodpecker, an inch longer, also

with a red spot on the top of its head, would chisel some seeds back out to eat, on a snowy day. A big Blue Jay would hang on tight to the small feeder, and Mr. and Mrs. Cardinal, stop by for fill ups. But the seeds on the ground attract rats, but birds ate grounded seeds too. More bird types are seen in the summer like Baltimore orioles.

The heron caught a frog in the summer, near the house, and threw it on the ground a few times so it wouldn't be alive and wiggle inside it. It did the same when it caught a 6-inch fish. One year a white egret visited too, but the egret and heron ignored each other. It is hard to think that such big birds as herons make nests high in trees.

Sometimes in the fall a few deer would graze the hay field late in the day, usually after third cut.

They mostly come at night and their prints in the snow can be seen the next day. Also, fox and bobcat and other night tracks are found.

On the top of the ridge is the solstice pine tree. The sun slants down from the south and goes down behind the roots of the tree on 22 December, from the kitchen window. If I sit on the porch to the left of the window, the sun sets to the left of the tree. Then watch its progress north from the tree all winter and spring, till the point of Summer Solstice, when the sun "stands still",

All summer, the sun sets further south and days get shorter, as the sun heads to the Solstice Tree, and the sun sets at the same spot (stands still) for a few days.

**Peter Grant  
Bristol**

# Wilson letter

*(Continued from Page 4A)*

work of the Board's Strategic Plan, and honor the values that have led to widespread and historic support of public education within our ACSD community.

- At the forefront, the plan was developed with financial transparency and equity-based budgeting principles.
- The plan includes a strong focus on academic achievement in mathematics and literacy, a deepened commitment to equity, and prioritizes student experience and success based on student proficiency data.
- The plan invests in a high quality licensed educator workforce.
- The plan reduces the district's per pupil education spending by over 6%. It is worth noting that a status quo budget based on FY25 would have increased our total education spending by over 6%, due primarily to increases in healthcare benefits and wages. To provide much needed relief to our taxpayers, the board directed

the superintendent to cap these increases to 2%.

- The district employed a "zero basis" budgeting approach to ensure our spending is strategically tied to our goals. This process achieved spending reductions, some of which the district is proposing to reinvest into staffing and programming tailored to achieve our 5-year strategic plan improvement targets.
- The plan increases rural elementary school classroom sizes to comply with the district's class size policy.
- Just over a million dollars of this budget is devoted to assisting students to make accelerated progress in mathematics and literacy in grades K-8. The ACSD Board's strategic plan calls for at least 80% of ACSD students to meet grade-level expectations in mathematics and literacy by 2029.
- In response to the strategic plan targets of increasing 4-year graduation rates to at least 90% by 2029, the plan also includes additional funding for our high

school's Flexible Pathways initiative to provide students greater access to dual enrollment and early college opportunities, and new avenues for blended/virtual learning and work-based learning placements.

- The spending plan also dedicates resources to eliminate bias-based harm and strengthen informed and safe school community cultures for all students and staff.

Further information on the FY26 spending plan can be found at our ACSD website under the ACSD FY26 Budget Development tab ([www.acsdvt.org/district-link/fy26budget](http://www.acsdvt.org/district-link/fy26budget)). You are also encouraged to attend our Annual Meeting and Public Information Hearing, which will be held at the Middlebury Union High School on Feb. 25 at 7 p.m.

**Barbara Wilson  
Shoreham**

*Editor's note, the writer is chair of the ACSD board but is writing here as a knowledgeable citizen, not on behalf of the board.*

# Jessie

*(Continued from Page 4A)*

ourselves snowed in (just until the plow truck came through, but still). We huddled by the wood stove as if it were our key to survival. I knitted and waited, with no luck, for the lights to flicker.

This was what we had been waiting for.

Monday, life returned to normal, although the snow made every chore, from feeding the chickens to bringing in the mail, a slog.

The fun was wearing off.

During the 20 minutes it took me to clean off my car, my mood soured. My winter boots, which had apparently renounced their waterproof properties sometime over the summer, soaked up snow

that turned to ice water between my toes, flash-freezing them.

I had to climb over snowbanks and through drifts to reach the roof of the car. I winced as I banged the ice off the windshield wipers; my winter hangnails and dry, cracked cuticles felt the pain of every strike. When I brushed off the car roof, gusts of snow blew back in my face and down my neck.

As I scraped the icy windows, my resentment of the weather grew. I thought wistfully of the days of summer when the only labor required for a drive into town was to slip on a pair of sandals.

The final blow to my equanimity came when the head of the long-handled snow brush unscrewed

itself mid-sweep and flew over the car into the deep snow. "Great," I said (only I used a different word, repeatedly).

I tromped around the car and reached into the bank to retrieve the brush head. In the process, a generous helping of snow slipped into the space between my cuff and mitten, causing the dermal equivalent of a brain freeze on the inside of my wrist.

I roared wordlessly in frustration and despair. In that moment, I hated everything.

And then I smiled — not in spite of my misery but because of it.

This, I reminded myself, is how a proper Vermont winter is supposed to feel.

# AI and the uncertain future

*Fourth and final in a series.*

By HÉCTOR VILA

Throughout this series on artificial intelligence, we've explored its fundamentals, examined its environmental impact, and analyzed its implications for governance. Now let's turn to perhaps the most crucial question: How do we prepare for the future that lies ahead?

In an era of rapidly evolving artificial intelligence (AI), predictions feel foolhardy. Yet history offers us a compass — helping us locate our present moment before we chart our course forward.

"Civilizations are born from the marriage of bureaucracy and mythology," writes Yuval Noah Harari in *Nexus: A Brief History of Information Networks from the Stone Age to AI*. "The computer-based network is a new type of bureaucracy that is far more powerful and relentless than any human-based bureaucracy we've seen before."

AI is reshaping fields from medicine to law, education to governance. Like every technological revolution before it, AI brings both promise and peril — and the familiar chorus of early warnings. The unknown is difficult to face, but that which is to come, that which we did not plan is the true future. Are we ready?

The Industrial Revolution, while transforming manufacturing and commerce, inadvertently sowed the seeds of environmental degradation. As factories and cities expanded, this period also ignited crucial debates about governance — whether nation states or imperial powers were better equipped to manage such rapid social and economic changes. Today, these historical tensions have evolved into what might be called "a struggle of systems" — authoritarian state capitalism, as exemplified by China, versus the open markets and deregulated capitalism of the United States.

Artificial intelligence blurs the traditional lines between authoritarian and market-driven systems. While China harnesses AI for centralized control and surveillance, Western democracies find their open markets increasingly shaped by AI-driven monopolies and algorithmic governance.

The technology challenges

both systems' core premises: China's authoritarian control faces the decentralizing force of AI innovation (China is scared of this reality), while America's free market ideology confronts the reality of AI concentrating power in fewer corporate hands (see Elon Musk, Sam Altman, et al.). This creates a new paradigm where neither pure state control nor unfettered capitalism fully captures how AI is reshaping power, economics and society.

In the AI age, clear, open communication, and transparency, will create stability, but we are far from this goal looking at the first month of the Trump Presidency.

**TRANSFORMATIONAL**

AI is digitally transforming work. We need to prepare for AI augmenting (rather than simply replacing) human work. This means developing skills in AI collaboration — learning to write effective prompts, verify AI

AI governance — from data privacy to algorithmic bias to the concentration of AI power. These frameworks need to be flexible enough to adapt to rapidly evolving technology while providing meaningful protection.

Cities, transportation systems and public services will need to prepare for integration with AI systems — from traffic management to healthcare delivery. This requires both technical upgrades and public education about these changes. None of this we have or are we even planning for.

Our challenge is that this way of restructuring society must be built in a contentious political period where no one party is a majority, so consensus, which is crucial, is nearly impossible, and perhaps merely a bygone dream.

**THE CHALLENGE**

We face an unprecedented need to adapt across multiple fronts.

The immediate future demands we master AI collaboration in our work, reshape education to emphasize distinctly human capabilities, and build economic and social systems resilient enough to weather rapid change.

We must simultaneously develop new frameworks for verifying information, create flexible but robust AI governance, and prepare our infrastructure for AI integration. This isn't just about technological readiness — it's about fostering a society that can thoughtfully navigate the profound transformations ahead while preserving human agency and social cohesion.

I am not optimistic we can do this.

In the current White House, as E.O. Wilson says in *The Social Conquest of Earth*, the inhabitant "is a waking dreamer, caught between the fantasies of deep sleep and the chaos of the real world." Wilson continues, "We have created a Star Wars civilization, with Stone Age emotions, medieval institutions, and god-like technology." Thus, "We are terribly confused by the mere fact of our existence, and a danger to ourselves and to the rest of life."

So, Wilson warns, "We thrash about."

This is exactly where we find ourselves with President Trump, who sees AI as a competitive game, not a life-changing and life-threatening technology that will leave no one unaffected. So, he adds to the confusion, insistent on a feudal system that is diametrically opposed to the promises, and needs, of AI.

*Hector Vila is an associate professor of Writing & Rhetoric at Middlebury College.*



**HECTOR VILA**  
Associate Professor of Writing and Rhetoric at Middlebury College

outputs, and identify tasks where human judgment remains essential. Fields from law to medicine will require professionals who can skillfully combine AI tools with human expertise.

And because the human element is crucial, we must change how we perceive *Education*.

Educationally, adaptation is key.

Schools and universities need to rapidly evolve — not just teaching technical AI skills, but emphasizing distinctly human capabilities like critical thinking, ethical reasoning and creative problem-solving, the hallmark of the Liberal Arts. We'll need to rethink testing and assessment in a world where AI can easily complete traditional assignments. Anything that's static will be removed by AI, educational tools and pedagogy, especially.

We should also prepare for accelerated economic change.

This means developing systems for rapid reskilling, strengthening social safety nets, and creating new frameworks for managing AI-driven inequality. Small businesses particularly need support in adopting AI tools to remain competitive.

As AI-generated content becomes indistinguishable from human-created content, we need new systems for verifying information and maintaining trust. This includes both technical solutions and broader digital literacy education.

And we need to prepare for complex policy decisions around

## Elderly Services Inc. ESI College

### Cole Porter

Tuesday, March 4, 10-11:30 AM  
Congregational Church of Middlebury

Dilettante, hedonist, elitist, snob: Cole Porter was called all of them during his glittering yet troubled life, but his reputation as a musical genius has never been questioned. The lecture, presented by **Robert Wyatt**, surveys Porter's life on Broadway and in Hollywood, covering 40 years that produced 33 stage works and the music for 23 films. Included are rare archival film clips and recordings of Ethel Merman, Fred Astaire, Louis Armstrong and Bing Crosby, along with Porter himself singing and playing "You're the Top" — which he was.

**Register Now!**  
at <https://elderlyservices.org/esi-college-spring-2025/>  
or call  
**802.388-3983**

### King Arthur and the British Empire

Tuesday, March 11, 10-11:30 AM  
Congregational Church of Middlebury

The mythical King Arthur supposedly conquered all of Britain, Ireland, Scandinavia, France and Italy, becoming an example for ambitious English kings who sought to recreate his so-called "British empire." Arthur's reputation lived into the 18th century, and the notion of an empire persisted down into the 1960s. Presented by **Paul Monod**, retired professor of British and European history at Middlebury College, this is the story behind an aspect of the Arthur myth that is today very little known.

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ADDISON  
COUNTY

Obituaries

Louise Ardel Grace Ross, 89,  
of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Louise Ardel Grace Ross, 89, of Middlebury, Vt., passed away peacefully on January 7, 2025, in her home.

Born in Potsdam, N.Y., in 1935 to the late Margaret (Whitney) and Dr. Reginald L. Grace, she graduated from Potsdam High School in 1952 and married her true love, Donald A. Ross.

Louise was a devoted wife, mother, a lover of animals, and a faithful member of New Haven United Reformed Church. She was an artistic quilter and an avid writer who loved creating custom cards to stay in touch with her

family and friends.

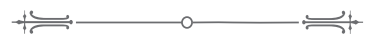
She is predeceased by her husband and her brother Ken Grace. She is survived by her sister Anne O’Brien (Hilton Head) and her two sons: Donald Ross, Jr. of Neckartailfingen, Germany, grandson, Marc (Danielle) and great-grandson, Noah of Colorado Springs, Colo., and Scott Ross (Janet) and granddaughter Margaret of Wilmington, Del. A private burial will be held in Potsdam, N.Y.

Memorial donations may be sent to the Grace Family Nursing Scholarship at Canton College Foundation, 34 Cornell Drive,



LOUISE GRACE ROSS

Canton, NY 13617 or online: [SUNYalumni.canton.edu/g/scholarships](http://SUNYalumni.canton.edu/g/scholarships). ♦



Paul W. Sherman, 87, of Monkton

MONKTON — Paul W. Sherman, 87, of Monkton, Vt., passed away on Feb. 2, 2025, at the McClure Miller Respite House. He was born May 29, 1937, in Granville, N.Y., to Earl and Mildred Sherman.

Paul graduated from Granville High School in 1954 and attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He began employment in 1956 in Hudson Falls, then Glens Falls, N.Y. with Kamy, Inc., a Scandinavian company, and engaged in the engineering and construction of specialized processes and equipment for the pulp and paper industry. In 1958 Paul married Linda Shema of Granville, N.Y., and they settled in Hudson Falls, N.Y., raising two children.



PAUL W. SHERMAN

After gaining experience in the industry, Paul became a project engineering manager. During a slowdown in the paper industry, the company branched out into metal ore processing systems for both tungsten and gold. Paul’s work in both the pulp and paper industry and ore processing took him on many trips throughout the United States, Canada, Sweden, Finland and South Africa. Kamy eventually became Ahlstrom and then later Andritz, and when the division relocated to Roswell, Ga., Paul and Linda relocated to Canton, Ga., in 1990. Paul retired in 1994 although he continued to work part time for Andritz until 2002.

Although Paul and Linda enjoyed their time in the south, where they also were close to Paul’s brother and his family, they returned north in 2002 to build a home near their daughter in Monkton, Vt.

For many years both in the northeast and the south Paul and Linda enjoyed attending a variety of events such as county fairs, antique and flea markets, craft fairs, music and fall festivals, auto races and historical parks, sightseeing and picnicking across

snowshoeing, especially at the Saratoga Battlefield grounds.

When not outdoors Paul was an avid reader and student of the physical sciences with a special interest in space travel. He loved old, noir movies, Sci-Fi and soundtracks. Also, as a music lover, for decades every week and until his death every radio in the house was tuned to the Metropolitan Opera Saturday Matinee live broadcast.

In recent years Paul enjoyed joining in at the many holiday gatherings with Deborah and her husband Peter’s extended family. Paul’s quiet and gracious presence will be missed.

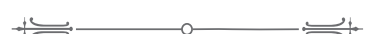
Paul leaves behind his daughter, Deborah Sherman, and his son-in-law Peter James of Weybridge, Vt., and his extended family: nieces and nephews Vic and (Tory) Werne and Karen Potter of Georgia and Kip and (Sandy) Potter of North Carolina; Stevens and Sherman cousins in the Whitehall and Granville, N.Y., area; as well as friends in New York, Georgia and Vermont. He is predeceased by his wife, Linda; son, Eric; and a brother and sister-in-law, Kenneth and Rosellen Potter of Acworth, Ga.

The family wishes to express gratitude to the many wonderful and caring staff at Addison County Home Health and Hospice, whose assistance and care helped to make it possible for Paul to remain at home for as long as possible.

A graveside burial service will be held in the spring at the Mettowee Valley Cemetery in Granville, N.Y. Date and time to be announced.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Paul’s memory to Addison County Home Health and Hospice at 254 Ethan Allen Hwy., New Haven, VT 05472.

Arrangements under the direction of Sanderson-Ducharme Funeral Home. Online condolences at [www.sandersonfuneralservice.com](http://www.sandersonfuneralservice.com). ♦



James Forrest Torrey, 74,  
of Shoreham



JAMES FORREST TORREY

SHOREHAM — James Forrest Torrey, 74, passed away unexpectedly Friday, Feb. 14, 2025, at his home in Shoreham.

He was born October 1, 1950, in Shoreham, the son of Forrest and Iola (Howe) Torrey.

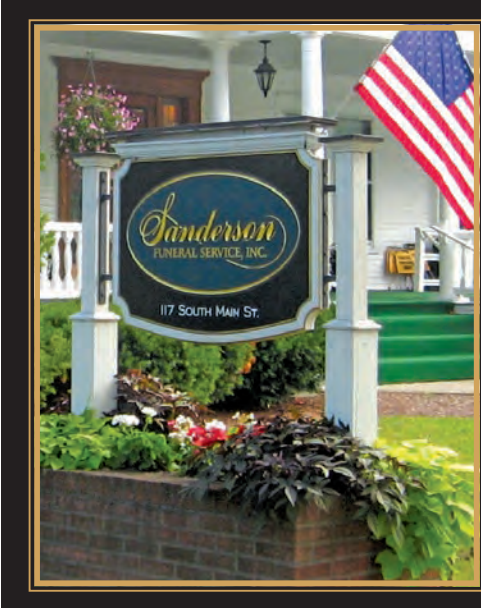
He enjoyed tinkering in the barn and NASCAR, and was a life-long hunter.

James is survived by his wife Ann; a son Kenneth and wife Amy

of Orwell, a daughter Miranda and husband Vegar Boe of Middlebury; seven grandchildren Lili, Cayden, Gunnar, Jacob, Hailey, Eirik, and Elizabeth; and by his five sisters.

He was predeceased by a brother and parents.

There will be no services at this time. To send online condolences to his family please visit [www.brownmcclayfuneralhomes.com](http://www.brownmcclayfuneralhomes.com). ♦



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Elvira McGovern Flight, 94, Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Elvira McGovern Flight, known as Vera, died peacefully on Dec. 14, 2024, after living a long and productive life. She was 94 years old and lived at Eastview in Middlebury.

She was born in 1930 in the front bedroom at the house she would share with her immediate family, her maternal grandparents and the boarders her grandmother took in to help with expenses during the Great Depression. They lived in Putnam, Connecticut, which at that time was a thriving mill town. She was the oldest of three children, and sharing a home with her grandparents allowed both her parents to work. She was especially close with each of her grandparents. She loved going to her grandfather’s garden to help pick weeds and harvest vegetables for the family table. She also loved to tell stories of teasing her grandmother by untying her apron and then running up the stairs to the only room with a lock on the door; the one bathroom in the house.



ELVIRA “VERA”  
MCGOVERN FLIGHT



VERA MCGOVERN IN  
EIGHTH-GRADE

Vera attended the public schools in Putnam and quickly was encouraged by her teachers who appreciated her keen mind and work ethic. In first grade her teacher was Gertrude Chandler Warner best known as the author of “The Box Car Children” books. This connection to children’s literature helped fuel a lifelong love of reading and interest in children’s literature and teaching. She became the first member of her family to attend college. She paid her way by working at a dry cleaners and a factory that made parts for transistor radios. She graduated from Willimantic State Teachers College (now Eastern Connecticut State University). In her senior year she met her future husband, David Strong Flight, who was there attending a special one-year program to get a veteran’s certified to teach.

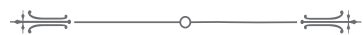
Their first teaching jobs were in Greenwich, Conn., where they settled after being married. They had a life plan for those early years, in part because at the time women couldn’t be in the classroom once they were “showing” they were pregnant. The plan was that Vera would teach until their first child and then she would spend 10 years raising them before heading back into the classroom. While living in Greenwich they had three children: David Hurdman (1955), Ellen Marjory (1957) and Susan Lois (1960.) In 1960 they moved to St. Louis, where her husband had a job as a school principal. Then in 1963 they

moved to Chicago so that he could earn his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago. After getting the family settled, Vera returned to teaching first grade at the Laboratory School at U of C.

By 1969 the family was on the move again, this time to Amherst, Massachusetts. Here Vera began teaching at the Smith College Campus School. While there she met children’s book author Jane Yolen whose daughter was in her class. This connection further inspired Vera’s interest in Children’s Literature.

In 1975 the family moved to Plantation, Florida, where Vera’s husband had taken a job at Nova University in Fort Lauderdale. With this move, Vera’s career took a turn as she began working at the University promoting their master’s degree programs for working classroom teachers. At the same time she returned to her own studies and earned a Master’s degree in her mid 50s. One of the things she most enjoyed about this work was traveling to national and international conferences to market the programs for teachers.

Starting with their honeymoon, Vera and David made yearly visits to what became their beloved family home and retreat in Hubbardton, Vermont, affectionately called “The Farm.” Vera in particular was keen to have her children and grandchildren imprinted on the property. Family time in the early years involved camping “in the worst campsite” of all, according to Vera. There was no electricity or running water. There was however a “three seater” outhouse. The most popular family activities were going to High Pond for skinny dipping, a ride up the hill at dusk to look for grazing deer and eating “corn from Woods farm stand” as the main course of the evening



David Arthur Baker, 79, formerly of Middlebury

BAKERSFIELD—David Arthur Baker, age 79, of Bakersfield, Vt., died Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2025, at his home following a battle with Huntington’s disease.

Born in 1945 in Bennington and a proud descendant of Green Mountain Boy Remember Baker, Dave was the son of Stephen Baker and Margaret Knight Baker. He grew up in Middlebury, where he worked with his father and his brother Peter in the family business, The Bakery Lane Bake Shop.

A member of the Middlebury High School class of 1963, Dave went on to graduate from Johnson State College in 1971 with a B.A. in Elementary Education. He became a teacher at Bakersfield Elementary School, where he worked for 24 years, most often with the third and fourth grades, and was a principal of the Common School. He is fondly remembered for his love of author Roald Dahl, reading his books to generations of local children.

Dave founded the Jay Peak Ski Program, conducted a Road Runners Club to prepare participants for the June Dairy Day Milk Run, sponsored movie nights and sledding parties, built skating rinks and Halloween haunted houses, and sponsored a Bike-A-Thon each spring that raised



DAVID ARTHUR BAKER

thousands of dollars for St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital.

An accomplished carpenter, marksman, and sailor, he was also a longtime member of the Enosburg Falls Town Band and served as Co-Scoutmaster of Troop 878 of Enosburg.

For thirty years, Dave was a proud member of the Vermont Army National Guard, providing food service and playing the saxophone in the 40th Army Band.

Dave is survived and lovingly remembered by his wife, Kathleen of Bakersfield; son David (Elizabeth) of Chester, Conn.; stepsons Christopher Tefft (Jessica) of Colchester, Michael Tefft (Lacey) of Jericho, and Cory

Tefft (Amy) of Wallingford, Ky.; two granddaughters, Margaret Catherine and Wendy Priscilla Baker; seven step-grandchildren, Hailey, Quinn, Theodore, Henry, Mason, Julie, and Isabel Tefft; and cousin Robert Marshall. Many others special to Dave include Pat and Sharon Evans, Kate Begley Baker, and Nancy Kilinski. Dave was predeceased by his parents and by his brother Peter.

Friends and family will be invited to a memorial service to honor Dave’s memory on Saturday, Feb. 22, at 11 a.m. at the United Church of Bakersfield and Fairfield in Bakersfield, Vt.

Friends wishing to remember Dave may make memorial contributions to St. Jude’s Research Hospital at [stjude.org](http://stjude.org) or to the Huntington’s Disease Society of America at [hdsa.org](http://hdsa.org).

Kathy would like to thank the many people who supported her and Dave throughout his illness, including family, friends, the UCBF, the Binter Center at UVM, Lamoille Health Cambridge, Bakersfield Emergency Response, Enosburg Ambulance, the VNA/ Hospice of the SW Region, and Diane Mansfield.

Condolences, photos and favorite memories may be shared through [www.gossfs.com](http://www.gossfs.com). ♦

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 and 11 a.m. on Friday for Monday’s paper. Email [obits@addisonindependent.com](mailto:obits@addisonindependent.com) or call 802-388-4944 for more information.

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**ADDISON  
COUNTY**

# Obituaries

## Sheila Kelly Henderson, 81, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Sheila Kelly Henderson, 81, passed peacefully at her home in Bristol, Vt., on Feb. 12, 2025. She had lived with Parkinsons since 2019.

She was born in Madison, Maine, on March 22, 1943, to Stephen and Pearl (Reed) Kelly. She met her husband, David, at Madison High School and they graduated in 1961. She graduated from Maine Medical Nursing School in Portland in 1964. They married that same year and celebrated 60 years of marriage on June 6, 2024.

Sheila worked as an RN in Philadelphia to support David through medical school. Their journey together brought them from Philadelphia to Burlington Vt., to North Dakota, and ultimately back to Vermont, moving to Bristol in 1975 to raise their family and set up their medical practice, from which they both retired in 2009. In retirement, she enjoyed traveling, camping, and most of all, her grandchildren.

Sheila was a caregiver at her very core. This was evident in her profession as a nurse, as a



**SHEILA KELLY HENDERSON**

volunteer EMT on the Bristol Rescue Squad, as a sister, daughter, friend, mother, grandmother and especially as a wife.

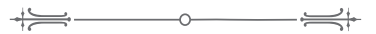
She is predeceased by her parents, her brothers, Donald Kelly, Alva Reed and his wife Shirley; her sister, Joyce Estes; brothers-in-law, Leo Estes, Dennis Barron, Richard Saucier, and David's parents, Harold and Lucille Henderson.

She is survived by her husband, David Henderson of Bristol; her

three children, Erin Henderson (Bryan Serinese) of Williston, Keely Henderson (Matt Germon) of Lincoln, and Tim Henderson (Jenny Endris Henderson) of Felt, Idaho; her six grandchildren, Hugo, Gus, and Maeve Serinese, Charlie and Noah Germon, and Henry Henderson; her two sisters, Carolee Barron and Gail Saucier of Madison, Maine; and her in-laws Jan Kelly and Tim and Linda Henderson, as well as many nieces and nephews.

We would like to thank Addison County Home Health and Hospice and Lisa Palmer for their care of Sheila and our family, and the community who reached out to support us during this difficult time, including members of the Bristol First Baptist Church, of which she was a member for 50 years. A celebration of Sheila's life is planned for this summer.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Sheila's memory may be sent to ACHH&H, PO Box 754, Middlebury, VT 05753 or the Bristol Rescue Squad, PO Box 227, Bristol, VT 05443. ♦



## Janet Loraine Clark, 87, of Addison

ADDISON — Janet Loraine Clark, 87, of Addison passed away on February 10, 2025, due to complications from pneumonia, after fighting it hard for over three months.

Janet was born on June 1, 1937, to Chase M. Clark and Evelyn (Bristol) Clark of Cornwall, VT. She grew up with her brothers on her family's farm in Cornwall. She graduated as class Salutatorian from Middlebury Union High School in 1955. She married Erwin A. (Red) Clark of Addison on September 15, 1962.

She first worked in the Loan department of the Chittenden Trust Company in Middlebury, then was the farm accountant for Champlain Valley Farm in Addison for 40 years while also raising her children. She was also the groundskeeper, and tended many flowerbeds and vegetable gardens. She kept almost 2 acres of lawn meticulously mowed right up through last fall.

She was a member of the Addison Community Baptist Church, and served as Treasurer for 15 years.

She was a founding member of the Addison Town Historical Society and for many years served as Vice President. She and her husband were both well known



**JANET LORAINÉ CLARK**

as town historians and were contacted often by anyone needing information about Addison.

She was a member of the Add-A-Pan group. Also active with the Addison Central School PTO when her kids attended the school, including being treasurer for most of those years.

Janet was predeceased by her parents, her husband, sister-in-law Margaret (Peggy) Clark, brother-in-law Hugh Clark and sister-in-law Beverly Clark Wernhoff. She leaves behind her children, Scott (Kathy), Brad (Sandy), Pamela (Matthew) Gevry, and Kyle (Lisa Audet). She

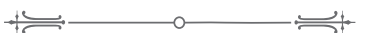
leaves 11 grandchildren, Jarrett, Morgen, Rachel, Ethan, Jason, Broc, Kayla, Lillian, Holden, Zeke and Mitchell. She also leaves two great-grandchildren, Gavin, her favorite co-pilot on her John Deere tractor, and Hadlie, who made her eyes sparkle every time she saw her. She is also survived by Lisa's son, Levi (Keri), daughter Jordyn and their kids Erin, Kinley, Colton, Rylee, Paisley and Benson.

She also leaves her two dear brothers, Larry and Dick (Mary), and special cousin Randall Clark.

She also leaves cherished nieces and nephews: Lisa, Andrea, Kris, Dale, David, Susan, Tom, Eric, Chase, Shaun, Erin, April, Risa, John, Jubal, Royal, Noble and Matthew.

Calling hours are 6–8 p.m., Friday, Feb. 21, at the Brown-McClay Funeral home in Vergennes. The funeral will be at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 22, at the Addison Community Baptist Church in Addison.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Addison Fire Department, 44 VT Route 17W, Addison, VT 05491, or Homeward Bound, 236 Boardman St., Middlebury, VT 05753. ♦



## Michael Lee Tebbetts, 64, of Leicester

LEICESTER — Michael Lee Tebbetts, 64, passed away Feb.12, 2025, surrounded by his family at his home in Leicester. He was born in Rutland, Vt., Nov. 12, 1960, son of Marvin and June (Bearor) Tebbetts.

He grew up in Leicester and Brandon, where he received his early education. Michael had worked in Logging and with the Leicester Highway Dept. He also worked with Ernie Miner Carpentry and was a truck driver. He was an avid hunter and fisherman.

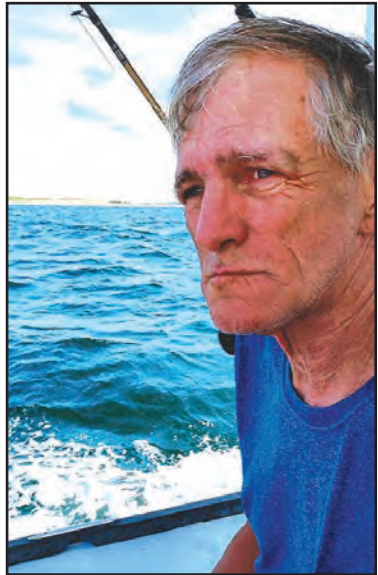
Surviving is his wife Nardy Tebbetts of Leicester; step-daughter Tori Thompson, and his granddaughter Olivia Thompson both of Springfield; three sisters, Penny Conlin of Brandon, Heather

Bouchard of Whiting, and Tracey Raymond of Brandon; and his step-father, Wayne Dwyer of Forest Dale. Several nieces, nephews and cousins, also survive him. He is also survived by his special friend, Kevin Betourney of Leicester, and his god-daughter, Payten Melanson of Agawam, Mass.

Calling hours will be held on Friday, Feb. 21, from 2-4 p.m. at the Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home, 26 Franklin St., Brandon.

Private graveside committal services and burial will take place in the Forest Dale Cemetery, at a later date.

Memorial contributions in his memory may be made to the Forest Dale Cemetery Association, P.O. Box 101, Brandon, VT 05733.



**MICHAEL LEE TEBBETTS**

# We tolerate what others wouldn't

In December my family took a trip to South Korea. I wanted to write about the amazing food, fantastic free museums, historic palaces and old neighborhoods, and the warm and friendly people we met. But something else happened while we were in Korea.

We woke up the morning of Dec. 4 to a deluge of messages from people back home checking in on us, wanting to make sure we were okay. We were confused, having been unaware of anything amiss the night before. It took us a little while to catch up on the events that unfolded overnight in Seoul while we slept.

On Dec. 3, at 10:27 p.m., former Prime Minister Yoon Suk Yeol suddenly declared martial law. At 10:42 p.m., the opposition Democratic Party, which holds the legislative majority, convened. At 11:04 p.m., the National Assembly entrance was closed, and by 11:57 p.m., Korean Armed forces appeared clashing with congressional staff. At 12:12 a.m. on Dec. 4, troops entered the National Assembly, and at 12:36 a.m. airborne troops broke through the glass windows to enter. All an attempt by Yoon to prevent the National Assembly from convening and voting.

However, at 1:02 a.m., the Assembly did vote unanimously to lift martial law. The Speaker of the Assembly told the military to leave, and troops began to withdraw. At 4:26 a.m., Yoon accepted the National Assembly's vote and announced that martial law would be lifted.

Later that day, legislators across six different parties submitted a motion for impeachment. Yoon became embroiled in legal proceedings and was arrested on Jan. 15. On the 23rd, the Corruption Investigation Office for High-Ranking Officials recommended

that Yoon be charged with "leading an insurrection and abuse of power." He was indicted on the 26th.

What struck me was the speed with which all this happened.

Within hours of Yoon declaring martial law, politicians broke into parliament and voted to overturn his order. Lee Jae-myung, the leader of the Democratic Party of Korea, live streamed himself climbing over a 5-foot fence to gain access to the Assembly. Others also climbed fences or clashed with police to gain access or prevent police from blocking access. A viral video of Ahn Gwi-ryeong, Deputy Spokesperson of the Democratic Party, shows her trying to seize a rifle from a soldier before he pointed it at her briefly. She said, "Aren't you ashamed?" as he walked away.

When we woke up on Dec. 4 we had missed it all. All we knew that morning was that martial law had been declared, and then quickly overturned. We were concerned things might be shut down, but when we ventured out everything was open and running as normal. No military presence and no extra police. Our previously booked tour of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) went as planned, passing through military checkpoints, viewing the tunnels, Friendship Park, and learning about the Korean War.

The only impact we saw from all this political chaos came when we returned from the DMZ. The normal drop-off location was at City Hall. However, as the square was crammed full of protestors calling for Yoon's impeachment, we were dropped off elsewhere. The rest of our trip was also uneventful. Though the protests continued every evening, most things functioned as normal.

People have called what happened in South Korea a reverse

January 6th. Instead of people trying to break into the capital to overturn election results, elected politicians broke into the building to cast their votes. Only hours after the declaration of martial law, they had convened and voted to end it. They literally scaled walls to get into the building in the middle of the night. I can't imagine U.S. politicians doing this. I can't imagine anything in U.S. politics happening so quickly and decisively.

The events of Dec. 3-4 were followed by largely peaceful protests that resulted in the impeachment of Yoon within weeks. People didn't like what he did, so they changed things. Comparing this to the cumbersome inefficiency of our government, with opposing parties stuck in a perpetual stalemate, is disheartening. Time and time again I hear from people outside the U.S. asking "why do they put up with this? Why are they not out protesting? We would not stand for that."

I started writing this article just before Trump took office. His blitz of executive orders are coming so quickly I thought I might have to rethink my position on the speed of politics here. However, what I see now is unattainable or unrealistic and even illegal orders that will be bogged down in legal challenges. We still have two parties that, instead of working for what the people want, mainly work to oppose each other and accomplish very little.

*Claire Corkins grew up and lives in Bristol and studied Human Ecology at College of the Atlantic in Maine. After college she worked abroad teaching English as a second language. She currently works with her father in such various endeavors as painting houses, tiling bathrooms, building porches, and fixing old windows. She hikes, reads, plays ice hockey, travels, and wishes she could wear flip flops all year round.*

## Marc Thomas Bougor, 58, formerly of Vergennes

RUTLAND — Marc Thomas Bougor, age 58, passed away Feb. 13, 2025, at Rutland Regional Medical Center.

Marc was born in Burlington on Aug. 10, 1966. He was the son of Larry and Judith (Rivers) Bougor Sr. He grew up in Vergennes where he received his education.

Marc had worked construction most of his life. He also worked as a roofer for several years. He was an avid fisherman and loved the New England Patriots.

He is survived by his daughter Mea Bougor and his son Damian Bougor; grandchildren Jade, Christopher, Mari and Lani; his mother Judith Blaise and father Larry (Laura) Bougor; brothers Eric Bougor, Logan Blaise, JR Bougor and Heath Bougor; and sister Stacey Bougor Rheaume. Several nieces, nephews and cousins also survive him.

A private gathering "In Celebration of His Life" with a lakeside barbeque will take place



**MARC THOMAS BOUGOR**

at a later date. Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon. ♦

## Forty and Eight scholarship applications available

VERMONT — The Barre chapter of The Forty and Eight, a national veterans organization, is offering scholarships to qualified undergraduate students enrolled in academic programs of study leading to either Associates or Bachelor Degrees in nursing. These scholarships can help veterans in related military occupations prepare for civilian careers in the nursing profession.

The deadline is May 15, 2025, for submitting applications for scholarships for the 2025 Fall Academic semester. Awards to successful applicants will be made in July 2025. At least one stipend of \$1,000 or more will be available. Students who have already enrolled in nursing programs and others planning to enter programs in Fall Semester 2025 need financial help to cover tuition, anticipated expenses for training and supplies, transportation, and housing so they

can focus on preparation for careers in the nursing profession.

A national program addressing the need for more skilled nurses is a special interest of La Société des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux, the veterans organization founded in 1920 and also known as "The Forty and Eight." Since the establishment of the national Nurses Training program in 1955, La Société has helped over 32,000 students with

scholarships for training. The chapter in Barre, since 2017, has awarded \$33,000 in scholarships to assist 31 students enrolled in undergraduate nursing programs in Vermont colleges and universities.

For more information about The Forty and Eight, the Nurses Training Program, and the Nurses Training Scholarship and forms, please call Karlene DeVine at (802) 877-6392 or email kdevine@gmavt.net.

## DO YOU HAVE AN OPINION?

Email your Letter to the Editor to: [news@addisonindependent.com](mailto:news@addisonindependent.com)

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# Letters to the Editor

## Trump administration’s destructive path continues

A terrible storm is brewing. It threatens the economic welfare and safety of all Americans and the existence of our Democracy. The Office of Budget and Management (OMB) drives the implementation of every President’s policy agenda. Now that a Republican party-line vote has confirmed Russ Vought, co-author of the dystopian Project 2025, as director of the OMB, it is easy to see where Trump and his power mongers want to take us. This reality includes Trump’s and Vought’s efforts to control government spending, a critical departure from the House of Representative’s Constitutional “power of the purse.” Also, the March 15 deadline for passing a 2025 Federal budget, passing another continuing resolution to extend Federal funding of the government, or initiating a partial shutdown is looming. Meanwhile Pam Bondi, Attorney General of the United States,

has been busy issuing a flurry of orders. One of these ends the FBI’s Foreign Influence Task Force charged with among other things, preventing foreign influence in our elections. Russia, China, and other actors are drooling with anticipation as we draw closer to our mid-term elections. Those of us who are hoping that Republican incompetence and their inhumane mismanagement of our government will enable Democrats to retake the House majority in 2026 may be sadly surprised that foreign tampering with our politics and elections produces a different result. A second Bondi order is also troubling. It directs the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) to shift its priorities from comprehensive violent crime reduction to immigration enforcement, human trafficking, and transnational gangs. Those who were pardoned for their violent attempt to stop the peaceful

transition of power along with the leaders and members of the Oath Keepers, Proud Boys, Bugaloo Boys, Christian Nationalists, and other far-right extremists are ready to lock and load. Compounding the above are the highly negative repercussions of Elon Musk’s attacks on USAID and the Department of Education, the likely confirmation of Kash Patel as Director of the FBI, and the potential confirmation of Tulsa gabbard as Director of National intelligence. Patel seems more interested in retribution against his list of political enemies than investigating domestic terrorism, and Gabbard has publicly extolled the virtues of the likes of Syria’s Assad and Russia’s Putin. It is not difficult to see the destructive path that is unfolding before our eyes. The question remains: Are we paying close enough attention?

Ron Rubin  
Middlebury

## More details needed on Birong’s education plan

Some thoughts on Rep. Birong’s proposal on education restructuring: - Though I support the consolidation of school district administration, I appreciate Birong’s idea of more districts than proposed by Gov. Scott, which placed Addison County schools in a district of 34,000 students, stretching from Swanton to Brandon and including Burlington’s urban area, markedly different from our rural concerns. However, it would have been helpful to me to see a map of Rep. Birong’s proposed districts.

- An average class size, in high school (middle school?) of 25 means less personal attention for each student. In a 90-minute class, meeting every other day, it means only 3 minutes per student to conference on their personal concerns. How can this be better for student learning? -A minimum of 450 students per elementary school will require the closing of schools in our county. That will require extended time on buses for students. As it is, when my son attended Monkton elementary, from which we live 5 minutes away, he would spend 40

minutes, each way (!) on the bus. Collecting students in Ripton (if it were to close) and bringing them to Middlebury would mean for some an hour (at least) ride, both ways. How can this be better for student learning? - I also pay property tax and agree it cannot continue to increase at the rate it did last year. So why is no one considering shifting school taxes to a progressive income tax rather than having them remain as a property tax?

Thomas Learmonth  
New Haven

## Locals line up to support the LGBTQ+ community

We stand with you, LGBTQ+ youth, your families, and the organizations that support you and will do everything within our personal and political power to prevent further harm. We stand with you and commit to listening to your needs and ensuring your voices are heard. We have so much love and joy for each of you as individuals and want nothing more than for you to feel valued, connected to your communities, and thriving. It’s important to remember that the White House is not a medical provider, and that Executive Orders are not laws (nor do they supersede state statutes). They are not social workers or licensed clinical mental health counselors. They are not pediatricians. All of these providers follow high-quality, evidence-based standards of their professional organizations, such as the following, and all are highly supportive of LGBTQ people and their healthcare — because you matter. • The American Medical Association “recognizes gender identity as a fundamental aspect of a person’s being and supports gender-affirming care, including medical interventions, for transgender individuals.” • American Academy of Pediatrics works to “ensure young people get the reproductive and gender-affirming care they need

and are seen, heard, and valued as they are.” • American Academy of Family Physicians affirms that “diversity in gender identity and expression is a normal part of the human existence and does not represent pathology.” • American Psychological Association: “(S)ate bans on gender-affirming care disregard the comprehensive body of medical and psychological research supporting the positive impact of such treatments in alleviating psychological distress and improving overall well-being for transgender, gender diverse and nonbinary individuals throughout their lives.” • American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists “recognizes and supports the gender diversity of all patients who seek obstetric and gynecologic care.” These healthcare professionals, LGBTQ+ organizations, and LGBTQ+ loved ones and chosen families have the expertise and person-specific understanding to guide individuals in making their personal healthcare choices, not the federal government. Certain politicians nationally have launched a vicious assault against LGBTQ+ people for just existing as they are as unique human beings. They use cruel and devastatingly harmful

misinformation in an attempt to legally and illegally erase the existence and dignity of real people, especially youth, in one of the most vulnerable periods of their lives. You know better than anyone the devastating impact of these Executive Orders and other attacks. Thirty-six percent of high school-age youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) have made a suicide plan in the past year, which is significantly higher compared to heterosexual cisgender youth (9%). Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth and young adults in Vermont. On the day of Donald Trump’s inauguration, crisis calls by LGBTQ+ youth increased by 33%. The national party in power in D.C. does not care about evidence, healthcare, truth or LGBTQ+ people. They care about gaining power by creating and exacerbating division and hate. But we do care. We hear you and stand with you. Rep Mari Cordes, Bristol Rep. Jubilee McGill, Bridport Sen. Ruth Hardy, Middlebury Rep. Robin Scheu, Middlebury Rep. Herb Olson, Starksboro Rep. Peter Conlon, Cornwall Note: A full list of 82 signatories can be found in this letter published online at Addison Independent.com

## Freedom of religion hangs in the balance

We are writing to express concern about House Resolution 59, which seeks to have the government condemn a religious message, spoken freely and in a house of worship. On February 6, President Trump announced plans to create a federal office to oppose what he terms anti-Christian bias in the government. According to a report by Reuters, Trump said, “The mission of this task force will be to immediately halt all forms of anti-Christian targeting and discrimination within the federal government, including at the DOJ, which was absolutely terrible, the IRS, the FBI and other agencies.” He vowed his attorney general would work to “fully prosecute anti-Christian violence and vandalism in our society and to move heaven and earth to defend the rights of Christians and religious believers nationwide.” Although we are pleased to see the phrase “and religious believers” added by the President, we wonder if enforcement would protect the freedoms of all religious traditions, and not just of those Christians favored by the President. A report by the FBI for year 2023 found that 60% of religious-based hate crimes were against Jews, 13% were against Muslims, and 8% were against Christians. We see an irony in the President’s proposal, at a time when many of his supporters in Congress have introduced H Res 59 to condemn a sermon by Bishop Mariann Budde. The sermon advocated unity and compassion in our government, and it acknowledged the people in our land who are afraid for what their future may hold. As lifelong members of a Christian Church, we understand that compassion for all, especially for “the least of these thy brethren,”



**Helping Daddy**  
OPHELIA AND DONOVAN Blanchard take advantage of some fluffy snow their father, Stephen rakes from his mother’s roof last week.  
Photo by Chris Blanchard

is among the most fundamental of Christian teachings. (We note parenthetically that many other religious faiths share these core values. So do many individuals who may not identify with any religious group.) Bishop Budde’s sermon was an eloquent and direct plea for Christian values, and it is consistent with her teachings throughout her career as a church leader. Does not H Res 59 conflict with the “free exercise clause” of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution? Given our country’s promise of religious freedom for everyone, we recognize people will not

always agree on matters of faith, even within the same faith tradition. But one need not agree with Bishop Budde’s message to oppose H Res 59. That resolution permits the government to decide what is acceptable in matters of religion. It is the role of our faith communities, not the government, to decide what is right in matters of their faith. We urge voters to contact elected officials in Congress, asking them to oppose this resolution and to uphold our country’s tradition of religious freedom. John and Amy Emerson  
Middlebury

## ACSD board candidate shares campaign priorities

My name is Jess Venable-Novak and I am one of the Middlebury candidates running for the Addison Central School District School Board. My family and I chose to move to Middlebury specifically so our children could attend ACSD schools. Since joining the community I have had the joy of being a Mary Hogan-turned-MUMS parent, as well as the parent of a toddler navigating both the early childhood education world as well as making the transition into preschool. Both of these experiences have only deepened my love for ACSD. At nearly every turn we have encountered thoughtful, attentive educators and staff who care about their schools, their towns, and the wellbeing of the district. Having lived and worked in various school districts in Vermont and beyond, I noticed the spirit of ACSD early-on in our time here, and think it’s what makes Addison Central a special place; one I’m eager to serve in my time on the School Board. I believe that accessibility is

foundational to public education. As a transgender person and working class parent, I know firsthand how crucial it is that our schools are places where families not only see themselves valued but considered. I am eager to contribute to ensuring that all schools in ACSD make space for the realities of all families in order to see our students flourish. Over 15 years of community organizing has shown me that communities thrive when members feel seen, heard and valued. I believe that our schools are no different. I would be thrilled to collaborate with other board members and district leaders to ensure that the experiences of our students and staff are held at the center of our decision making processes. I believe that their firsthand experiences of how ACSD policies and practices impact daily life in our schools are some of the most precious information we have to inform our work. Diversity of experience makes communities stronger. I believe leaning into that diversity is essential in making sure we

are better serving our students and families in the shifting landscape of public education in Vermont. There is so much potential for our schools to be even stronger community hubs, and double-down on being places where all families feel welcomed, connected, and celebrated. I know that I can help ensure that ACSD continues to grow into a place where all families, staff and students can thrive. If I am elected I will bring to the School Board an unwavering spirit of collaboration. I value creative solutions that are inclusive and evidence-based, and approach working together to find these solutions with transparency and authenticity. Simply said, being a reliable and approachable community member is deeply important to me, and I would love to be just that on the ACSD school board. I am incredibly grateful to be in the running for ACSD school board and would be honored to have your vote on March 4. Jess Venable-Novak  
Middlebury

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# Letters to the Editor

## Providers rebuke Trump on science, health care cuts

We are health care providers concerned about the consequences of the Trump administration’s attempts to restrict or eliminate critical health-care programs. We have taken oaths to protect and defend our patients’ well-being. We believe that the following issues are of paramount importance for our population’s health. By signing this letter, Vermont’s health care providers are expressing our deepest concerns about these issues:

NIH funding of scientific research is the foundation of our efforts to control and combat significant ills in America. NIH funding is the lifeblood of scientific research. These funds cannot be turned on and off like a spigot. Science and scientists suffer.

WHO membership: It is the WHO that protects us against pandemics and other world-wide

health crises. Though not without its challenges, on balance, WHO provides critical, integrated knowledge and responses to health crises.

Vaccines are our lifeboats in a microbial sea. Loss of trust in vaccines and the elimination of mandated school vaccines will allow parents to opt out of vaccine programs and lower our herd immunity. This will increase the likelihood and seriousness of outbreaks of infectious diseases like measles, which we are already experiencing.

We call for health care facilities to be a safe space, free from fear of ICE apprehension and deportation. Vermont’s dairy industry depends on our migrant workforce, some of whom are undocumented.

USAID is a vital force for good in the world. It extends assistance to countries recovering from

disasters, ameliorates poverty, and engages in democratic reforms. USAID feeds starving children and works to prevent infectious diseases such as polio and epidemic diseases. It deserves our support.

Protection of vulnerable populations such as LGBTQ+, immigrants, and BIPOC.

Fully funding the CDC to carry on its lifesaving public health initiatives. Censorship of communication and information must end.

**Jack Mayer, MD, MPH,**  
**Middlebury**  
**Laura Forman, MD,**  
**Middlebury**  
**Kate Williams (Open Door**  
**Clinic)**  
**Roberto Viguez (Open Door**  
**Clinic)**  
**Sara Grandstrom, Bristol**

## In life, unlike with YouTube, real discoveries take time

Last night, I binged the new Netflix show “Apple Cider Vinegar.” It’s mainly about two “wellness” influencers, who both claim you can cure cancer with healthy eating, and without chemo or surgery. The thing is, one of them doesn’t actually have cancer.

The character who’s telling the truth, Milla, struck me because her story is basically the story of a lot of movies: The hero is told nothing can be done, they refuse to accept this, and find a way. The thing is, in this case, the hero is wrong.

It’s scary to see how much she believes she’s right though. I won’t get into it, but Ahh!

She reminded me a bit of myself, and how I used to think I could find a way to live without money — just eat peanut butter and apples, ride Greyhound buses, and stealth camp in forests in my little green tent. Simple thinking is seductive. The idea of going back to what’s “natural”, being “free.”

And it’s so hard to put those beliefs down, or at least complicate

them, because when you believe, it’s like a religion that actually (for a while at least) makes your life better and gives you energy. Finally, you understand the world. You just need to live your vision. You’re a prophet. It’s so hard to walk away from that kind of faith. But sometimes you need to lose an arm, or your whole body will die. (That’s a reference to “Apple Cider Vinegar,” by the way.)

This feels connected to conversations I’ve had with someone I know to be a kind person who means well, but whose beliefs seem completely bonkers and very dangerous to me. We don’t really talk much anymore, but she used to like to tell me about how much she was learning about the world through YouTube videos. She seemed to believe every conspiracy theory. And the way she talked — it was that “I finally understand” voice. She’d been enlightened and she wanted to enlighten me too. The YouTube videos were full of people telling

her crazy things, but in a simple way that she could hold on to. As humans, that seems to be a natural thing— We want to have a solid grip on things, to feel safe, to understand. But real discoveries take time, and it can be so tempting to take shortcuts — especially when people are selling them so well.

I heard a podcast today in which a musician said that “magical thinking” is important. In art, everything is possible, and it’s good to lose yourself in that sometimes — all power, all possibility, no fear. But maybe it’s important to keep magical thinking to the realm of art. Maybe in real life, we can pursue it to a point. Sometimes, following our dreams expands what’s possible. We make great discoveries, create new things. But sometimes what feels true just isn’t, and if we keep ignoring the signs that we’re wrong in favor of our faith, we’re screwed.

**Lou Gervais**  
**Vergennes**

## Gov. Scott pitches repeal of universal school meals

Gov. Scott continues to fail our children as he seeks to repeal Act 64. Hunger Free Vermont puts it well: “When Vermont passed its Universal School Meals program in 2023 with strong support from all political parties, the state made a simple but powerful commitment: no child should have to go hungry at school.

Now, that progress is at risk. Gov. Phil Scott has proposed repealing Act 64, eliminating the Universal School Meals program and putting the burden back on families and schools. If this happens, Vermont kids would miss out on 2.5 million meals each year. For 27,000 students in middle-income families already struggling to meet their basic needs, this would mean an additional \$1,500 in annual school meal expenses — or the burden and added expense of packing their own lunches. Schools and farms would lose millions in federal funding, and meal debt would make a comeback, forcing school administrators to play the role of bill collectors instead of educators.”

I reached out to the governor’s office to urge that he reconsider

repealing Act 64 and was met with a disheartening response. Not that a constituent’s concerns or desires will be taken under consideration but that he has made up his mind on something that affects every family in the state. As a public servant and an elected official serving the public in a government role, specifically as the chief executive of a state, he is a representative of the people he governs. The people he governs deserve a say in the matter, especially of where we feel our taxes are best used.

The governor’s office response: “Dear Tyler: Thank you for reaching out regarding Act 64, the Universal Schools Meals Act.

The current law, paid for by the statewide education property tax, provides free school meals for all Vermont students regardless of their ability to pay. This is a departure from historic practice funded by the National School Lunch Program, which offers free lunch for students at or below 130% of the federal poverty line as well as reduced lunch up to 185% of the poverty line.

There’s no doubt that those who

support universal school meals are well intentioned. However, the Governor understands that responsible budgeting, often means choosing between many good things. In practice, the program is regressive. Since it is funded through the education fund, and that money is collected through property taxes, and indirectly through rent, those students who would otherwise qualify for the federal program are essentially subsidizing their wealthier classmates.

All Vermonters are facing an affordability crisis, and we remain committed to supporting policies that make life more affordable while ensuring every child has the resources they need to succeed. Again, our goal is not ending free meals for those who need it, we are proposing to remove the inequitable tax burden faced by underprivileged families that are subsidizing wealthy families’ lunches.

Sincerely, Governor’s Constituent Services

Philip B. Scott, Governor of Vermont”

**Tyler Day**  
**Middlebury**

## Public forums should promote, not limit, discourse

This week, in our local Front Porch Forum, neighbors wrote in to complain that there was too much political discussion going on regarding the events in Washington. They felt that FPF was a place for neighborhood news, not opinions about the state of affairs with our democracy. Yet, Anne Applebaum, a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who writes for the *Atlantic*, recently cited Front Porch Forum in Vermont as a shining example of democracy in action, a place where citizens can engage civil discourse regarding topics that engage them.

Timothy Snyder, author of the book, “Freedom,” grew up in rural Ohio, near Dayton, and writes about how every small town had its own newspaper, often a bi-weekly, with local reporters who lived in the community. These papers covered local issues such as school board discussions, town budgets, local police reports, the things *Addison Independent* and *Front Porch Forum* cover each week. They were the glue that bound people together. But,

in those towns of his boyhood the local papers are gone. He writes,

“The end of factuality, of home truths, brings national discord. As a sense of local reality dissolves, Americans ceded their opinions to faraway people on talk radio or cable television, then to placeless algorithms. In the absence of shared local knowledge, human anxieties and fears have to be processed as national politics, ideological conflict or social media spats. When we no longer have any reporters, we say we ‘distrust the media,’ but all the while we cling to the mechanized bits of it that are attuned to how we already feel. Once we substitute Facebook for local newspapers, as people in Warren County and Clinton County have done — as much of America has done — we drift toward a spectral world of ‘us and them.’”

We need Front Porch Forum, we need the *Addison Independent*, and *VT Digger*, and *Seven Days*, to be able to learn what our neighbors think and what our local reporters are able to dig up. All

this information from all these sources gives us perspective that canned television and internet sources can’t provide.

Years ago when I was an art instructor, I would often hear young students say that they didn’t want to be distracted by other artists’ work, they wanted to develop their own style. Instead, I would suggest that they look at all the art they can find and their style would emerge, and not to try to work in a vacuum. It applies to the way we consume information, look at everything, base your opinions on more information not less.

We need to hear what our neighbors are saying and what our local reporters are reporting so we can hone our values on local issues before trying to engage at the macro-level. And we need to support local news sources by subscribing and by donating — when they are gone it will be too late.

**Richard Butz**  
**Bristol**



### Eerie nature

THE STRETCH OF clear water on the Middle Branch of the Middlebury River off Wagon Wheel Road in Ripton looked a little like a ghost to Marty Feldman. He snapped the photo on Feb. 15.

## Scott should reconsider his education reform plan

I am writing to express my deep dissatisfaction with Gov. Scott’s school reform plan for the state. I would like to preface this criticism by saying that though I have never voted for Scott, I hold him in high regard and am thankful for his steady, rational and humane leadership during the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath. It is precisely because I have this respect for him that I am so taken aback by what is a patently radical plan (I reject Zoie Saunders’s descriptor of “bold” as mere euphemism) to transform educational governance in Vermont. Although the Republican Party made historic gains in Vermont and Scott was re-elected with an overwhelming majority, I fear the governor has misread his mandate.

Of course, the only way this plan was proposed in the first place is through the parliamentary tricks Gov. Scott used to appoint Zoe Saunders without the approval of the legislature. When that occurred, I gave the governor the benefit of the doubt, as a popular political figure whose agenda had been thwarted or revised, depending on your perspective, repeatedly by Democratic supermajorities in both legislative chambers in Montpelier. After reading about the plan, the manner of Saunders’s appointment should be seen as indicative of how out of step her and, apparently, the governor’s ideas are about educational reform in our state. My objections are twofold.

First, the creation of five mega-districts is an arrogation of local power that flies in the face of what used to be a central tenet of conservative politics:

## We must ‘resist and act’ in defense of democracy

In the Book of the prophet Daniel there is a story: The King of Babylon, having made a gold statue of himself, set it up in a valley in the province he ruled. The King ordered that with the sound of musical instruments being played every person must bow down and worship the gold statue. Anyone who would not bow down would be thrown into the fiery furnace. There were citizens of Babylon who seized on this order as a chance to attack the Jews who had been exiled among them (Daniel 3:8).

Many of you reading this letter will recognize the names Shadrach,

Meshach and Abednago. They

were three friends of Daniel, all of them Jewish exiles and had found favor with the King. They were also the three who were reported to the King as refusing to bow down to the gold statue the King had set up. In response to the King’s questioning, they said, “We don’t need to answer your question. If our God — the one we serve — is able to rescue us from the furnace of flaming fire and from your power, then let him rescue us. But if he doesn’t, know this for certain, Your Majesty: We will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you’ve set up” (Daniel

cannot afford a single annual private school tuition cost (let alone the costs for multiple children) even with the state paying 50, 60 or even 75 percent of the total bill. Thus, wealthy families who are already paying for private school tuition will be getting a nice subsidy drawn from public coffers, while the overall funding for public schools will be systematically siphoned away. Given Ms. Saunders’s background — the majority of her career (2012-2019) has been spent in senior positions at Charter Schools USA — this is not idle speculation about what might be but rather takes seriously the mission of such an organization. Founded in 1997 by a researcher from the Heritage Foundation (of Project 2025 fame/infamy), Charter Schools USA partakes in a larger national movement to be rid of “government” (read: public) schools. The method? Death by a thousand cuts...or a thousand vouchers.

In an era where public things, indeed, the public thing (the res publica, or republic), are under attack on multiple fronts, Vermont has the opportunity to model deliberative democracy, civic engagement, and community participation through the local governance of our schools. I encourage Gov. Scott to reconsider his proposal and focus on making Vermont’s public education system the envy of the nation. For the sake of our children and the generations to come.

**Amit Prakash**  
**Middlebury**

3:16b-18).

In the midst of the current Administration’s unconstitutional and unlawful dismantling of our democracy will we “seize the chance” to attack the migrant workers, the immigrants, those of us who benefit from any government services, including Social Security, grants for road repair, school vouchers, farm or small business grants? Or will we risk and resist the onslaught with our speaking and our actions? The choice is ours. I choose to resist and act.

**Patti Welch**  
**Bristol**

## Scott’s education plan follows conservative playbook

The most alarming thing about Gov. Scott’s Education Transformation Proposal is that it follows the playbook of conservative billionaires who are funding a coordinated effort to dismantle public education. Americans for Prosperity, a political advocacy group founded by the Koch Brothers, recently confirmed this when they singled out and praised Gov. Scott’s efforts. Under the false promise of school choice, the governor wants to expand tuition payments to private schools. This will further drain dollars from the state budget and our public education system to fund unaccountable private schools.

Part of the strategy of these

conservative billionaires is to politicize and dismantle trust in our public schools. They try to pit parents against public schools and teachers and thus divide communities. These efforts to vilify educators are simply attempts to justify diverting taxpayer dollars away from public education.

Public education is a cornerstone to our nation’s democracy, and public schools are essential to providing youth with the skills and knowledge to be engaged participants in our society. Two hundred and fifty years ago Vermont’s founders knew that a well-educated population was the only means of ensuring Vermont’s future and protecting us from autocrats and tyranny. This is

highlighted by the fact that the only government service mentioned in the Vermont Constitution is education. The framers knew exactly what they were doing with the education clause, the common benefit clause and the compelled support clause of the Vermont Constitution.

The importance of public education to the preservation of our democracy is as important today as it was 250 years ago. As we look for solutions to our problems we will need to find common ground. I would like to suggest that the legislature ignore the conservative billionaires and stay grounded in Vermont’s Constitutional history.

**Greg Hughes**  
**Bethel**





**It's the Ice Show!**

“All You Need Is Love” was the theme for this year’s Middlebury College Winter Carnival Ice Show, and fans at the shows this past weekend clearly loved the entertainment. Scores of skaters in the Middlebury Figure Skating Club from very young to college age took part. At left are special guest Emmanuel Savary skating with Middlebury College senior Ting Cui. Pictured clockwise from above, are Lyra Knapp (left) and Olivia Donnelly (center) in red tutus; in lavender, from left, Emily Amaral, Fiona Chen, Sofia Larose, Amaryllis Lenihan, Soa Baker-Medard and Louva Baker-Medard; Ting Cui; in polka dot dresses, from left, Eleanor Knipplerand and Julia Bouvier; Middlebury College students Maya Henning and Esteban Catano; Zara Trump; Jeannie Paguaga; and in teal dresses, from left, Georgie Kiel, Casey Clark, Layla Swepston, Deborah Sherry.

Independent photos/Steve James





# Panton SB candidates outline their views

## Incumbent chairman Hall faces challenge from Reece Jaring

PANTON — Two candidates are running for a seat on the Panton selectboard on Town Meeting Day. They are longtime incumbent Howard Hall and challenger Reece Jaring.

The *Independent* asked each of the candidates to answer five questions to give voters some data on which to cast their ballots.

Here are the questions and their answers.

**What is your personal bio, and what are your qualifications to serve on the selectboard?**

**HALL:** I have lived in Panton for 12 years. For over 30 years, I was a fulltime firefighter/paramedic. I was highly involved in dealing with management of the fire department's wages, hours and benefits. My department employed 120 firefighters, supported by \$27 million budget. Since retiring from that job, I have served on the Panton Selectboard for the past 10 years. Previously I held a position on the Panton DRB/Planning Commission. I have gained a broad-based knowledge of the town and area through my participation on the Transportation Advisory Committee of the Addison Regional Planning Commission; the Maple Broadband Board; and the Five-Town VARS Committee.

**JARING:** My family (wife, Katelyn, daughter, Alia and son, Declan) and I moved to Panton four years ago after the sale of our home in Middlebury. A classic case of the worst house in the best location. Currently I'm employed by a local company in customer service and previously spent a decade in finance & accounting with employers locally and in Chittenden County. I am experienced in listening to people and problem solving.

**What motivated you to run?**



HOWARD HALL



REECE JARING

**JARING:** Motivation is uniquely one's own. Both of my parents and father-in-law work for municipalities in Addison County so I spent much of my life with exposure to local government and public service. I think folks often overlook how important individual contributions are because they don't believe they'll have an impact. Residents should feel they have a say.

**HALL:** My whole career has been dedicated to public service, and I continue to be motivated to help our town be a great place to live. In 2014, I was appointed to the Panton Selectboard and have run for each election since. We have accomplished so much over the past 10 years, and I want to continue contributing as a selectboard member. Panton is served by a well-functioning, capable team comprised of our new town clerk-treasurer Kyle Rowe, our road crew and the selectboard. It's an energizing time to be involved in Panton.

**How do you feel about the proposed solar array, and how will you represent the town's interests?**

**HALL:** The Panton Selectboard seeks to represent the interests of all its residents. Some residents consider that the solar project would be good for both the town and state. But

many other residents do not believe this is an undertaking that is well placed in Panton. Because the differing opinions were so strongly expressed, a question about the solar array was on our November ballot. By a count of 3 to 1, residents expressed their opposition. I have always been a strong advocate for the town's interests and the will of the voters and will continue to do so. We do understand, however, this is not a simple matter of Panton's choice. At the appropriate time, the selectboard will communicate to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) the fact that Panton residents do not welcome this project. The PUC makes the ultimate decision to approve the solar array.

**JARING:** The solar project is complex. There are many strong opinions and feelings surrounding it. I believe the selectboard must strike a balance in representing all parties and be transparent. Helping all involved understand the "why."

**What other Panton issues do you feel strongly about?**

**JARING:** In my opinion residents are ready to see the next generation represented and engaged in the community. It's important to have diverse perspectives, opinions, and discussions even when they're

difficult. It's also important to remove any personal biases when approaching town business.

**HALL:** Here are my top issues: 1) Continue practicing sound fiscal management to ensure that the town is run responsibly, always keeping in mind the tax impact on our residents. 2) Resolving the unfinished business of improving ambulance service from the Vergennes Area Rescue Squad to Panton. 3) Resolving the town border issue with Vergennes. 4) Supporting our new town clerk to ensure his success in the position. We're off to a very strong start.

**Why should people vote for you?**

**HALL:** My 10-year tenure on the selectboard has established a demonstrated record of accomplishments. I remain grateful to the many others who have contributed so much to this progress. Together we have worked steadily to improve our town's facilities, town beach and boat launch site, technology and day-to-day operations. Wherever possible, we have researched and implemented ways to save money including the installation of solar panels at our town garage; new efficient heating systems; the improvement of town operations and the sensible use of available state funding and grants. I respectfully ask my fellow residents to allow me to continue my service to our community by voting for me on March 4.

**JARING:** I plan to embrace the role with a fresh perspective and desire to hear the questions, concerns, and comments — I intend to facilitate discussion and provide answers to questions asked. Panton residents are our "customers" and it's unacceptable for them to feel they aren't being heard. I believe my accounting background will be an asset. In a general sense don't be afraid to ask for help when warranted — no one person will always have the answer.

## Bristol Police Log

BRISTOL — Bristol police on Jan. 27 received a report of domestic assault on Main Street. After investigating, police cited Cameron Sprigg, 20, of Bristol for domestic assault. Police also cited Alexandria Alexander, 20, of Morrisville for aggravated domestic assault.

Between Jan. 19 and Feb. 8 Bristol police completed 46 foot patrols and five car patrols, conducted 28 traffic stops and checked security at Mount Abraham Union High School 21 times, at Bristol Elementary School 20 times and at local businesses 14 times.

Police also processed 25 fingerprint requests, conducted sex offender registry checks and verified three vehicle identification numbers.

In other recent activity, Bristol police:

- On Jan. 20 after a fraud investigation, cited Michele Higgins, 39, of Monkton for false pretense or tokens.
- On Jan. 20 helped someone get resources on being safe online.
- On Jan. 22 began investigating a theft of road signs on Briggs Hill Road.
- On Jan. 23 cited Natalie Huestis-Bell, 25, of Starksboro for failing to appear for an arraignment for domestic assault. Police reported that Huestis-Bell turned herself in when she became aware of a warrant for her arrest.
- On Jan. 24 assisted Mount Abe with a truancy concern.
- On Jan. 25 took a report of a stolen trailer on Pine Street.
- On Jan. 28 attempted to locate someone for a Rutland agency, but the person was not in Bristol.
- On Jan. 28 cited Noah Lincoln, 34, of South Burlington for operating a motor vehicle without an ignition interlock device following a traffic stop on Route 116 North.
- On Jan. 28 completed a report of a parking lot crash.
- On Jan. 28 responded to a report of suspicious activity on East Street, but found no one on their arrival.
- On Jan. 29 responded to a report of the sound of gunshots in the East Street area. Police patrolled the area and didn't find anything suspicious.

- On Jan. 29 reminded people at Sycamore Park of the park's hours.
- On Jan. 30 responded to Route 116 South for a reported motor vehicle complaint, but the vehicle was gone before police arrived.
- On Jan. 30 assisted Middlebury police at a motor vehicle stop on Route 7.
- On Jan. 31 received a report of a truck stolen from Church Street. The vehicle was later found unoccupied on Liberty Street.
- On Jan. 31 received a report of someone going through vehicles on West Street. Police reported that nothing was missing.
- On Jan. 31 responded to Taylor Avenue to help a citizen.
- On Feb. 1 responded to East Street to check on someone, but the person was gone when police arrived.
- On Feb. 2 responded to a suspicious incident on Lawson Lane. The people involved left before police arrived.
- On Feb. 3 issued court paperwork to a minor in possession of tobacco on Airport Drive.
- On Feb. 4 responded to a car in a ditch on Route 116 South. Police reported there were no injuries.
- On Feb. 4 assisted Bristol Elementary with a truancy concern.
- On Feb. 5 received a report of a dog loose on North Street. Police did not find the dog.
- On Feb. 5 responded to Burpee Road for a motor vehicle complaint. Police located the vehicle but did not find any violations.
- On Feb. 7 received a report of three horses loose on Carlstrom Road. The horses were returned to a fenced area prior to when police arrived.
- On Feb. 8 responded to Route 116 North for a vehicle that slid off the roadway.
- On Feb. 8 cited Jordan Atwood, 30, of Rutland City for driving with a criminally suspended license following a motor vehicle stop on Route 116 South.
- On Feb. 8 responded to Mount Abe for a motor vehicle complaint, but the vehicle was gone when police arrived.



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**March 3, 2025**

**by contacting one of the following:**  
Darcie Arensmeyer, [darensmeyer@acsdvt.org](mailto:darensmeyer@acsdvt.org), 802-388-1274  
The principal at your local elementary school  
Ashley Bessette, [abessette@acsdvt.org](mailto:abessette@acsdvt.org)





# Vekos

(Continued from Page 1A)  
unprofessionalism and curtness they'd never seen under prior state's attorneys.

Vekos was offered opportunities to defend herself, both during an in-person interview and through a series of emailed questions.

"I don't think it would be appropriate to engage in a public debate with unidentified sources about specific cases," she said. "However, I would welcome the opportunity to meet with anyone involved in a case that I have prosecuted to have a constructive discussion. I stand by the record of my work in the hundreds of cases I've handled in over 27 years of legal practice, including the cases of the Addison County SA's office."

Those interviewed by the *Independent* alleged, among other things, that:

- About 10 victims in 2024 chose to hire attorneys to help ensure their rights as victims were being upheld. While advocates told the *Independent* that the extent of victims "lawyering up" as "unprecedented" in Addison County's criminal division, Vekos said, "I don't see it as interference; I find it very helpful."

- In September of 2023, members of the county's domestic violence/sexual assault team requested a meeting with Vekos because she was allegedly not responding to official case updates. Vekos, according to two people at that meeting, walked out mid-meeting while raising her voice. A month later, Vekos agreed to monthly "community partner" meetings to review sex assault and domestic violence cases, but subsequently cancelled and no longer participates, according to

regular attendees.

"There came a time when I felt the meetings themselves weren't productive," Vekos said. "The idea was the group wanted to be regularly updated on the status (of cases). I felt the updates are just as easily done by emails and reports I've developed."

But at least one member of the team contends she was temporarily denied access to that information.

Vekos has had such a fractured relationship with victims' advocate Martha Bowdish that she at one point during 2023 cut off Bowdish's access to Justware, a software program through which SA employees can access case information.

"You are not an employee of this department and I cannot imagine a scenario where a non-employee would have full access to the state's files, videos, calendars, etc.," Vekos informed Bowdish through a Nov. 17, 2023, email.

"I'm not cutting you out or denying you any information," she stated. "Relax. Please. This conversation is over."

The Vermont Department of State's Attorneys & Sheriffs quickly restored Bowdish's access.

Unlike Katie Dutton — a victims' advocate funded through and assigned to the SA's office — Bowdish is employed by the Addison County Unit for Special Investigations, which helps the SA's office investigate sexual assault and domestic violence cases. The State's Attorney and Sheriff's office covers the annual cost of Bowdish's work, without which Vekos and her staff would need look after victims' concerns in hundreds of additional juvenile and criminal cases.

And in addition to being temporarily kicked off Justware, Vekos last April asked the Vermont Department of Buildings & General Services to deactivate the badge that allows Bowdish access to the SA's office. This happened just days before a trial in the longstanding case of Rein Kolts, who was accused in 2014 of repeatedly sexually assaulting a girl over a two-year period, beginning when she was 11. Bowdish had been working with victims in the case.

Annie Noonan, labor relations and operations director for the Vermont Department of State's Attorneys & Sheriffs, denied Vekos's request.

"(Bowdish) cannot perform her work (on the Kolts trial) without being able to be in the office to communicate and collaborate with you and the other staff," reads Noonan's letter denying the deactivation of Bowdish's badge.

"It seems reasonable to expect that whatever issues or problems may exist in the relationship between you and Martha, the victims in cases being handled by the Addison County SA's Office, and by Martha on our behalf, should not suffer as a result; and that you will make every effort to proceed professionally and collegially with Martha for the benefit of the victims in the Addison County SA's Office cases."

In an email, Vekos cited the Kolts case as a win for her office, but also an example where the survivors won't be happy with the sentence handed down to the defendant.

"In February of 2024, I tried a serial child rapist who was found guilty of two counts of sexual abuse of a child under the age of 13. This defendant now faces the possibility of 10 years to life on each count. He will likely never admit to his crimes, and I will advocate that he spend the rest of his life in prison. But for this victim and her family, life in prison is probably not punishment enough."



**ADDISON COUNTY STATE'S Attorney Eva Vekos appeared to be ready for the job when she was formally sworn in by Vermont Judge David Fenster in early 2023. But some victims and victims' advocates, as well as others in the judicial community, have not been pleased with her performance.**  
Independent file photo/Steve James

## TOO LATE TO CALL EXPERT

But victims' advocates alleged that Vekos was unable to get an expert witness to testify on the state's behalf because of her own tardiness in advancing that witness, Abby Tassel, a trauma-informed sexual assault investigation and adjudication educational program instructor.

With the case set for trial on May 1, 2024, Vekos's office filed a notice on March 21 that it intended to call Tassel. Kolts's attorneys filed a motion to exclude Tassel from testifying because the late disclosure date wouldn't give defense the time to retain and prepare its own expert witness.

Vermont Superior Court Judge Michael S. Kupersmith agreed with the defense in an April 17 ruling.

"The time for the state to disclose the expert witness was prior to Sept. 15, 2023. The state even had a second chance to retain and disclose its expert when the trial was postponed on Oct. 26, 2023. Here, disclosure of the state's witness was simply too late," he wrote in his decision.

The *Independent* reached out to Bowdish for comment. She provided the following statement:

"I applaud the bravery of these survivors for their courage to talk about their experiences with the criminal justice system and specifically SA Vekos. I have observed the injustices survivors

have endured at the hands of SA Vekos and I stand with the survivors. Victims of domestic and sexual violence matter. Despite SA Vekos' lack of aggressive prosecution of domestic and sexual

violence cases, there is a team of dedicated professionals that are here to support and advocate for you."

Also among the complaints against Vekos that the *Independent* heard were that:

- When former Deputy State's Attorney Anthony Bamrick gave his notice last summer, Vekos told him to get out and started throwing things, according to a witness to the alleged incident.

"I am also not going to comment on a private conversation that took place between myself and a member of my staff," Vekos said of the incident. "I was sorry to see Anthony go, but glad that he achieved his goal of going into private practice."

- On Nov. 4, 2024, Addison County Superior Court

Judge Robert Katims and court staff held a criminal law bench/bar meeting at which attorneys, court staff, county prosecutors and community partners met to discuss criminal law issues. Vekos, according to multiple witnesses, arrived late and, during discussion about the length of citation dates,

got upset and left the courtroom, allegedly yelling an epithet heard by the people in the courtroom. She returned near the end of the meeting, according to witnesses.

Vekos acknowledged being saddened, as opposed to angry, about at the incident in question.

- Vekos, according to testimonials gathered by some of those who have worked alongside her, doesn't react well when prosecutorial partners disagree with her. Sources noted, as an example, a Nov. 15, 2023, sentencing hearing at which Judge David Fenster — a former Addison County state's attorney, himself — heard a proposed plea deal for Andrew Hinman, now 23, a defendant who'd been charged with a felony sexual assault/no consent charge stemming from a Sept. 8, 2017, incident when he and the female victim were both 15.

The victim and her family said the proposed sentence was too lenient — a four-year deferred sentence (probation), with credit for time served. The jail time he'd already served was for violating conditions of release.

Fenster rejected that plea deal.

The day after that hearing, Vekos sent an email message to two advocates who worked with victims in the Hinman case: Bowdish and Jena Santa Maria, director of advocacy for Atria Collective, formerly known as WomenSafe.

(See Prosecutor, Page 13A)

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# Bristol police district budget set for vote

**By MARIN HOWELL**  
BRISTOL — On Town Meeting Day, voters who live in the Bristol Police District (primarily the village) will consider a proposed fiscal year 2026 spending plan of \$688,370. The spending plan would require \$533,088 to be raised by taxes.  
Voters will be asked to adopt the proposed police district budget by Australian ballot on March 4.  
The budget reflects a spending increase of \$61,742, or 9.85%, from the current year. Town officials noted in the Bristol Town Report that the increase is “largely due to increases in compensation

and benefits to remain competitive in a challenging market, liability insurance and supply expenses.”  
“While there is a projected increase in non-tax revenues by more than \$8,115 (5.51%), the net supported by taxes is proposed to be increased by \$53,627 (11.18%),” Bristol officials added.  
Bristol town officials held an informational meeting on the proposed spending plan during a Feb. 10 selectboard meeting. An additional informational meeting will take place at the selectboard’s Feb. 24 meeting, which will be held on Zoom and in person at Holley Hall beginning at 6:30 p.m.

# Prosecutor

*(Continued from Page 12A)*  
“A colossal mistake,” Vekos wrote. “Whatever trust and partnership that existed between our offices is now in grave jeopardy. I look forward to seeing how you plan to repair it.”  
Family and friends of the victim turned out at the Mahady Courthouse this past Monday, Feb. 10, to see Hinman agree to a plea deal that called for six years of probation, with conditions — including that he not contact the victim, engage in violent or threatening behavior and meet regularly with his probation officer.  
Danielle Hill, the victim’s mom, said she was shocked that the plea deal didn’t include incarceration or the defendant’s placement on the state’s sex offender registry.

agreements she’s navigating, especially around the frustration — and quite frankly, ire — that I’ve heard from some of the victims’ families. I hope the (state’s Professional Conduct Board), housed within our judiciary, is taking the complaints that are being filed against SA

*“As a rule, parties are usually dissatisfied with criminal court outcomes. Our system of justice simply does not have the tools to make victims truly whole or take away their pain.”*

— Eva Vekos

Vekos with utmost seriousness.”  
Vekos defended her performance on behalf of the state and victims:  
“As prosecutor, I try to strike a balance — as justice requires — to meet the needs of victims and the community. I do this with careful thought, deliberation and creativity. Unfortunately, we cannot always control the outcome of a criminal matter and there are times when others may disagree with my approach to a particular case. As a rule, parties are usually dissatisfied with criminal court outcomes. Our system of justice simply does not have the tools to make victims truly whole or take away their pain. The best it can hope to do is work toward accountability, rehabilitation, restitution and, yes, even punishment where warranted. This is my goal in every case.”

*“From the time she took over this case, we always felt there were two defense counsels in the room, not a prosecutor.”*

— Danielle Hill

The *Independent* reached out to Atria Collective officials for comment. In the last three months of 2024, Atria served 218 new victim/survivors, 88 of whom received legal assistance. Specific services included help obtaining restraining orders, no-stalking orders, civil legal assistance with family law issues, and immigration assistance.  
The Atria board provided a statement, which in part reads:  
“For the past two years, Atria Collective has

observed the tenure of Eva Vekos as Addison County State’s Attorney, a critical and influential position that significantly impacts the lives of victims and survivors in our community. Unfortunately, during her time in office, Atria Collective has witnessed countless instances where the statutory rights of victims and survivors have been violated, along with a consistent and troubling disregard for their respect and dignity — behaviors that no one, especially victims and survivors, should have to endure. In case after case, our agency has observed State’s Attorney Vekos neglecting to prioritize both the safety of victims and survivors and the well-being of the community. Victims and survivors deserve security and justice.

“Atria Collective continues to be dedicated to supporting victims and survivors throughout the criminal justice continuum,” the statement continues. “It is our sincere hope that State’s Attorney Vekos reflects on and acknowledges the harm caused by her practices and dedicates herself to learning and growth in her role as well as opportunities for repair. To the victims and survivors of Addison County: we see you, we hear you, you are valid, you are enough, and we continue to stand with you — today and every day.”  
*Editor’s note: In Part 2 next week we will look at victim testimonials.*

# Career center

*(Continued from Page 1A)*  
of Commerce and the Addison County Economic Development Corp. — two entities that partner with the Career Center on student programming.

MacTavish and her counterparts are monitoring, with trepidation, the Scott administration’s effort to transform the delivery of CTE as part of a broader Transformative Education Plan that his administration unfurled last month. That plan includes consolidating the state’s current 171 public school entities into five regional districts, each one governed by a single school board and superintendent. Addison County would be grouped with Chittenden and Franklin Counties — an area with 34,104 preK-12 students.

The plan — which would come with a new formula for school funding — would vest major funding and policy decisions in the AOE and regional boards, though it recommends a “school advisory council” for each public school, comprised of school educators, staff, students and caregivers to influence school improvement plans, budgeting and the district’s strategic plan.

While the governor’s proposed preK-12 public education changes have garnered a lot of headlines, less has been said about how his revamp blueprint would affect CTE. It remains to be seen how much of the Republican governor’s plan will advance in the Democrat-majority Legislature, but his current plan — which borrows from a study of Vermont’s current CTE system by the consulting firm of Augenblick, Palaich and Associates calls for:

- All the state’s CTE centers and programming to be overseen by a single, statewide CTE Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).
  - The state to directly fund the new CTE BOCES directly for all center-based career/technical students. The proposed funding amount for each CTE Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students is projected to be \$25,000.
  - The CTE BOCES would be expected to fund all operations from the \$25,000 per FTE student (part-timers are added together to create fulltime equivalents), including building budgets for each of the public CTE centers.
- “APA has found that median spending for CTE programs is around \$25,000 per student to provide a full-time program, not including any costs still incurred by sending districts to support students at their sending school,” reads a summary of the governor’s education plan.  
MacTavish believes having all 17 CTEs managed by a statewide career/tech board would curtail individual career centers’ ability to design and implement their educational programming in a manner that will prepare graduates for the sometimes unique needs of the local industries that are hiring.

“Centralizing CTE oversight to cut costs is antithetical to what Vermont needs to grow our own labor force, to boost industry, and to respond to the needs of local economy,” she said.

Relying on a single Vermont career/tech board to plot a statewide CTE strategy fails to recognize different counties



NICOLE MACTAVISH

have different business niches and needs, MacTavish noted.

“In order to expand economic opportunity and strengthen industry, we must grow our own highly skilled tradespeople,” she said. “The smart people who originally designed CTE in Vermont knew this, and they designed a system specifically to strengthen Vermont, through county-based CTE centers.”

The Middlebury-based PHCC receives students from the Addison Central, Addison Northwest and Mount Abraham school districts. The center delivers 19 career/technical education programs to the more than 300 students who take one or more classes at the center’s Charles Avenue or North Campus facilities in Middlebury. Adding up all the part-timers, the PHCC now serves the equivalent of 150 fulltime students.

County voters on March 4 will field a proposed PHCC fiscal year 2026 spending plan of \$5,704,280, representing an 8% increase compared to this year. Career center officials have said the increase is largely driven by 9% increase in negotiated teacher salaries for next year, a 12% bump in health insurance premiums, and debt service for \$8.1 million in

renovations recently made to both PHCC’s Middlebury campuses.  
MacTavish, at a recent Addison Central School District board meeting, noted the PHCC is one of four CTE centers that are independent school districts. Those four independent CTE districts generally have higher tuitions than the 13 other, non-independent centers.

“We have higher tuitions because we don’t just provide the programming; we do all the office tasks, too,” she said, citing accounting, human resources, budgeting and other functions. Hannaford is now the only CTE center statewide to run a theater program, which this year marks its 30th birthday.

In large part due to its independent status and diverse programming, the PHCC is proposing an FY26 tuition rate if \$34,920. That’s almost \$10,000 per FTE student more than the CTE tuition rate of \$25,000 that’s being pitched through the Scott plan.

Debt service on the recent \$8.1 million renovation amounts to more than 14% of the PHCC’s budget ask. And MacTavish noted Scott’s proposal doesn’t take into consideration state aid for school construction.

“(This) would mean we would also somehow have to fund this (construction) debt, from less than half our current budget,” MacTavish said.

The PHCC would have no choice but to trim its offerings, which ironically would translate into fewer students and thus a smaller revenue stream.

“Budget cuts of this magnitude would force us to cut programs like agriculture, diesel technology, construction, and medical professions,” she said, adding, “Given the scope of staffing cuts, we would no longer have the capacity to secure, administer, and complete the numerous reporting

requirements for large complex federal, state, and industry grants. This loss of capacity would cost us upwards of \$500,000 per year in revenue.”

Another lamentable casualty, according to MacTavish, would be the PHCC’s Adult Education programs, which serves hundreds of Addison County residents each year.

“These adult education programs are an unfunded mandate. We are currently able to subsidize (them) through our other funding streams, but in the scenario outlined in the governor’s proposal, we would no longer be able to support adult education.”

Also concerning to MacTavish: A proposed 18-month timetable for transitioning to the new CTE system.

There’s bipartisan momentum in Montpelier right now toward transforming Vermont’s public education system, which has been shedding students at an alarming rate as expenses keep going up. Lawmakers have yet to coalesce around a leading plan at this point.

MacTavish hopes the plan ultimately chosen will preserve at least some of the local backbone of CTE.

“One of the reasons I chose to bring my family here is the strong school system and the way CTE is set up,” she said. “The system we currently have is set up to drive strong economic development in Vermont. The founders — whoever those smart people were — designed the current system on a county-ish basis, so our CTE centers could be responding to the local economic drivers, what kind of workforce was needed, what the industries were, and how we train high-skilled, high-in-demand, high-wage jobs, so our kids can move into these industries and hopefully stay in Vermont.”

*Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com*

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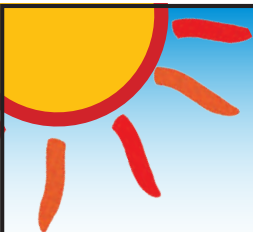
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# Vt. Agricultural Hall of Fame seeking nominations

ESSEX JUNCTION — Nominations are now open for the 2025 Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame. Nominations will be accepted in three categories: Emerging Leaders, Ag Innovators, and The Lifetime Achievement Award. Nominations will be accepted through Friday, March 24, at 5 p.m.

With over 100 Vermonter’s recognized in the last 23 years, the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame is ready to accept your thoughtful, quality nominations for 2025. All are welcome to submit a nomination at a chance to honor Vermont farmers, producers and people dedicated to supporting Vermont’s working landscapes. Prior nominations do not carry over; please resubmit your nomination for consideration again.

Any person who is or has significantly contributing to farming in Vermont — whether they own or work on a farm or provide direct support, is eligible for nomination.

Individuals, partners, families and collectives — including members of the farmworker community — are contenders and will be reflected on.

Inductees will be honored at the annual luncheon hosted during the Champlain Valley Fair in late summer.

The three categories are as defined:

**Emerging Leader** — This category highlights those who are stepping up to become the next generation of agricultural leaders in Vermont. Age 40 or younger (born after Jan. 1, 1985), these individuals demonstrate a deep commitment to Vermont’s working landscape and are poised to lead our Ag community into the future. They are remarkable for their service, youthful energy, and dedication to Vermont agriculture.

**Ag Innovator** — Those in consideration for this category have demonstrated a fresh and forward-thinking approach to agriculture. They are making or have made a significant, positive impact on Vermont, in areas such as but not limited to: growing the local economy, promoting stewardship and conservation, improving community health and nutrition, developing new tools and practices, and using alternative models in business and land ownership. They are notable for their unique perspective and unconventional approach. (Age is not a factor for consideration in this category.)

**Lifetime Achievement** — This category recognizes those who have made a significant contribution to the advancement, improvement, or development of Vermont agriculture over the course of their long career. Nominees shall have played an active role in Vermont agriculture for at least thirty years.

To nominate an ag leader for the 2025 Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame visit the website at [www.vtaghalloffame.org](http://www.vtaghalloffame.org). The nomination form is available electronically or to print.



POSING FOR A photo after participating in the 10- and 11-year-old age group at the 2025 Addison County 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl were: Front row (left to right): Ella Pope, Shoreham; Sutton Chittenden, Whiting; Olivia Tudhope, Orwell; and Rowdy Pope, Bridport. Back row: Ava Smith, Danby; Autumn Thresher, Salisbury; Sophee Shepard, Panton; Desiree Plouffe, Bridport; and Normandie Cesario, Cornwall. The contest took place on February 8 in Bridport. Photos by Tosha Pope

# Dairy Quiz Bowl was a lively competition

BRIDPORT — Competition at the 2025 Addison County 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl was lively as 4-H dairy members raced to be the first to buzz in with the correct answer to questions about dairy breeds, feeds, anatomy and the dairy industry, among other related topics.

The annual event took place at the Bridport Elementary School in Bridport on Feb. 8. Thirty-seven youths from county clubs participated in the event, which included a written test and several buzzer rounds. A few ties had to be broken with extra questions.

The Addison County 4-H Foundation provided rosette (See Quiz bowl, Page 15B)



THE 2025 ADDISON County 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl, Feb. 8 in Bridport, included eight competitors in the 12- and 13-year-old age group. The 4-H'ers were: Front row (left to right): Payton Lucas, Orwell; Caroline Compagna, Whiting; Boston Wilbur, Orwell; and Tenley Chittenden, Whiting. Back row: Sophia Stocker, Bridport; Gracelynn Barber, Shoreham; Renee Plouffe, Bridport; and Greyson VanderWey, Ferrisburgh.



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# Quiz bowl

(Continued from Page 14B)  
ribbons for the first through tenth place winners in each age group. They were:

**Seniors (14 and older):** 1. Brailey Livingston, New Haven; 2. Taryn Burns, Whiting; 3. Lola Rollins, North Ferrisburgh; 4. Jayden Ploof, Pantan; 5. Caroline Allen, Vergennes; 6. Kylee Shepard, Pantan; and 7. Bella Roell, Middlebury.

**12- and 13-year-olds:** 1. Tenley Chittenden, Whiting; 2. Boston Wilbur, Orwell; 3. Caroline Compagna, Whiting; 4. Payton Lucas, Orwell; 5. Greyson VanderWey, Ferrisburgh; 6. Renee Plouffe, Bridport; 7. Gracelynn Barber, Shoreham; and 8. Sophia Stocker, Bridport.

**10- and 11-year-olds:** 1. Rowdy Pope, Bridport; 2. Olivia Tudhope, Orwell; 3. Sutton Chittenden, Whiting; 4. Ella Pope, Shoreham; 5. Normandie Cesario, Cornwall; 6. Desiree Plouffe, Bridport; 7. Sophee Shepard, Pantan; 8. Autumn Thresher, Salisbury; and 9. Ava Smith, Danby.

**8- and 9-year-olds:** 1. Blake Moulton, Middlebury; 2. Leonne Plouffe, Bridport; 3. Amelia Tudhope, Orwell; 4. Lucas Gorton,



**AMONG THE 37 competitors at the 2025 Addison County 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl, held Feb. 8 in Bridport, were seven 4-H'ers who took part in the Senior Division (ages 14 and up). They were: Front row (left to right): Lola Rollins, North Ferrisburgh; Taryn Burns, Whiting; and Brailey Livingston, New Haven. Back row: Bella Roell, Middlebury; Kylee Shepard, Pantan; Caroline Allen, Vergennes; and Jayden Ploof, Pantan.**

Photo by Tosha Pope

New Haven; 5. Colin Compagna, Whiting; 6. Corbin Kerr, Shoreham; 7. Ellis Chittenden, Whiting; 8. Hannah Stocker, Bridport; 9. Remy Pope, Bridport; 10. Nora Plouffe, Bridport; and 11. Wyatt Carter, Bridport.

Two 4-H Cloverbuds, Jade

Gorton, New Haven, and Charley Moulton, Middlebury, also took part in the dairy quiz bowl, earning rainbow participation ribbons.

To learn more about 4-H dairy events in Addison County, contact Martha Seifert at (802) 656-7547 or martha.seifert@uvm.edu.

# Organic Dairy Day sessions to be held in Vergennes

BURLINGTON — To help dairy farmers prepare for the growing season, UVM Extension will hold a 2025 Organic Dairy Day session in Vergennes March 20, at the Vergennes American Legion, 100 Armory Lane. The session will feature presentations on ruminant nutrition and high-quality pasture and stored forages. The workshop is sponsored by UVM Extension's Northwest Crops and Soils program and will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Dairy producers will hear from Kurt Cotanch, a Vermont dairy nutritionist, on rumen biochemistry and function. Cotanch will discuss how a cow's rumen works from a biochemical perspective and connect that functionality to meeting the nutritional needs of grass-fed cows.

They will also hear about analytical, visual and sensory forage quality assessments with a "walk through" of a forage lab analysis. Through hands-on activities using visual and sensory analyses producers will learn how to discern forages of different qualities.

Sarah Flack, a Vermont independent grazing consultant, will talk about managing pasture and hay for quality. Participants then will have an opportunity to use nutritional modeling to better understand how the feeding of various qualities of forages impacts maintenance and production potential.

In addition, Jen Miller, Farmer Services Director with the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, will discuss how forage quality can impact cost of

production, including the economic impacts of various forage quality scenarios.

The interactive workshop costs \$25 per person, which includes lunch. Registrations will be accepted online at [go.uvm.edu/2025organicdairy](http://go.uvm.edu/2025organicdairy) or by contacting the University of Vermont (UVM) Non-Credit Registration Office at (802) 656-8407 or [noncredit@uvm.edu](mailto:noncredit@uvm.edu).

Anyone requiring a disability-related accommodation to participate should contact UVM Student Accessibility Services at [access@uvm.edu](mailto:access@uvm.edu) or (802) 656-7753 at least three weeks prior to the workshop. For questions about the program, contact Susan Brouillette at (802) 656-7611 or [susan.brouillette@uvm.edu](mailto:susan.brouillette@uvm.edu).

# Vermont tree fruit growers to meet on February 21

The Vermont Tree Fruit Growers Association, together with the UVM Fruit Program, will hold their annual meeting on Friday, Feb. 21, at the American Legion Hall in Middlebury.

Meeting topics will include disease management; managing bitter pit; and novel uses for plant growth regulators. Additionally, updates will be shared from the USDA Risk Management Agency,

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and Vermont Department of Health. Register at [tinyurl.com/tree-fruit](http://tinyurl.com/tree-fruit).

# County 4-H'ers compete in Hippology

WEYBRIDGE — Local 4-H'ers gathered at the Weybridge Elementary School in Weybridge on Jan. 25 for the 2025 Addison County 4-H Hippology and Quiz Bowl competitions.

In the morning, participants tested their equine knowledge in hippology, a multi-phase contest that began with rotation through five identification stations on horse colors, breeds and other horse-related topics. They then judged a class of four horses based on conformation, took a written test and viewed a slide show to answer questions with scores for all four phases combined to determine overall placements.

For hippology, the results were as follows:

**10- and 11-year-olds:** 1. Normandie Cesario, Cornwall; 2.

Elise Tribou, Addison.

**12- and 13-year-olds:** 1. Iris Bassett, New Haven; 2. Chace Petrin, Addison; 3. Brianna Bessette, Salisbury.

**14-year-olds and older:** 1. Tessa Buskey, North Ferrisburgh; 2. Lila Smith, Lincoln; 3. McKenzie Ball, Vergennes; 4. Alexis Freegard, Bristol; 5. Sophia Welch, Bridport.

For the afternoon quiz bowl competition, the 4-H'ers earned points for being the first to buzz in with the correct answer to questions about the horse industry. Because two of the participants had to leave early, the two younger age groups were combined for this competition.

The results were:

**10- to 13-year-olds:** 1. Normandie Cesario, Cornwall; 2. Elise Tribou, Addison; 3. Brianna

Bessette, Salisbury.

**14-year-olds and up:** 1. Tessa Buskey, North Ferrisburgh; 2. Lila Smith, Lincoln; 3. Alexis Freegard, Bristol; 4. McKenzie Ball, Vergennes; 5. Sophia Welch, Bridport.

Addison County Extension 4-H Educator Martha Seifert organized the event. She was assisted by Kathy and Cassie Kennett, Vergennes, who prepared the questions and volunteered at the event along with parents who helped score and moderate the contests. The rosette ribbons presented to the winners were provided by the Addison County 4-H Foundation.

For more information about 4-H horse events in Addison County, contact Seifert at (802) 656-7547 or [martha.seifert@uvm.edu](mailto:martha.seifert@uvm.edu).



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# Sewer plant

(Continued from Page 1A)

1,879 residential, commercial and industrial accounts via 60 miles of pipe.

Last year, it treated approximately 378 million gallons of domestic and industrial wastewater, averaging 1,036,110 gallons per day — roughly 38% of its design capacity.

But that’s only part of the story; the plant also receives 2.5 million gallons of septage a year from haulers of septic tank waste. Given the average 1,000-gallon residential septic tank, this equates to around 2,500 additional properties served by the Middlebury plant.

The \$49.5 million outlay — the largest bond Middlebury has ever fielded — would improve the plant’s ability to process biosolids (sludge), as well as pay for several age-related upgrades to a facility that was launched in 2000.

“It’s served the ratepayers well, but we’re getting to a point where we can’t keep it going much longer,” said wastewater plant Assistant Superintendent Dean Rheume. “The ratepayers have gotten more than the designed life out of it. We’re at the point where we could see catastrophic failures.”

Rheume, plant Superintendent Jeremy Rathbun and Middlebury Director of Engineering Emmalee Cherington led the *Independent* on a tour of facility last week to show what’s driving the need for

the proposed upgrades.

Rathbun opened a cabinet of circuit breakers that ensure electricity flows to all sectors of the plant. Fortunately, the crew there had the foresight last summer to order a spare breaker for each circuit. The current wait time for one of the outdated breakers is about four months, because each has to be made to order.

“If we had lost one of these and had to wait months to get it, we’d be out here trying to run temporary wiring to keep the plant online,” Rathbun said.

Instead of working on long-range wastewater planning, Rathbun and his staff are constantly having to troubleshoot the here and now. Rathbun’s Feb. 11 workday began at 4 a.m., wrestling with an uncooperative valve at one of the plant’s holding basins. The valve needs a new actuator, which is on order.

“I have two valves with different valve stems, and I need two different actuators,” Rathbun said of just one of the plant’s idiosyncrasies.

And that, he said, is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the plant’s growing obsolescence.

“A lot of what we’re doing is going over the plant and saying, ‘OK, over the next five years, what do we think we could have problems with?’ and try to make sure we get (replacement materials) to stave off those emergencies.”

Investing in replacement parts to forestall future emergencies sounds wise, but there comes a point when it becomes an imprudent investment, according to Rathbun.

“We can plan for the future, but at a certain point, you start running into sunk costs,” he said. “We start buying things we’re not going to recoup the money on; we’re just putting that hardware in, and in five years we’re going to have to get rid of it. You don’t want to be doing too much of that.”

Rathbun said five years, because the current schedule (assuming a positive March 4 vote) is a construction launch in 2027 and project completion in 2029, according to Wright Pierce, a consulting firm that’s helped devise the project.

**PROCESSING SEPTIC**

The next tour stop was the septic receiving location at the wastewater treatment plant, or WWTP. The plant has become a de facto regional drop-off hub for septage pumped from the tanks of hundreds of area residents whose towns don’t have a sewerage system.

“On busy summer days, we have to shut down. Our tank outside gets full and we can’t take more septage in,” Rathbun said. “This receiving unit wasn’t meant to take the flow it takes every day.”

He noted that at age 25, the plant’s septage pumps can no longer be primed with the push of a button. So WWTP workers have to



WASTEWATER PLANT SUPERINTENDENT Jeremy Rathbun, right, and plant operator Noah Fleury check out a sample of water that was running through the plant last week. Middlebury next month will vote on a \$50 million upgrade to the plant.

Independent photo/Steve James

physically prime them with water every day to get them started. It adds around an hour and a half to the chore, according to Rathbun.

From there, it was on to an inspection of the WWTP’s heat and lime stabilization system. Lime, in Rathbun’s words, “eats everything” — including the metal infrastructure with which it has come in contact these past 25 years.

“The system has a lot of moving parts — conveyor belts, augers, heaters — a lot of parts that are reaching the end of their lifespan and need to be replaced,” he noted. “So the question is, ‘How much money do we put into a system that we want to replace anyway?’”

While the air quality in the plant is “acceptable” according to regulators, the WWTP crew spends long days surrounded with by lime dust.

“It’s not the greatest environment for people to be working in all day, every day,” Rathbun said.

A sludge pressing process reduces the substance to only 14% liquid.

**SOLUTIONS**

So what’s the solution to what’s ailing the plant?

Consultant Wright Pierce

combed through the plant last year and proposed a package of improvements that include:

- \$4 million to renovate the main pump station.
- \$4 million to improve the headworks.
- \$13 million to modernize the secondary treatment/sequencing batch reactors.
- \$4 million to replace an ultraviolet disinfection system, among other things.
- \$2 million in site improvements.

The company also recommends more than \$20 million in sludge handling upgrades, including replacing the antiquated sludge-dewatering equipment with drying apparatus that officials said would significantly reduce the amount of Class A biosolids (fertilizer) the town is currently paying to spread at the 1,500-acre Adams Farm.

Officials are concerned that state and/or federal authorities could eventually prohibit land application of biosolids given greater awareness of Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances, better known as “PFAS.” PFAS are synthetic chemicals found in many conventional products, ranging from clothing to paper packaging. The chemicals accumulate in body tissues, and exposure to certain PFAS is linked to risk of thyroid cancer and liver damage.

So the Environmental Protection Agency has prescribed strict PFAS thresholds — measured in parts per billion — for land applying biosolids. Biosolids that exceed those thresholds must be landfilled at great expense. While Middlebury’s biosolids haven’t exceeded the EPA’s PFAS thresholds, Wright Pierce’s recommended project would give the town the future option of equipping its sewer plant with “pyrolysis” technology. Pyrolysis uses intense heat to break down organic material and destroy nearly all PFAS content.

**WHO PAYS?**

How will the town pay back the \$49.5 million in debt?

Primarily through increases in the town’s sewer fees, which include a base rate of \$52 every three months and a usage rate of \$7.55 per 1,000 gallons.

Winning grants would help reduce the impact on the rates. Showing community support helps win grants.

“A positive bond vote demonstrates community support,” Cherington said. “If we receive a positive vote, we will be able to apply for grants and loans that could potentially reduce the project cost by as much as 10-35%.”

Cherington will mine a menu of grant options, including:

- The Clean Water State Revolving Fund. One possible grant would cover 10-35% of the project, the other would cover \$250,000 for engineering services.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency, to subsidize flood protection for the plant’s main pump.
- The Northern Borders Regional Commission, for money for regional septage receiving and/or a regional solids handling dryer.
- A Congressional earmark.

Asked about her hope for federal aid given the Trump administration’s promise to cut federal grant programs, Cherington said, “it’s day to day.”

To watch a guided tour video of the wastewater treatment plant, head online to [tinyurl.com/5n78s29b](http://tinyurl.com/5n78s29b).

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

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# Monkton

*(Continued from Page 1A)*  
The *Independent* asked each of the candidates about their prior experience, the issues they're passionate about and plans for how they'd serve the town of Monkton if elected.  
Their answers are printed below. Responses from Delgreco and Huizenga weren't available as the *Independent* went to press.

**Please provide a brief bio.**  
**Charboneau:** I'm Randy Charboneau, a Monkton resident for over 30 years. I retired from the Vermont Army National Guard after three decades of service, including two overseas deployments. During my military career, I managed budgets and oversaw \$250 million in equipment inventory.  
Locally, I have served on the Monkton Fire Department, assisted with the Monkton Cub Scouts, and currently serve as a Town Auditor. I also volunteer at the monthly Bristol Senior Lunch and Homeward Bound, Addison County's Humane Society.

**Dunham:** I grew up in Starksboro and moved to Monkton in 2011. My wife and I have 2 young kids, one at MCS and one in preschool.

I studied mechanical engineering in school and worked for a solar company for 10 years before returning to the family sugaring business in Starksboro.

I have very limited public service experience. I am currently serving on the Monkton energy committee. During and after college I volunteered as a coach for the Mt. Abe alpine ski team.

**Demeritt:** I have always lived in Vermont and moved to Monkton in 1996, married in 1997, and I am raising two children here. I started volunteering for the Monkton recycling center in 2016, and later became the coordinator and served in that role until 2024. Since 2018 I have been working with an informal group that removes wild parsnip and buckthorn from Morse Park and the forest next to the school.

I serve as an alternate on the Board of Supervisors for the Addison County Solid Waste Management District. I helped found Troop 802, a Scouts BSA female troop in 2019 and served as Assistant Scoutmaster and treasurer. In 2024 I was appointed to the Town Forest Committee and the Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee. I love exploring the forests and mountains, I have a sweet tooth, and I enjoy gardening.

**Gordon:** I have lived in Monkton for 14 years after getting married to my wife Bailee Layn-Gordon. We have 5 children, 4 at home still and one in college. I have been a member of the Monkton Development Review Board since 2013. I have also been in the Vermont Army National Guard for almost 28 years. I am a small business owner in town. I am currently the leader of Cedar Lake Shooting Sports 4-H club, which is based out of Monkton.

**Steadman:** My wife and I moved here, built our home 1979 and raised 4 kids who went to the local schools. I previously served as constable, delinquent tax collector, several years on the zoning and planning commission and two terms on the selectboard.

**Peisch:** I work as a health policy analyst for the Vermont Office of the Health Care Advocate (HCA). We are an independent office established in state law to advocate for the interests of Vermonters — the public — in all areas that impact health: our legislature, state government, and our regulator.

Prior to working at the HCA, I worked for seven years as a researcher and project administrator at the Harvard School of Public Health, where I received my Masters in Public Health. I am a member of the Little Hogback Community Forest, which helps collaboratively manage a forest plot in Monkton. We also partner with the Monkton Wood Bank and Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects (HOPE) to donate and deliver firewood to those in need of heating support in Addison County.

**What motivated you to run?**

**Dunham:** I feel strongly that it is important for all of us to participate in our local governance however possible. In years past for me, that has merely been attending town and school board meetings and having private conversations with our elected officials. When several seats became vacant at once, I was on the fence about taking on a

larger role.  
After having numerous conversations with other members of the community it became clear that despite my lack of experience, they felt that I had the temperament to serve well. Their confidence in me convinced me that now was as good a time as any to give it a try.

**Demeritt:** I have been in service to the town for almost a decade. It wasn't intentional; it has been work I have been drawn to do. Connecting with people in the community, working together to bring a shared vision to reality, learning and laughing at events — these are things that I appreciate, value, that energize me.

I have been taking minutes for Monkton's selectboard since 2021. I have learned a lot about the function of a selectboard, and some of the issues that are important to the residents. I would like to put my service experience to use for the town. I would like a turn serving the town as a selectboard member.

**Gordon:** The thing that motivated me most is the desire to continue serving my community. I want to bring a new perspective to the selectboard. I want to make sure all voices in town are being heard. I also feel in order to make change you need to step and be part of the processes.

**Steadman:** A reason for running, the three longest serving members are leaving. The remaining two have only been on a short time.

**Peisch:** First and foremost, I care deeply about the town. As nerdy as it sounds, I also genuinely enjoy talking and learning about issues many people understandably find mind-numbingly dull despite being important, like road grading, plowing, zoning ordinances, local preservation grants, town ordinances, etc.

I have also been fortunate to have received a lot of help from Monkton residents since we moved here. Within one year of living here, we had to navigate our water heater leaking CO and having the fire department help us in an emergency, our driveway washing away twice in flash floods, and losing power countless times. In all of these circumstances, people we barely knew (but now know as friends) reached out and helped us. I see the selectboard as an opportunity for me to give back to the town.

**Charboneau:** As Town Auditor, I've gained valuable insight into Monkton's financial processes. With three selectboard seats open, I see an opportunity to continue serving the community by ensuring responsible financial management. My goal is to balance necessary projects, maintain existing assets, and keep Monkton affordable. My wife and I raised our two children here and I want future generations to have the same opportunities our family did.

**What are Monkton's most pressing issues and how should the town navigate them?**

**Demeritt:** The town of Monkton is losing its three senior selectboard members. The remaining members have three years of experience between them. Monkton is going to face some challenging years while the novice members learn how to do the board's work.

There are the perennial issues of the roads, increased taxes, communication between the boards and the residents, and generally conflicting interests. But I think the most pressing issue will be the inexperienced board. Luckily, Monkton has a seasoned Town Administrator to help guide the new selectboard's work. If elected, I look forward to learning what the residents of the town feel are the most pressing issues.

As I said in the candidate forum on Feb. 6, it takes a long time for the town to accomplish work. Major issues like road crew turnover and road maintenance, storm damage and FEMA funding, selling town property (the 1859 building), renovating town property (the new town hall expansion room), can take 2 to 4 years.

It will take some years for the new selectboard to learn how to do good work for the town. It will be key for them to take the lead on fostering communication and cooperation. This is work that I believe I have demonstrated in my other service roles, and that I would like to bring to the town. I will also ask for help and acknowledge when I don't know.

**Gordon:** I think the most pressing issue for Monkton is an

affordability problem. I want to make sure my children will have the opportunity to build or buy a home here in Monkton. Currently with housing prices and the lack of development of affordable housing, I don't see this possibility for the next generation. I also would like to make sure the selectboard is transparent with the community. I think it is very important to use executive session sparingly and to consider a wider variety of ways to communicate with towns people.

I want the selectboard and the planning commission to work together to try and make it easier to develop affordable housing in town, while still adhering to the Unified Planning Document and the Town Plan. I know affordable housing is going to be hard with the high prices of construction material. However, I think the town can assist with this by making it a little easier for people to build multi-family homes. This will only work if we all come together and bring ideas to the table.

How I think the selectboard could improve transparency is through open communication. While some community members would rather gather their information online, there are still towns people who prefer their information on paper. It might be worth it for the selectboard to explore ways to expand getting information out to the community.

It is also very important to use executive session sparingly. I think the majority of discussions should be held in open session, so the community has an opportunity to see how and why a decision was made. When topics are discussed in executive session it can limit the opportunity for input from the towns people.

**Steadman:** As for issues, looking at the budget these lame ducks have put together there has been a good bit of overspending and interesting book keeping over a number of years. So, I would like to help get to understand what has been going on and help get it straightened out.



DEMERITT

I ran for the three year term to help give some stability to the board.

**Peisch:** Like many Vermont towns, too many people in Monkton are struggling with the lack of affordability — whether it be property taxes increasing at rates that exceed wage growth or meeting basic needs of heating, food, and maintaining their car.

Monkton also is a place that wants to be inclusive with respect to having housing for people of different income levels, but has struggled to figure out how to sustainably develop in a way that does not disrupt the rural and quiet character of the town that is a central reason why many people have decided to move to Monkton and/or stay here. I will work hard to do everything I can within my power as one selectboard member to develop sensible, sustainable budgets that do not overburden our residents and deliver on what Monktonites want with respect to town services.

We are also a town with many seniors, working class families, and people who work in the trades. I am keen to help develop programs that ensure these community members are respected and supported.

My guiding principle for working with people is to always be humble. I also believe that while we can always make something political, oftentimes this makes establishing a compromise or consensus more difficult. I truly believe that many of the town's issues do not have to be political — we need to be tough



DUNHAM

on the problem, not on people who are worried about it.

I have worked with — and been helped by — many people in town since we moved here. Not once has who they voted for been asked nor has it ever mattered. What mattered was establishing mutual respect, being clear, transparent and communicative, and developing a plan to fix the problem. That approach is what I will seek to bring to the selectboard.

**Charboneau:** Affordable housing remains a key concern at both the town and state levels. While we can't control factors like material costs or labor shortages, we can make a difference by managing local finances responsibly. Town Committees and Departments must adhere to their budgets, and new projects should not place an undue financial burden on residents.

With my experience in budget management, I will prioritize financial oversight to keep spending in check. Project proposals should be thoroughly reviewed to ensure funding is secured before approval. Cost overruns can strain the town's resources and limit our ability to maintain existing infrastructure. A fiscally responsible approach will help Monkton remain a great place to live.

**Dunham:** I will not pretend to have a vast understanding of what all of the issues are, let alone a way to fix them. I am aware that affordability, like the rest of the



PEISCH

state, is an issue for Monkton. I also understand that we need more housing. Our roads and culverts are a particularly visible issue that, while greatly improved in the last few years, still have far to go. I recognize that the selectboard may have a more limited ability to address some of these larger issues than we might like.

I do not have all of the answers, but I can be fair and unbiased in weighing solutions and have an excellent approach to problem solving. I would do my best to communicate directly and clearly with anyone with an interest in the issues and endeavor to balance the needs of the town as a whole with those people most impacted by the selectboard's decisions.

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# By the way

*(Continued from Page 1A)*  
**Funding Changes. Will Bristol be OK?”** If you’re wondering how federal funding cuts and policy changes could affect the community, you’ll be able to ask questions and get some answers during the event, slated for 6:30-8:30 p.m. Phoebe Barash and Bruce Duncan will guide participants in small group discussions. The focus will be on listening and learning from other community members. To learn more email [concernedbristolvt@gmail.com](mailto:concernedbristolvt@gmail.com).

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Community Development this past week announced \$4,764,010 in Community Development Block Grant funding to benefit 15 projects in 14 communities — including the town of Hancock. Hancock has received \$60,000 to conduct an environmental review, a feasibility study and develop architectural and engineering plans for the potential construction of housing at 50 Taylor Meadow — that’s a spot in the village by the current fire station. Other CDBG grants in this latest round will support such things as creation of the regional Orange County Parent Child Center in Randolph, renovate the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi headquarters in Swanton, and increase homeownership services provided by the Windham and Windsor Housing Trust. “These investments are transformational for rural Vermont and will help revitalize communities,” Scott said. “Without this support, many of these projects would not get across the finish line. I want to thank our Congressional delegation for their support of this important program.”

The 5 Town Friends of the Arts (STFA) is now accepting grant applications for its spring round of community grants. The community grants program helps fund activities and events in the fine arts, performing arts and other cultural experiences to enrich the lives of people

living in Monkton, New Haven, Bristol, Lincoln and Starksboro. One goal of STFA is to expose children and teens to arts and culture, so preference will be given to projects that meet that goal. Previous recipients have been libraries in the five towns, schools seeking funding for special events or artists in residence, and theater programs and other community groups with great ideas in need of funding. Applications are due on or before March 15 and can be downloaded from the organization website: [5townfriendsofthearts.org](http://5townfriendsofthearts.org) Please send completed applications to [FiveTownFOA@gmail.com](mailto:FiveTownFOA@gmail.com) (preferred), or mail c/o AOM, 25 Main St., Bristol, VT 05443.

Average gasoline prices in Vermont have risen half a cent per gallon during the past week to \$3.14 per gallon according to GasBuddy’s survey of 626 stations. Prices in Vermont are 0.6 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and 10.3 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. According to GasBuddy, the cheapest station in Vermont sold gas \$2.75 this week, and the most expensive sold at \$3.35. Meanwhile, the national average price of gasoline rose 2.2 cents to \$3.11 — unchanged from a month ago and 16.5 cents lower than a year ago.

# Bristol

*(Continued from Page 1A)*  
to press.

**Please provide a brief bio.**

**Hill:** Hi, my name is Chanin Hill and I am a lifetime resident of Addison County. I attended primary school at both Beeman Elementary and Bristol Elementary and graduated from MAUHS in 1988. My three children all attended Bristol Elementary and graduated from MAUHS and went on to college. I currently work on the family farm doing bookkeeping, payroll, grant administration, retirement account administration and many other duties. My public service currently includes being a member of the Bristol Planning Commission, our farm is a member of the Champlain Valleys Farmer Coalition and Vermont Dairy Producers Alliance (VDPA) of which I was recently elected to the be the Executive Director. Previously, our farm was a founding member of VDPA and I was a board member for many years.

**Rossignol:** I’m a lifelong Vermonter, deeply committed to safe, effective, and sustainable schools. With a master’s in special education and years of hands-on experience, I’ve seen our schools’ challenges up close. As a former teacher of students with emotional and behavioral disabilities, I understand what’s at stake.

This past year, as a school board trustee and chair of the Community Engagement Committee, I fought



MEREDITH ROSSIGNOL

to keep teachers in classrooms and students safe while finding smart cost-saving solutions. If re-elected, I’ll keep pushing for practical, community-driven policies that strengthen our schools.

**Why represent your town on the MAUSD board?**

**Rossignol:** My daughter, Lily, is 2 years old, and like every child in our four towns, she deserves the best possible education. As a parent and member of this community, I am deeply invested in the future of our schools. Our current system is not sustainable. Despite Vermont spending the most per student on education, the quality of our education is mediocre. If we continue on this path, costs



CHANIN HILL

will keep rising, and the quality of education will decline.

I believe we can do better. I want to ensure that every child, including Lily, has access to a safe, effective, and sustainable education system.

**Hill:** My interest in becoming a member of our local school is because of my concern that my grandchildren who will be attending school in the district will get a quality education. I hope to support my schools and community by enhancing educational opportunities in programs and curricula that ensure all students are prepared for a future in both academic and career development.

**How would you help MAUSD navigate education funding changes?**

**Hill:** As Governor Scott has just introduced a new funding plan which I support, it’s too early to determine if it will come to fruition. I do know, and the voters have made it clear, that the current funding system is too costly and if elected I will work to be fiscally responsible.

**Rossignol:** My experience as an educator and team leader has given me the insight and skills to advocate effectively for our district. I am committed to ensuring that state-level changes benefit our schools, teachers, and students. I envision a future where every child has access to high-quality education, our teachers are fully supported, and our schools are thriving hubs of learning and growth without taxing our communities to their breaking points.

**How should Vermont fund its schools?**

**Rossignol:** Sustainably. We need to prioritize funding programs that truly benefit our children and cut unnecessary costs. We all agree that education in Vermont is too expensive. It’s time to take a hard look at where our tax dollars are going and eliminate expenses that don’t directly contribute to student success. By doing so, we can ensure that every dollar spent is making a meaningful impact on our children’s education and future.

**Hill:** Our resources are limited and need to be managed efficiently and effectively to directly benefit students and enhance the quality of education.

**Are there other issues or concerns the school board should address in your term?**

**Rossignol:** School safety is an urgent priority. With so many changes happening in education at the local, state, and federal levels, we must act now to ensure our schools are safe havens for our children. Recent survey data reveals that a significant number of our students don’t feel safe at school, and this is unacceptable to me as a parent, educator, and community member.

*Note: Hill did not provide an answer to this question.*



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TIGER SENIOR FORWARD McKenna Raymond fires home one of her two breakaway goals against visiting Rice on this past Friday.

Independent photo/Steve James

— ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT —

B Section

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2025

SPORTS

ALSO IN THIS SECTION:

- School News
- Legal Notices
- Classifieds
- Police Logs

Panthers 2nd at carnival

Dartmouth nips Midd ski teams

By ANDY KIRKALDY  
MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury College ski teams this past weekend were edged by unbeaten Dartmouth at the Middlebury Winter Carnival, 898-877.5. The University of Vermont rounded out the top three with 722.5 points.  
In Alpine highlights, on Friday Panther Bradshaw Underhill won the men's slalom with a two-run time of 1:31.25, and teammate Nicholas Unkovskoy tied for ninth in 1:32.98.  
Underhill also won the giant

slalom on Saturday in 1:58.62, with Unkovskoy right behind in second (1:59.15). Underhill has won seven of 10 races this winter and remains unbeaten in the slalom.  
On the women's side, on Saturday Panther Kjersti Moritz won the GS with a two-trip time of 2:02.61.  
On Friday Moritz finished second in the slalom in 1:36.54. Panther Sophia Tozzi was seventh (1:37.10), and teammate Mika-Anne Reha was ninth (1:37.55).  
In Nordic competition, in Friday's women's sprint racing, Shea Brams had the top finish, taking seventh in 3:57.44.  
In Saturday's 10 kilometer classic race, Brams finished third

in 28:56, while Mica Bodkins (29:56.8) and Sofia Scirica (30:01.9) placed 11th and 12th, respectively.  
In men's sprinting on Saturday, Panther Jack Christner was fourth in the final in 3:24.24.  
Panther Logan Moore, placing 12th, with his fastest time of the day (3:19.48) coming in the qualifying round.  
In the 10K classic on Saturday, Moore was second in 24:41.9, while Christner was third (24:48.4).  
The Panthers travel to the University of New Hampshire for the Eastern Intercollegiate Ski Association Championships, which begin on Friday.  
(See Carnival photos, Page 5B)



PANTHER SKIER KJERSTI Moritz speeds through the slalom course during Middlebury College Winter Carnival ski racing at the Snowbowl on Friday, Feb. 14. She finished second in the slalom that day and first in the giant slalom the next day to help the Panther ski team take second place overall.

Independent photo/Steve James

Score BOARD

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS	
Girls' Basketball	
2/12 Mt Abe vs Enosburg .....	36-24
2/12 MUHS vs VUHS .....	34-24
2/13 OV at Hartford .....	Postponed
2/14 MUHS vs Missisquoi.....	55-20
2/14 Mt Abe vs VUHS.....	52-40
2/17 OV at Windsor .....	Postponed
2/18 Enosburg vs VUHS.....	60-27
2/18 Rutland vs MUHS.....	29-27
2/18 Mt Abe vs Colchester.....	51-28
Boys' Basketball	
2/14 MUHS vs Milton.....	58-43
2/15 Mt Abe vs Missisquoi.....	57-39
2/15 OV vs MSJ .....	61-40
2/17 VUHS at Enosburg .....	Postponed
2/17 Winooski at Mt Abe .....	Ppd. to 2/20
2/18 Fair Haven vs OV .....	59-37
2/19 VUHS at Missisquoi .....	Late
2/19 Mt. Abe at MUHS.....	Late
Boys' Hockey	
2/14 Hartford vs MUHS .....	3-1
2/19 MUHS at Spaulding .....	Late
Girls' Hockey	
2/12 CVU/MMU vs MUHS .....	3-2
2/14 Rice vs MUHS .....	6-4
2/19 MUHS at Hartford .....	Late

(See Scoreboard, Page 3B)

Hartford nips improving MUHS boys' hockey

By ANDY KIRKALDY  
MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School boys' hockey team for the most part held their own against defending Division II champion Hartford on this past Friday. But the Hurricanes did a better job of finishing their chances and left Middlebury's Memorial Sports Center with a 3-1 victory.  
Hartford improved to 11-6-1 and looked solid on defense as well as

dangerous in transition. The Tigers, a young team that dresses only two seniors, have been steadily improving, especially defensively, according to Coach Jordan Stearns. But that improvement has yet to be reflected in their record — MUHS dropped to 3-14-1.  
Still, Stearns was happy with the team's continued improvement on the defensive end, which has been a point of emphasis. He  
(See Boys, Page 3B)

D-I Green Knights rally past Tiger girls' hockey

By ANDY KIRKALDY  
MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School girls' hockey team scored four pretty goals and got outstanding goaltending from senior Ruby Hubbell against visiting Rice on Friday evening. But the Green Knights, who controlled most of the action during the game, erupted in the third period with four

unanswered goals to skate away with a 6-4 victory.  
The game was the fourth straight for the Division II Tigers against D-I opponents. Despite being competitive in all of them, they have earned just a tie in those four outings, which include Friday's tough setback and two one-goal losses, one in overtime.  
(See Girls, Page 4B)



THE TIGER DANCE team takes to the air during their Hip Hop routine at the state championship competition this past Saturday at Vergennes Union High School.

Independent photos/Steve James

Tiger dance nets two silvers  
Squad is close second in Hip Hop, Pom divisions

By ANDY KIRKALDY  
VERGENNES — The Middlebury Union High School dance squad, which had reinforcements this season from Mount Abraham Union High School, improved dramatically over the course of the winter, observers agreed. But the local dancers came up just short of claiming Vermont championships on Saturday evening at Vergennes Union High School.  
The Tiger team finished second in both the Hip Hop and Pom divisions, and their overall efforts fell short of matching only defending champion Mount Mansfield, which took first place in Hip Hop and second place in Jazz. According to MUHS Activities Director Sean Farrell, the Tigers lost to MMU in Hip Hop on a tiebreaker.  
South Burlington and MUHS essentially tied for the second best overall on the evening showing as well as in their chosen divisions. South Burlington edged the Tigers to win the Pom title, but finished in third place behind Mount Mansfield and MUHS in Hip Hop.

Lamoille also had a successful evening in front of the usual big and enthusiastic crowd in the VUHS gym, earning first place in Jazz and fourth place in Hip Hop.  
Each team chooses to perform routines in two of the three disciplines, and a panel of judges rates their performances on a number of criteria, such as presentation, musicality, creativity and synchronicity.  
The full results were:



MEMBERS OF THE MUHS dance team showed sparkle and spirit during the squad's Pom routine at the state championship competition this past Saturday at Vergennes Union High School.

In the Hip Hop Division:  
1st Place: Mt. Mansfield  
2nd Place: Middlebury  
(See Dance, Page 2B)



THE TIGER DANCE team's Hip Hop performance included a show of hands at the state championship competition this past Saturday at Vergennes Union High School.





SYNCHRONIZED HANDSTANDS WERE a dramatic and crowd-pleasing part of the MUHS dance team's Hip Hop performance at the state championship competition this past Saturday at Vergennes Union High School.



THE TIGER DANCE team showed school spirit during its Pom performance at the state championship competition this past Saturday at Vergennes Union High School.

Independent photos/Steve James

# Dance

(Continued from Page 1B)  
3rd Place: South Burlington  
4th Place: Lamoille  
5th Place: Mt. Anthony  
6th Place: Burr & Burton  
**IN THE POM DIVISION:**  
1st Place: South Burlington  
2nd Place: Middlebury  
3rd Place: BFA St. Albans  
4th Place: Burr & Burton

5th Place: Colchester  
6th Place: Mt. Anthony  
7th Place: North Country  
**IN THE JAZZ DIVISION:**  
1st Place: Lamoille  
2nd Place: Mt. Mansfield  
3rd Place: BFA St Albans  
4th Place: North Country  
5th Place: Colchester  
The members of the MUHS

dance team are Alina Arias, Cora Blair, Medelyn Brochu, Whitney Dykstra, Emily Fritz, Kayla Haugan, Harper Hendy, Abby Ho, Madyson Hutchinson, Autumn Lowell, Carowyn Maceno, Isobela Osborne, Thea Porter, Fallon Ray, Jordyn Rushton, Lily Ryersbach and Ava Whelan.





THE MUHS DANCE squad went airborne more than once during its Hip Hop routine at the state championship competition this past Saturday at Vergennes Union High School.



TIGER DANCE TEAM's family members and friends loved the squad's efforts at the state championship competition this past Saturday at Vergennes Union High School.

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# Boys

(Continued from Page 1B)  
said the coaching staff is trying to build from the back, and the Tigers are making progress that is not necessarily showing up in their win-loss record.

He cited the Tigers’ two games against Hartford as an example — they surrendered five goals to the Hurricanes on Jan. 15, but played better positionally and also blocked more shots this time around. “It’s going well. Tonight is a great indicator. We gave up 19 shots, and the last time we played them gave up almost 40,” Stearns said. “There’s definitely some improvement there. We outshot them tonight (25-19). It’s just that responsibility and taking pride in the defensive zone. It’s getting there.”

The Tigers particularly played well once they settled into their defensive set, even when the Hurricanes skated with a man up. “Our guys did a good job, and their power play is pretty solid,” Stearns said.

But occasionally the Tigers got caught out too far up the ice.

“That’s a good team. They’re so fast in transition. That’s how we got burned tonight,” Stearns said. “That’s experience. That’s learning. That’s recognizing the situation and understanding. So the message has been minimizing those mistakes, understanding those mistakes, and moving on and not making them again.”

That trouble began in the first period, which ended with Hartford up, 1-0, even though arguably the Tigers were crisper than the Hurricanes and outshot them, 9-5. Early on, MUHS junior defender Logan McNulty’s slapper from the left point sailed just wide, and Hartford goalie Nunu Mayer (24 saves) kicked away junior Joseph Sullivan’s wrist from the slot. On a Tiger power play with seven minutes gone, Mayer gloved a bullet launched by senior Quinn Collins from between the top of the circles.

Hartford standout Cavan Benjamin gave his team the lead at 9:57 by blasting a slapper from the right circle into the upper far corner; the play started when he won the puck near his own blue line. Tiger goalie T.J. Baron had little chance.



MUHS FRESHMAN CASE Pitner bolts up the ice with the puck during the Tiger hockey team’s Friday home game.

Independent photos/Steve James

The Tigers weren’t as crisp in the second period, but tied the score at 7:35 on the second of two consecutive Hartford penalties on an Asa Root Pratt finish. McNulty carried into the left corner and angled a pass back to Root Pratt cutting into the slot, and Root Pratt one-timed the puck high into the upper right corner from close range.

The MUHS lead lasted about a minute and a half. At 9:04 Nick Daniels steamed down the left side after taking a breakout pass from Nolan Morlock and roofed a shot under the bar from close range. With 2:25 left in the period, Morlock picked up a loose puck the Tigers failed to clear cleanly and whipped it into the upper right corner, and the lead was 3-1.

In the third period the Hurricanes went into lockdown mode, often checking the Tigers’ sticks when they tried to shoot and limiting then to six more shots. Baron (16 saves) and the Tigers did well to shut down two Hurricane power plays late in the period and developed two good shorthanded bids, but Benjamin broke both of them up,



HARTFORD GOALIE NUNU Myers denies MUHS sophomore Tyler Munson from the doorstep during the Tiger boys’ hockey team’s Friday game.

and Hartford locked down the win.

“They have a couple really good players,” Stearns said, adding that Benjamin is a “one-man breakout. He was a one-man forecheck in the third period, too. We couldn’t get

the puck away from him.”

The Tigers were set to visit Spaulding this Wednesday after the deadline for this issue, and will wrap up their regular season by hosting D-II’s first-place team, Burr & Burton, this coming Wednesday. All in all, Stearns is pleased with his team’s progress and work ethic. “They’re doing an awesome job. They’re a great group of kids,” he said. “We had a tough start. We had some injuries. We didn’t have a full lineup until January. But since then I feel like they’re coming together as a group, super positive. Practices are phenomenal, every practices the guys are coming out, working hard, staying positive, supporting each other. It’s just really great. So I’m really proud of them for that.”

Stearns added the Tigers remain on track to be playing their best hockey when the playoffs start on Feb. 28 and March 1, but regardless how the postseason goes the Tigers

are learning they can get better if they put in the time and effort, and the program has a bright future.

“It definitely does,” he said. “We’ll be in really good shape.”

# Scoreboard

(Continued from Page 1B)

COLLEGE SPORTS	
Men’s Basketball	
2/14 Amherst vs Midd.....	75-67
2/15 Hamilton vs Midd.....	76-71
Women’s Basketball	
2/14 Amherst vs Midd.....	66-55
2/15 Midd vs Hamilton.....	77-72
Women’s Hockey	
2/14 Midd vs Williams.....	7-0
2/15 Williams vs Midd.....	4-1
Men’s Hockey	
2/14 Williams vs Midd.....	2-1 (Shootout)
2/15 Midd vs Williams.....	2-0

# Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS	
Girls’ Basketball	
2/20 Mt Abe at MUHS .....	7 PM
2/20 OV at West Rutland .....	7 PM
2/24 Mill River at OV .....	7 PM
2/24 VUHS at Colchester .....	7 PM
2/24 Enosburg at MUHS .....	7 PM
2/24 Milton at Mt Abe .....	7 PM
2/27 Missisquoi at Mt Abe .....	7 PM
2/27 MUHS at Colchester .....	7 PM
2/27 Milton at VUHS .....	7 PM
2/27 OV at Springfield .....	7 PM
3/1 VUHS at Fairfax .....	3:45 PM
Boys’ Basketball	
2/20 Winooski at Mt Abe .....	7:30 PM
2/21 Mt Abe at VUHS .....	7 PM
2/21 OV at Hartford .....	7 PM
2/22 MUHS at Enosburg.....	2:30 PM
2/25&26 .....	First Round Playoff Games
2/28&3/1 .....	Quarterfinals
Boys’ Hockey	
2/26 Burr & Burton at MUHS .....	7 PM
2/28&3/1 .....	First Round Playoff Games
3/3&4 .....	Quarterfinals
Girls’ Hockey	
2/22 Spaulding at MUHS .....	5 PM
2/26 MUHS at Essex .....	6 PM
2/28&3/1 .....	First Round Playoff Games
3/3&4 .....	Quarterfinals
Wrestling	
2/28&3/1 .....	State Tournament in Barre
COLLEGE SPORTS	
Women’s Basketball	
NESCAC Quarterfinal	
2/22 #7 Midd at #2 Colby .....	2 p.m.
Women’s Hockey	
2/21 Midd at Colby .....	7 PM
2/22 Midd at Colby .....	3 PM
3/1 NESCAC Quarterfinal.....	TBD
Men’s Hockey	
2/21 Amherst at Midd .....	7 PM
2/22 Hamilton at Midd.....	3 PM
3/1 NESCAC Quarterfinal.....	TBD



MUHS SENIOR QUINN Collins (#21) and sophomore Gabe Quesnel (#23) storm the Hartford net during the Tiger boys’ hockey game in Memorial Sports Center on Friday.

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**Thursday, February 27:**  
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**Thursday, March 6:**  
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Girls

(Continued from Page 1B)  
As a result, the Tigers’ record dropped to 9-6-2. They are in second place in D-II heading into a Wednesday night game at D-II’s third-place team, Hartford (8-7-2). Those teams tied at Middlebury’s Memorial Sports Center in their season opener, 5-5. The Hartford game was scheduled after the Wednesday deadline for this edition of the *Independent*; the score will be updated at [addisonindependent.com](http://addisonindependent.com).

The path for a home playoff game for the Tigers won’t get easier. They close the season with games against Spaulding and Essex, D-I’s third- and fourth-place teams, respectively, although the Tigers have defeated Spaulding this winter.

Given the Tigers have proven scorers and a reliable goalie and defense, and they have played the top D-II teams tough this season, Coach P.J. Lalonde said as the postseason looms, he can find a silver lining even after losses last week to Rice and Champlain Valley/Mount Mansfield — the hockey playoffs begin on the final two days of February.

“The one blessing in disguise in seeing all these top D-I teams here at the end of our schedule is hopefully those challenges really prepare us for the playoffs,” Lalonde said. “I like our chances.”

Certainly, the Tigers took advantages of the chances they developed against Rice, at 9-8-1 D-I’s sixth-place team. Rice outshot MUHS, 46-13, but the Tigers got transition goals from senior forward McKenna Raymond (two), junior defender Quinn Doria, and junior forward Lia Calzini and did not trail until the third period.

The Tigers took their first lead 1:02 after the opening faceoff. Calzini picked up the puck on the right side and carried to the bottom of the right circle and fired on Rice goalie Paige Johnson, who deflected the puck into the corner. There, Tiger junior forward Sawyer Witscher won the puck and fed it into the slot, where Doria tucked it home from close range.

The lead lasted 11 seconds. Green Knight Elyse Seitz controlled the faceoff and sent



MUHS SENIOR GOALIE Ruby Hubbell sprawls to make one of her 40 saves against visiting Rice on this past Friday night.

Independent photos/Steve James

Emeri Rasco in alone on goal, and Rasco converted into the left side with 1:13 gone.

That was the only one of 17 shots on goal that eluded Hubbell in the first period. Notably, Hubbell denied Haley Bouvier from the slot three minutes in and Harper Murray from the left circle a minute later, made back-to-back saves from point-blank range 10 minutes in, blocked a screened laser from Finley Strong and then Murray from the slot about 13 minutes in, and gloved a Cassidy Skoda bid at the horn with Rice on a power play.

“Ruby stood on her head for us. Forty saves is no small feat,” Lalonde said.

Raymond had the other best chances for MUHS in the period, but fired just wide left early on and in the late going.

But Raymond made no mistake 17 seconds into the second period, stealing the puck at center ice, skating in alone on the Rice goal and snapping a forehand home in the net’s left side to make it 2-1.

Hubbell, who made another 18 saves in the second period, preserved the lead with a point-blank kick save on a Lanah Quong backhand, and the Tigers made it 3-1 on a well-executed rush finished off by Calzini.

Freshman forward Nova



TIGER SOPHOMORE DEFENDER Sedona Carrara blocks the path of Green Knight forward Grace Raleigh in the MUHS girls’ hockey game against visiting Rice on this past Friday night.

Bojanowski started the play by sending the puck up to sophomore Hayden Dunakin in neutral ice. Dunakin carried into the left corner and angled a pass back to Calzini in the slot, and she one-timed a shot into the right side of the net.

Rice then ratcheted up the pressure, and it paid off at 8:34, when Quong’s shot from the right circle found its way home through a screen.

The Tigers answered 32 seconds later on a power play. Calzini won

a faceoff to Raymond on the left boards, and Raymond skated into the middle around the top of the circle into the high slot and fired a shot into the net’s right side, and the Tigers’ lead was 4-2.

Hubbell preserved the lead by stuffing Eliza Fischer’s point-blank backhand bid with five minutes to go, and then in the period’s final minute stopping Sietz’s shorthanded forehand bid from the slot.

But the Tigers’ hope for an upset ended when Murray netted three straight goals in the third period.

The first came with 3:20 gone, a forehand from the slot low into the right side. Two minutes later, Murray picked up a rebound to the left of the net on her backhand, quickly shifted to her forward and flicked the puck high into the net to tie the game at 4-4.

A minute later Murray steamed down the slot, took a pass from Quong and fired home the game-winner. Becky Penney added a pad goal with 3:28 left in the game on a Rice power play.

Lalonde pointed to the positives, but said ultimately the Green Knights proved too tough to handle.

“Our strong players really showed up in some moments there, and then defensively we were really on our heels. We struggled a few times to get the puck out of the zone,” he said. “They’re a fast team. There were definitely some times when we struggled to keep up. You make a few mistakes in your defensive end, and the good teams will make you pay for that.”

On Feb. 12, host Champlain Valley/Mount Mansfield edged the Tigers, 3-2. The Tigers could not protect a 2-1 lead after two periods. Three Redhawk players had a goal apiece, and goalie Ella Gilbert made 14 saves.

Scoring for the Tigers were Kenyon Connors and Calzini, and Witscher and Becka Seeley supplied assists. Hubbell made 23 saves.

Eagle, Tiger girls win rivalry contests

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — To highlight high school girls’ basketball action Middlebury and Mount Abraham both picked up rivalry wins over Vergennes. The Eagles also won two other outings to maintain a lofty perch in the Division II standings. Meanwhile MUHS split two games, and VUHS came up short on the road.

MUHS at VUHS

On Feb. 12 visiting Middlebury pulled away in the second half of a defensive battle to defeat the Commodores, 34-24. The Tigers led by just two at halftime, but pulled away afterward as **Solstice Binder** (13 points) and **Louisa Orten** (nine points) led the way.

**Ashtin Stearns** and **Georgia Krause** each scored eight points for the Commodores.

VUHS AT MT. ABE

On this past Friday the host Eagles got past the Commodores, 52-40, with a typically balanced offensive output. Forward **Mackenzie Griner** put up a double-double with 13 points and 10 rebounds, and **Meredith Dufault** was next up with nine points and eight rebounds. **Hazel Guilmette** helped key the Mount Abe defense with 10 steals.

Stearns poured in 27 points to keep the Commodores in the running.

EAGLES

On Feb. 12 the Eagles topped visiting Enosburg, 36-24. Griner (14 points) and **Louisa Painter** (eight points and four assists) did the most damage for Mount Abe.

On Tuesday, the Eagles coasted past host Colchester, 51-28. Griner and Painter led the attack again with 14 points apiece, and Guilmette chipped in seven points.

The two wins helped solidify the 14-3 Eagles’ hold on second place in Division II behind North Country.

TIGERS

On this past Friday, the Tigers dispatched visiting Missisquoi, 55-20, as Binder tossed in 28 points to lead the way. Also contributing offensively were **Isabel Quinn** (eight points), Orten (seven points) and **Skyler Choiniere** (six points).

On Tuesday a last-second bucket by Kallie Brooker gave Rutland a 29-27 victory over the host Tigers. D-I RHS got 15 points from Brinley Gandin and improved to 10-8.

The Tigers dropped to 12-5 despite 15 points from Binder and four from **Kassidy Brown**. Unofficially, they dropped one place into sixth in the D-II standings with the setback.

Commodores

On Tuesday host Enosburg outscored the Commodores, 60-27. Vienna Wilde led three Hornets in double figures with 12 points.

**Ava Francis** and Krause led VUHS with eight points apiece. The Commodores dropped to 7-10.

OTTERS

The Otters’ Feb. 13 game at Hartford and Monday game at Windsor were postponed. No information on makeup dates, if any, was provided to the *Independent* as of Wednesday’s deadline.

MUHS wrestlers excel at major dual-meet event

By ANDY KIRKALDY

COLCHESTER — The Middlebury Union High School wrestling team wrapped up its regular season this past weekend with five victories in the North-South Duals at Colchester High School.

According to Coach Ethan Raymond, the Tigers this winter finished 22-3 in head-to-head dual meet competition, won three tournaments and finished fifth or better in every tournament. The Tiger grapplers are ranked No. 2 in Vermont heading into the state tournament on Feb. 28 and March 1 in Barre.

In an email, Raymond said the Tigers “hope to continue the hard-nosed wrestling and momentum from this season” into the Vermont tournament.

Against five teams this past weekend the Tigers filled 12 of

14 weight classes, Raymond said, meaning they could score a maximum of 72 points. They did so in defeating both South Burlington and Mount Mansfield by 72-0 and Champlain Valley by 72-6.

The Tigers defeated Colchester, 46-27, and Essex, 51-25.

Individually, eight MUHS wrestlers went undefeated: Avery Carl at 157 pounds, Alex Sperry at 144, Jason Sperry at 150, Tucker Wright at 174, Colton Murray at 138, Steven Lackard at 215, Kameron Raymond at 285 and Parker Carl at 190.

Among notable matches Miles Goetz, the likely second seed at 106 at the state meet, pinned likely No. 3 Sam Zuckerman of South Burlington, and Jason Sperry, the likely No. 4 seed at 150, earned a technical fall over likely No. 5 Garret Cook of Colchester.

Mount Abe, MUHS, Otter boys hoop pick up wins

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — In a high school boys’ basketball schedule lightened by weather postponements, Middlebury and Mount Abraham prevailed in their only outings, Otter Valley split two games, and Vergennes was idle.

TIGERS

On this past Friday the Tigers trailed by 27-20 at the half at Milton, but erupted for 28 points in the third quarter on the way to a 58-43 victory. In the decisive period **Taylor Altemose** scored 13 of his 16 points, **Brady Lloyd** nine of his 20 points, and **Cooke Riney** six of his 10 points. Lloyd and Riney each pulled down 10 rebounds to finish with double-doubles; Lloyd’s was a career first, according to **Coach Chris Altemose**, who also credited the defense of **Cam Whitlock** on Milton’s point guard.

Coach Altemose said in an email he was also pleased with his team’s persistence.

“The best part about last night was that we were challenged, and once again, we stayed together and just kept grinding until things clicked,” he wrote.

The Tigers were also set to host Mount Abe on Wednesday after the deadline for this issue.

EAGLES

On Saturday the Eagles trailed visiting Missisquoi at halftime, but hit the T-Birds with a 17-0 run to open the second half on the way to a 57-39 victory. In all, Mount Abe outscored MVU by 25-4 in the decisive third quarter. **Hayden Lutz** and **Charlie Germon** each scored 11 points to lead the Eagle offense.

The Eagles’ Monday home gave vs. Winooski was postponed until

this Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

OTTERS

On Saturday, the Otters defeated visiting Mount St. Joseph, 61-40, as they honored seniors **Logan Letourneau**, **Addison Boynton**, **Rowan Steen**, **Drew Pelkey** and **Lucas Politano**. OV led by 23 at halftime and coasted to the victory.

Letourneau paced OV with 23 points, and Pelkey scored 10.

On Tuesday the Otters lost for the second time this winter to rival Fair Haven, this time in the Slaters’ gym, 59-37. Fair Haven led by 14 in the half, OV cut the lead to single digits in the third, and then the Slaters pulled away in the fourth quarter.

Slater post player **Phil Bean**, who recently scored his 1,000th point, finished with 19. **Jack Almeida** and **Andrew Barker** each scored 12 points, and **Max Kyhill** chipped in 11 for Fair Haven (14-5).

Politano paced the Otters with 16 points. **Connor Denis** scored eight, and Letourneau added seven.

The Otters dropped to 16-3, but remained in third place unofficially in the Division II standings. They wrap up their regular season by visiting No. 2 Hartford on Friday, when they will be looking to avenge another of their losses. A setback there could drop OV into fourth place and set up a potential quarterfinal matchup with Fair Haven, now in fifth place.

COMMODORES

The Commodores’ Monday game at Enosburg was canceled, with no makeup date scheduled.

VUHS was set to visit Missisquoi on Wednesday after deadline for this issue. At 11-6 heading into that game, VUHS was unofficially in fifth place in D-III.



MUHS SENIOR GOALIE Ruby Hubbell covers up the puck after making one of her 40 saves against Rice on this past Friday night in Middlebury.

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Russell Memorial Library

**ORWELL:**  
Orwell Free Library

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Ripton Country Store

**SALISBURY:**  
Kampersville Store (seasonal)

**SHOREHAM:**  
Shoreham Service Center

**STARKSBORO:**  
Jerusalem 4-Corners Store

**VERGENNES:**  
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# A dozen break-ins plague the little city

## Vergennes Police Log

VERGENNES — Vergennes police took reports of almost a dozen break-ins or attempted break-ins into vehicles parked around the city during the night of Feb. 14, including the theft of a firearm from a car parked on Prospect Street.

Also, after a half-dozen burglaries or attempted burglaries into buildings the week before, city police reported three more such crimes last week.

Other vehicle break-ins and attempted unlawful trespass under the cover of darkness on Feb. 14 occurred on West Main, Main, South Water and South Maple streets.

Vergennes police are encouraging residents to lock their vehicles and report any suspicious activity to the department at 802-877-2201. Police said the spree of break-ins are under investigation.

Meanwhile, police said they are also looking into two burglary incidents on Feb. 12 and one on Feb. 15, all on Main Street and all of which are also the subject of ongoing investigations.

On Feb. 12 police said an individual “forced entry” into the offices of the Addison Housing Works nonprofit during the overnight hours, and that during the same night an unsuccessful attempt was made to break into the Park Squeeze restaurant. On Feb. 15 police said they responded to the Malabar business for a burglary complaint.

In other action between Feb. 10 and 16, Vergennes police conducted four traffic stops, two cruiser patrols, two background investigations and two VIN inspections; honored three pre-employment or volunteering fingerprint requests; responded to a false alarm, and also:

- On Feb. 10:
- Enforced the city’s winter parking ban.

parking ban and ordered two vehicles towed from city streets.

- Helped a man whose truck was stuck in Falls Park, and in the process learned that his wife, who has Alzheimer’s, had wandered off from the area. Police helped find her and recommended services to the family.

On Feb. 11:

- Directed traffic around a disabled truck on Main Street near the Maplefilds convenience store until it was towed.

- Dealt with a minor two-vehicle accident on Main Street.

- Conducted a commercial vehicle inspection on Monkton Road.

- Heard an allegation from a Green Street resident that a roommate “appears to be taking his food.”

On Feb. 13:

- Enforced the city’s winter parking ban.

- Took an advisory report from Maplefilds that a man was loitering around the store and drinking alcohol and making some of the employees uncomfortable, and that a no-trespass order might be needed in the future.

- Responded to Monkton Road, where a delivery truck had become stuck in a culvert while trying to turn around in a driveway and was blocking a lane of traffic. The truck was soon towed out of trouble, police said.

On Feb. 14:

- Helped unlock a vehicle for its owner on Monkton Road.

- Turned over a wallet found on South Water Street to its owner.

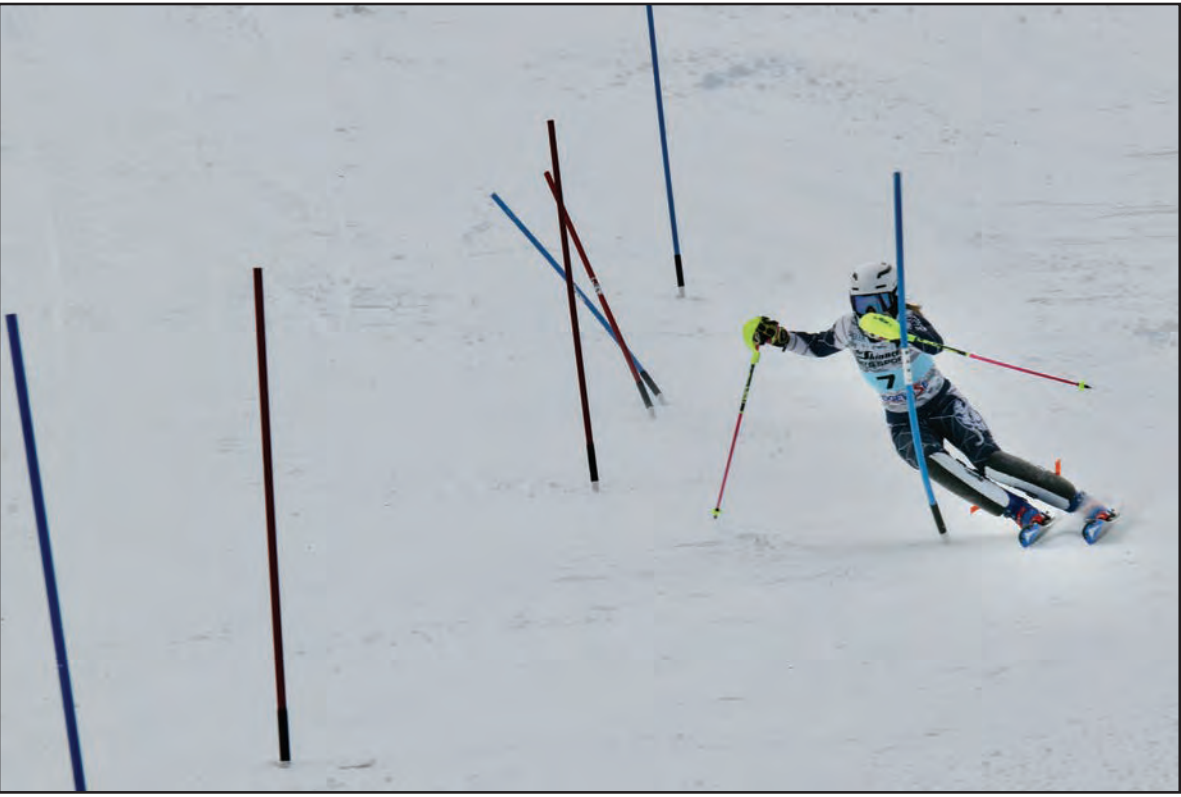
- Enforced the city’s winter parking ban.



## Winter Carnival!

PANTHER SKIERS MIKA-ANNE Reha, top and bottom, and Sophia Tozzi, middle, carve turns in the slalom event on Friday, Feb. 14, during Middlebury College Winter Carnival racing at the Snowbowl. Reha finished ninth in the slalom, and Tozzi was seventh as they helped the Middlebury Alpine and Nordic ski teams finish second overall in the two-day carnival.


Independent photos/Steve James



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MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY MUSIC Center, Addison Otters Swim Team, and the Cancer Patient Support Group, were the three local organizations to benefit from the charitable 100+ Women Who Care Addison County's latest quarterly donations. Accepting the awards are clockwise from top left, Sadie Brightman, MCMC; Adrienne Smits, Addison Otters; and Sarah Wallace-Brodeur and Liz Philip-Buttery, Cancer Support Center.

Photo courtesy of Judy Kowalczyk

# 100+ Women donates to local non-profits

ADDISON COUNTY — 100+ Women Who Care Addison County held their first-quarter meeting of 2025 on Tuesday, Jan. 21, via Zoom, to distribute \$17,025.00 to local non-profits.

The three finalists for this quarter were the Middlebury Music Center (for children's summer camps), Addison Otters Swim Team (for youth programs), and Cancer Patient Support Group (helping cancer patients with payments for groceries and other bills). Middlebury Music Center was the top vote recipient, receiving 70% of the available funds. The runners-up both received 15% of the available funds.

100+ Women Who Care, Addison County is a charitable giving circle gathering quarterly to choose three non-profits to receive our collective donations. Every quarter, each member contributes

one hundred dollars, the full sum accumulated going toward the local organizations. Members suggest a non-profit and two weeks before the meeting, three of those suggested are randomly selected (via online spinning wheel) to make a 5-minute presentation at the meeting. A vote is held after the presentations to choose who receives 70%.

The organization has gifted \$200,000 to Addison County charities in its two years. It is so interesting to learn about each non-profit. Organizers say it would be great to grow membership and welcome more members who share their commitment to supporting each other and the community.

The next meeting will be in April 2025, location TBD.



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# Reader Comments

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

**A subscriber from Wallingford, Vt. writes:**

**"You're the only newspaper I subscribe to. You keep me connected to Addison County which I moved away from 25 years ago."**

Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.



ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

# community calendar

**feb 21 FRIDAY**  
**Spaghetti dinner fundraiser in Weybridge.** Friday, Feb. 21, 5-7 p.m., Weybridge Elementary School, Quaker Village Rd. For this Weybridge Volunteer Fire Dept. fundraiser, the menu will include spaghetti and meatballs, marinara or alfredo sauce, tossed salad, rolls, beverage, home-made desserts. Adults \$14, kids \$6.

**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.  
**Crafters Market in Middlebury.** Saturday, Feb. 22, 9 a.m., VFW, 530 Exchange St. Join the members of the Middlebury Farmers Market and guest vendors, crafters and small businesses to showcase and sell their goods and services. Raffles to support a music series. Live music by Cindy Hill and Tom Hanley.  
**Otter Valley superintendent and school board chief meeting in Whiting.** Saturday, Feb. 22, 11 a.m., Whiting Town Hall, Route 30. Laurie Bertrand, chair of Otter Valley School Board, and OV Superintendent Rene Sanchez will join Whiting residents for an open and informal discussion of education issues, including finances and taxes, educational opportunities, and local control. All are welcome; snacks provided.  
**Voter information panel in Shoreham.** Saturday, Feb. 22, 1 p.m., Shoreham Congregational Church, School Rd. Each of the groups that requests funding at the Shoreham Town Meeting will be offered an opportunity to provide information about their program, and they will be available afterwards for further questions you may have. Last year's presentation was lively and informative.

**feb 23 SUNDAY**  
**Breakfast in Vergennes.** Sunday, Feb. 23, 7:30-10 a.m., Masonic Hall, 54 School St. Come to the last Sunday of the month all you can eat buffet breakfast. This helps the Masons raise money for community projects.  
**"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.  
**Bingo in Vergennes.** Sunday, Feb. 23, 2-4 p.m., American Legion Post 14, Armory Lane. Doors open at 1:30 p.m., Bingo starts 2. Game packets are \$15 for one sheet of three cards for each regular game. There is no limit to the number of packets you purchase. Special "Winner Take All" games are extra \$1. Bring your own daubers or borrow one of ours. Food available. Sponsored by the Auxiliary Unit 14. More info: Contact Michelle Eastman at 802-349-6370.

**feb 24 MONDAY**  
**Legislative breakfast in Bristol.** Monday, Feb. 24, 7-8:45 a.m., Bristol American Legion, Airport Dr. 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. Breakfast by donation; RSVP to Bill Scott at wjscottjr@comcast.net so they can get a headcount for food.  
**Vacation library days in Starksboro.** Monday, Feb. 24-Thursday, Feb. 27, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Have some fun at the library during vacation week. Crafts and games. Librarian for a Day, scavenger hunt and more! 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Monday and Thursday.

**feb 25 TUESDAY**  
**Federal funding cuts discussion in Bristol.** Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Holley Hall. If you are wondering how federal funding cuts and policy changes could affect our community, you are invited to a forum to discuss what is at stake for our town. It's called "Bristol Town Forum: Federal Policy and Funding Changes. Will Bristol Be OK?" Join your neighbors to share concerns, personal stories and ideas for ways to support each other and the organizations and services that may lose funding or already have. Phoebe Barash and Bruce Duncan will guide us in small group discussions. The focus will be on listening so we can learn from other community members. For more information, email concernedbristolvt@gmail.com.  
**Quilters in Middlebury.** Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6:30 p.m., American Legion, Wilson Road or on Zoom. The Milk and Honey Quilters meeting will feature Sharon Perry, who will give a lecture about "Barn Quilts in Vermont" and how Franklin County is displaying over 569 barn quilts. She will also share her wish to have Barn Quilt trails across Vermont.

**feb 26 WEDNESDAY**  
**American Red Cross Blood donation near Vergennes.** Wednesday, Feb. 26, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Victory Baptist Church, 862 Route 7. Give blood or platelets in February to help build up the blood supply after thousands of donations went uncollected last month. To book a time to give blood or platelets, use the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). All who give Jan. 27-Feb. 28, will get a \$15 e-gift card to a merchant of choice. See RedCrossBlood.org/Flurry for details.



**Citizen lawmaker**  
**REP. MATT BIRONG, a Vergennes Democrat, speaks at a 2023 Legislative Breakfast in Vergennes. The breakfast, where local lawmakers meet directly with Addison County citizens, comes to the Bristol American Legion on Monday, Feb. 24, between 7 and 8:45 a.m.**  
Independent file photo/Steve James

**feb 27 THURSDAY**  
**So you want to write a book presentation in Monkton.** Thursday, Feb. 27, 7 p.m. Russell Memorial Library, 92 Monkton Ridge. It's surprising how many have dreamt of authoring their own tale. Step into this presentation and discover how to elevate that thought into a breathtaking narrative. Speakers will be Eugenie Doyle and Ivor Hughes. Additional information from the library at 802-453-4417 or email: russellmemlibrary@gmail.com.

**feb 28 FRIDAY**  
**Med47 indoor yard sale in New Haven.** Friday, Feb. 28, 2-7 p.m., New Haven Town Hall, 78 North St. Fight those winter blues with Addison County's finest treasure hunt. The hall is jam packed with clean, gently used items. All kinds of household items, small furniture, decor, toys, tools, garden, office jewelry, crafting and more. All proceeds benefit the Med47 Foundation, which supports the needs of our community. More info contact Med47foundation@gmail.com.

**mar 3 MONDAY**  
**Vacation Days at the library in Starksboro.** Monday, March 3-Thursday, March 6, Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Have some fun at the library during vacation week. Crafts and games, librarian for a day, scavenger hunt and more.

**mar 4 TUESDAY**  
**Town Meeting Day in Vermont.** The 250-year tradition continues.

**mar 5 WEDNESDAY**  
**Historical Society meeting in Shoreham.** Wednesday, March 5, 6:30 p.m., Platt Memorial Library, Main Street. At its annual kick off meeting, Shoreham Historical Society will have an organizational meeting followed by a Shoreham trivia contest. More info: Linda Larrabee, lpo@shoreham.net or 802-897-2275

**mar 6 THURSDAY**  
**Twist O' Wool Guild meeting in Middlebury.** Thursday, March 6, 7 p.m., American Legion, 49 Wilson Rd. Come and show off your projects and learn a new skill. All are welcome.

**mar 7 FRIDAY**  
**Lenten fish dinner in Vergennes.** Friday, March 7, 5-6:30 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, South Maple Street. This Knights of Columbus event will include a menu of beer battered haddock, zesty wedges, coleslaw, mixed vegetables, roll & butter, chocolate chip brownie. \$13 adults \$7 children 6-12 (cash or checks). For take-out reservations call 802-877-3352 (Parish Hall) and leave a message with your name, phone number and number of dinners, and please speak slowly. This dinner repeats March 21, and April 4.

**mar 8 SATURDAY**  
**Legislative luncheon in Middlebury.** Saturday, March 8, 10:30 a.m., Middlebury American Legion, 49 Wilson Rd. 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. Invited guest Anson Tebbetts, Vermont Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets. Make a donation for lunch at noon; RSVP to Bill Scott at wjscottjr@comcast.net so they can get a headcount for food.  
**Queer hangout in Middlebury.** Saturday, March 8, 3-5 p.m., Juice Amour, Merchants Row. In this time of uncertainty and division, we are looking

to foster a space where Vermont LGBTQ+ folks can connect in a safe environment. Community is vital during these times. Join us. All are welcome, snacks and drinks available, activities and games provided. Bring a friend. Eat, play games and socialize at your own pace.

**Bingo in Vergennes.** Saturday, March 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.

**Corned beef and cabbage supper in Vergennes.** Saturday, March 8, 5-6 p.m., Vergennes United Methodist Church, Main St., across from the Opera House. Menu includes corned beef, cabbage, carrots, potato, onion, roll and dessert. \$12. Takeout only. Preorder only at 802- 877-3150 before 7 p.m. Thursday, March 6.

**Willowell Boogie Benefit in Bristol.** Saturday, March 8, 6 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. The Willowell Foundation's annual benefit dance and silent auction features a cash bar, and the Almendros, a popular Addison County band whose infectious repertoire ranges from rock, country and blues to reggae, ska, calypso and African styles. Tickets are \$10 at the door, children free. Proceeds support the Willowell's scholarship fund, which helps children access local nature-based programming and education.

**mar 9 SUNDAY**  
**Breakfast buffet in Vergennes.** Sunday, March 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 families. Sponsor: Vergennes Council Knights of Columbus.

**mar 16 SUNDAY**  
**"Four Hebrew Prophets: Amos" lecture in Middlebury.** Sunday, March 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 March 23.

**mar 18 TUESDAY**  
**"Sleeping with the Ancestors" virtual book discussion.** Tuesday, March 18, 6-7 p.m., ZOOM. Rokeby's winter book discussion series continues with historic preservationist Joseph McGill Jr.'s account of the Slave Dwelling Project, in which he spends the night in former slave dwellings. The book focuses on all of the key sites McGill has visited in his ongoing project and digs deeper into the actual history of each location, using McGill's own experience and conversations with the community to enhance those original stories. Visit www.ropkeby.org for more info, link, and the full book discussion series.

**mar 19 WEDNESDAY**  
**Climate Economy Action Center community round table in Middlebury.** Wednesday, March 19, 4:30-6 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. Join CEAC at its March Community Round Table. This meeting will bring together invited representatives from many organizations working on the clean energy transition and allied issues throughout Addison County. Learn what is happening in our community to meet our county's carbon emissions reduction goals.

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR  
**CALENDAR**  
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addisonindependent.com



# Look up! You might spot a squirrel drey

By EMILY HAYNES

In the starkness of winter, squirrel dreys reveal themselves in the tree canopy. They’ve been there all along — just screened by trees’ leafy crowns for much of the year. Dreys are shaggy masses of leaves nestled against a tree trunk or cupped in a fork of branches 20 to 40 feet above the ground. Squirrels not only rear their kits in them but also use them as shelter during many months of the year.

“It’s always kind of magical when the leaves fall down and you see these other homes of citizens in the neighborhood,” says Ken Benton, director of education at North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier, Vt.

Roughly one to two feet in diameter, dreys are often mistaken for the nests of large birds such as eagles and hawks. But while those birds prefer platform-style nests made primarily of sticks, squirrels make their shelters out of leaves, grass, and shredded tree bark. Crows’ nests are similar in size and location to squirrel dreys but use pencil-length sticks to form an open cup. Squirrel dreys, on the other hand, are fully enclosed; squirrels typically make the entrance small and flush with a tree trunk or branch. What’s more, dreys are more multipurpose than nests. Birds typically inhabit their nests only from the time they lay eggs through when their young have fledged. Squirrels, however, can be found sleeping and resting in dreys throughout the year — making dreys longer lasting home bases.

“For the most part, they’re taking shelter from nocturnal predators, like owls. A sleeping squirrel would be an easy and tasty snack for a large owl,” says Nate Marchessault, staff ecologist at the Harris Center for Conservation Education in Hancock, N.H.

In the Northeast, all squirrel species — grey, red, and flying — make dreys, but grey squirrel dreys are the easiest to spot. That’s because red squirrels prefer to build theirs in pines and other coniferous trees, while grey squirrels go for deciduous trees. Flying squirrels tend to build smaller nests, often



in conifers. Sit and watch a grey squirrel for a while and it will likely lead you to its drey, scampering up a tree trunk — perhaps with fresh nest lining clamped between its teeth — and disappearing into its shaggy home.

Flying squirrels, however, are nocturnal, so it’s much more difficult to find where they shelter from predators and the elements.

Grey squirrel dreys are made up of three distinct layers. An outer layer of sticks and leaves help insulate the cavity from water and wind. This is what’s visible to us from ground level. Within that is a layer of young, pliable shoots, which squirrels gnaw off trees and weave into a round cavity. It’s this cavity where squirrels will rest, sleep, and raise their young, so they line it with suitably soft material, such as feathers, fur, and grasses. (I’ve even spotted a cotton rag hanging from an abandoned squirrel drey!)

“They really like it cozy in the middle of their dreys,” Marchessault says.

Now in mid-winter, squirrels have mostly abandoned their dreys for the more effective shelter of tree hollows. These cavities — some bored by woodpeckers and others formed naturally, such as after a tree limb falls — are better water-proofed and wind-proofed, and help

squirrels stay protected during the coldest and snowiest months of the year. Squirrels like to spruce up these cavities by lining them with the same materials they use to line their dreys. If squirrels can’t find a suitable cavity to overwinter, they’ll remain in their dreys, sometimes huddling together to stay warm.

Grey squirrels birth two litters of kits each year: once between January and February and the other in late summer. The winter litter may be raised in cozier tree cavities or more exposed dreys, and the summer kits will be raised in dreys.

During winter ecology lessons with children, Benton encourages them to canvass their neighborhoods and count the number of squirrel shelters temporarily on view. The next time you’re outside, see how many dreys you can spot. Though the squirrel that built it may be napping in a tree cavity instead, if you see rustling, the occupant may not have found a warmer spot to spend the winter.

*Emily Haynes is a writer currently living in Washington, D.C. An avid birder and hiker, she loves exploring the forests of the Northeast. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol. The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: nhcf.org.*



## Fishin’

A BALD EAGLE perches over the New Haven River in Bristol on Jan. 21.

Photo by Dave Cobb

## Lincoln

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

### NEWS

LINCOLN — The annual town and school district local election will be held on Tuesday, March 4. Polls will be open at Burnham Hall from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. If you are unable to come to the polls that day, you may request an absentee ballot from the town clerk.

You can submit your absentee ballot request online by visiting [mvp.vermont.gov](http://mvp.vermont.gov), pick up one at the town office, send an email to

[clerk@lincolnvermont.org](mailto:clerk@lincolnvermont.org), or give the office a call at 802-453-2980. Please leave enough time to return your voted ballot. All voted ballots must be *received* by 7 p.m. on March 4 in order to be counted.

A reminder that the Lincoln Historical Society collects donations of empty returnable bottles and cans that can be dropped off in the wagon parked in front of the museum. Did you

know that LHS does not typically request funds from the town budget? Bottle returns are a major source of their funding and they’re crucial for maintaining the museum buildings that house the collections of historical artifacts.

Until next time...Don’t Be Afraid To Try. Never Let The Fear Of Striking Out Keep You From Playing The Game.

# STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

## Mount Abraham Union High School

### Brailey Livingston

Mt. Abraham Union High School is pleased to announce Brailey Livingston as our student of the week. Brailey lives in New Haven with her parents, Philip and Dawn-Marie, and sister, Karissa.

An honors student, Brailey’s favorite courses this year have been “Turn the Page” with Addie Thompson and “Money Matters 2” with Bob Maurer, as they both have a great way of connecting to their students’ learning style. In addition, Brailey attends the Sustainable Agriculture program at the Hannaford Career Center. Through this course, she has earned 12 college credits and is a two-year member of the National Technical Honor Society. Brailey holds a Future Farmers of America (FFA) officer position and represented Mt. Abe at the National Convention in Indianapolis, placing Silver in the Dairy Handling competition. She plans to complete the FFA degrees, to become a Vermont State Officer for 2025-2026.

Brailey is the President of the New Haven Dairy 4-H and a member of the Vermont State Dairy Judging Team. She holds the title of New England Jersey Princess, awarded by the New England Jersey Breeders Association and is on the New England Holstein Junior Team. Brailey was selected to represent Vermont at the National Jersey Youth Academy in Columbus, Ohio, and will travel to St. Louis this summer to represent New England Holstein at the National Convention’s Jeopardy competition.

Above all, Brailey’s favorite thing is to show her cows. Starting at local competitions, she now travels to national shows, including the North American International Livestock Expo in Louisville, Ky., this past fall. Her goal is to attend the next World Dairy Expo, which will be held in Madison, Wisc. To date, her most meaningful awards have been Supreme Showman at the 2023 New England States and an All-American nomination in 2024. Along with showing cows, Brailey works as an assistant Herd Manager at her family farm, Rail View Dairy. She also enjoys reading, riding and training horses, skiing and snowmobiling.

When asked about what advice she would give to younger classmates, Brailey stated, “It is OK to follow your own path. We have so many great peers in our school community, there will always be a teacher or staff member to support and cheer you on. Work hard, put dedication where your heart is and you can conquer anything.”

After high school, Brailey plans to attend SUNY Cobleskill and study Dairy Production and Management. She also plans to join their Dairy Club and the Sigma Alpha sorority. We are proud of all of Brailey’s accomplishments and wish her the best in her future endeavors!



Brailey Livingston  
MAUHS

## Otter Valley Union High School

### Drew Pelkey

Drew Pelkey is Otter Valley Union High School’s Student of the Week. He lives in Brandon with his parents and sister along with three pets.

Drew has done very well at Otter Valley, often making the Principal’s List, and otherwise always on the Honor Roll. Last year he was inducted into the National Honor Society. Drew’s favorite class is AP Biology, which he admits is somewhat surprising given that he chose such a challenging class for the final semester of his senior year. He says, “The personalities in the class help lighten the mood.” He calls Mr. Hughes his favorite teacher. “We always look forward to bothering one another,” he says.

Outside of class, Drew has served as a student mentor and has played both basketball and soccer. He was recognized by the VPA this year by being named to the all-state teams in both sports. He has been involved in both teams since his freshman year at OVUHS. Basketball is his favorite. Due to an injury, he was unable to participate in soccer this fall.

Hanging out with friends, spending time outdoors and shooting some hoops take up a good deal of his free time, and he also likes to listen to music.

Of all the things he has learned in high school, Drew says the most important one would be not to take anything for granted. After tearing his ACL before senior year began, Drew says he went through quite a few hardships both mentally and physically. Having to miss all soccer season and returning to basketball four games later than everyone else, was very difficult, but he grew and learned to always be grateful for what he has. “Someone out there definitely has it worse than you, so be grateful for what was given,” he says. “Always take pride in everything that you do.”

While Drew doesn’t yet know where he will end up, he plans on going on to college and majoring in something in the STEM fields. All of us at Otter Valley wish him well.



Drew Pelkey  
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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Help Wanted

Help Wanted



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Help Wanted

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Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

# of runs: \_\_\_\_\_

Spotlight Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Internet Listing: **\$2.00**

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

The Independent assumes no financial responsibility for errors in ads, but will rerun classified ad in which the error occurred. No refunds will be possible. Advertiser will please notify us of any errors which may occur after first publication.



Addison Independent  
CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted      Help Wanted      Help Wanted



TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

The Town of Bristol, located in Central Vermont's Addison County, is seeking highly motivated candidates for the Town Administrator position to oversee our vibrant community's daily operations. Reporting to the Selectboard, this role is pivotal in driving policy implementation, budget management, and departmental oversight to deliver high-quality, cost-effective town services.

We seek an individual with strong business and financial management skills to manage daily operations, supervise Town employees, administer a budget of approximately \$3 million, and ensure compliance with municipal, state, and federal regulations. This position also requires expertise in economic development, project management, strategic planning, and municipal processes.

The ideal candidate holds a bachelor's degree in public administration, business, political science, or equivalent professional qualifications or experience (a master's is preferred but not required) and has 3-5 years of leadership experience in municipal government or similar roles. A detailed job description is available at [www.bristolvt.org/town\\_admin\\_job.pdf](http://www.bristolvt.org/town_admin_job.pdf)

Salary is commensurate with experience, starting at \$82,500. Excellent benefits package. The position is advertised until filled.

To apply, please submit a letter of interest, a resume, and three references by March 31, 2025, to [townadmin@bristolvt.org](mailto:townadmin@bristolvt.org) or send by mail to: Bristol Town Administrator Search  
Town of Bristol, PO Box 249, Bristol, VT 05443

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

In print or online, find your dream job with help from the Addy Indy.



[addisonindependent.com/help-wanted](http://addisonindependent.com/help-wanted)

ADDISON COUNTY  
INDEPENDENT

For Rent



**ALL REAL ESTATE** advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or persons receiving public assistance or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD Toll-free at 1-800-424-8590. For the Washington, DC area please call HUD at 426-3500.

**CO-WORKING OFFICES** in Marbleworks professional office building. Handicapped accessible w/ elevator. 802-349-2008

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

For Rent

**CORNWALL-UPSTAIRS 2** bedroom apt., all inclusive, washer/dryer hookup, no pets, no smoking. \$1,700 per month. 802-989-2283.

**LAKE DUNMORE HOME** Private/Modern 1.5 BR house, Lake Dunmore waterfront, 12 miles to Middlebury College/Porter. \$1450/ month, short term lease (2 months minimum) March 1st to June 30. No pets. Utilities included. Sleeps 4. Contact at [aaron@baliერი.com](mailto:aaron@baliერი.com)

**MIDDLEBURY BRIARWOOD APARTMENTS** is currently taking wait-list applications for 2- br apartments. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply- rent based on income- 2 person minimum occupancy. Equal Housing Opportunity. Handicapped accessible. 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 [www.SummitPMG.com](http://www.SummitPMG.com).

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

**STUDIO APARTMENT** in Brandon Village. All inclusive, no pets. Security required. \$1,000 monthly. 802-247-6829.

For Rent

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

Wood Heat

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

Real Estate

**BRANDON, 5 ACRE** building lot for mobile home or doublewide. Ready to go with well, water, electric, sewer and cement slab. \$115,000. 802-458-1664.



**BUILDING LOT** approximately 1/2 acre Daisy Lane, East Middlebury, village water, underground utilities, designed septic. Established neighborhood with Little League field. \$105,000. Tel 802-388-2502. Jack Brown.

Real Estate

**HOME AVAILABLE** \$129K - Owner Financing! 3 bed, 2 bath fixer-upper in Crown Point, NY, just 1 hour from Lake George, Lake Placid & Gore Mountain. New furnace, updated plumbing, workshop basement. Great vacation home or rental! Email: [12928house@gmail.com](mailto:12928house@gmail.com)

Att. Farmers

**1ST CUT, SMALL** square, \$3.25. 2nd cut small square, \$4.25. 802-377-5455.

**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.

Att. Farmers

**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.

AUCTIONS

MARKET REPORT  
ADDISON COUNTY  
COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT  
Sales for 2/14/25 & 2/17/25

		COST		
BEEF	LBS.	/LB		\$
Bartholomew	1720	1.63		\$2803.60
Vorsteveld	1775	1.48		\$2627.00
Nop Bros.	1095	1.45		\$1587.75
Blue Spruce	1780	1.44		\$2563.20
Westminster	1660	1.42		\$2357.20

		COST		
CALVES	LBS.	/LB		\$
Barnes B&W	90	10.00		\$900.00
H. Degraaf	86	10.00		\$860.00
Sunderland	105	9.00		\$945.00
Savello	80	9.00		\$720.00
Forbes	91	7.30 (H)		\$664.30
Defreest	95	7.25 (H)		\$688.75

Total Beef - 138      Total Calves - 176  
We value our faithful customers.  
Sales at 3 pm - Mon. & Thurs.  
call 1-802-388-2661

MIDDLEBURY CEMETERY  
ASSOCIATION  
PUBLIC NOTICE

The annual meeting of the Middlebury Cemetery Association will be held at the offices of Langrock, Sperry & Wool, 111 S. Pleasant St., Middlebury, VT on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 5pm.

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY  
PROPERTY TAX BILLS

MARCH INSTALLMENTS ARE DUE IN THE FINANCE OFFICE ON OR BEFORE:  
**MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2025**  
(SINCE THE 15TH IS A SATURDAY)

Finance Office:  
388-8100 ext. 203, 204 or 208  
[accountclerk@townofmiddlebury.org](mailto:accountclerk@townofmiddlebury.org)

Office Hours:  
Mon – Fri, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

*Please allow extra time if you are mailing your payment, postmarks are not accepted as timely payment.*

For your convenience there is a secure payment box located between the Town Office and the Library.

email us:

You can reach us at  
[news@addisonindependent.com](mailto:news@addisonindependent.com)

TOWN OF SALISBURY  
REQUEST FOR BIDS

The Town of Salisbury is accepting bids for the mowing and general upkeep of the Village, Holman and West Side Cemeteries for the 2025 season. Please submit a separate bid for each cemetery. Applicants must provide proof of insurance. Specifications are available by contacting the Town Clerk ([townclerk@townofsalisbury.org](mailto:townclerk@townofsalisbury.org) or 802/352-4228). Deadline for bid submission is March 7, 2025.

Sealed bids can be directed to the Salisbury Select Board. Drop off at the town office or mail to Attention: Select Board, PO Box 66, Salisbury, Vermont 05769.

SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PUBLIC NOTICE  
POLICY WARNING

The Slate Valley Unified Union School District Board will conduct a public hearing at their meeting on March 10, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. and take action on the following policies:

To Adopt with Changes:  
C41 Independent Educational Evaluations

To Rescind:  
C39 Transition of Toddlers with Disabilities to Preschool

Copies of the policy are available on the district website at [slatevalleyunified.org](http://slatevalleyunified.org)

Brooke Olsen-Farrell  
Superintendent of Schools

WARNING FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING  
TOWN OF ADDISON

The legal voters of the Town of Addison are hereby notified and warned to meet at 7:00 pm on Monday, March 3, 2025 at the Addison Community Center gymnasium to transact the following business:

- To accept the reports of the Town Officers
- Shall the list of delinquent taxes be published in the Town Report
- To transact any other business proper to be brought before the meeting

Dated at Addison, Vermont this 2nd day of February 2025

Jeff Kauffman, Sr., Chair  
Roger Waterman, Vice-Chair  
Peter Briggs  
Robert Hunt  
Steven Torrey

CITY OF VERGENNES  
WARNING

The legal voters of the City of Vergennes, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Vergennes Fire Station, 50 Green Street, in the City of Vergennes on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, between the hours of nine o'clock (9:00) in the forenoon (a.m.), at which time the polls will open, and seven o'clock (7:00) in the afternoon (p.m.), at which time the polls will close, to vote by Australian ballot upon the following Article of business:

Article [4] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the voters authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds or notes, pursuant to 24 V.S.A., Chapters 53 and 57 by the City of Vergennes in an amount not to exceed One Million Two Hundred Thirty-Three Thousand Dollars (\$1,233,000.00), that may be reduced by the receipt of available state and federal grants-in-aid, for the purpose of financing the purchase of a used heavy rescue fire truck, a used ladder truck, and upgrading radio and safety systems?

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

The legal voters of the City of Vergennes are further notified that an informational meeting will be held on Monday, March 3, 2025, at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Vergennes City Council, Vergennes Fire Station in the City of Vergennes at 7:30 pm, for the purpose of explaining the proposed article.

Public Notices Index

Public Notices for the following can be found in this  
**ADDISON INDEPENDENT** on Pages 11B, 12B and 13B.

Act 250 (2)	Monkton (1)
Addison (2)	Salisbury (1)
Knights of Columbus (1)	Slate Valley UUSD (1)
Lincoln (1)	Starksboro (1)
Lincoln School District (1)	Vergennes (2)
Middlebury (4)	Weybridge (1)
Middlebury Cemetery Association (1)	

Email your Public Notices to [legals@addisonindependent.com](mailto:legals@addisonindependent.com) and Jenna makes sure it gets in the paper

ANNUAL MEETING  
of the FATHER DALEY ASSOCIATION

Tuesday, March 4, 2025 at 7:45pm+/- in the K of C Council room at St Mary Church hall to conduct the following business.

- 1) Election of Trustees/officers
- 2) Vote: Proposal regarding Father Daley Association investment portfolio
- 3) Donations 2025-2026
- 4) Address other proper business.

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT  
PROBATE DIVISION, ADDISON UNIT  
DOCKET NO.: 24-PR-07375  
IN RE ESTATE OF: LARRY BLACKLOCK

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

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

Dated: 02/01/25

Executor/Administrator: Kristi Blacklock  
28 Thomas Drive, Colchester, VT 05446  
802-578-2113  
[Kristi.ShearBliss@gmail.com](mailto:Kristi.ShearBliss@gmail.com)

Publication: Addison Independent  
Publication Dates: 02/13/25 & 02/20/25  
Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, Addison Unit  
Address of Probate Court: 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753

TOWN OF ADDISON  
WARNING

The legal voters of the Town of Addison are hereby warned and notified to meet in the Addison Community Center gymnasium at 7:00 am on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, to vote by Australian ballot (between 7:00 am & 7:00 pm) on the following articles:

1. To elect all necessary town officers  
Moderator (1 Year)  
Town Clerk (3 Year)  
Treasurer (3 Year)  
Selectboard (2 Year)  
Selectboard (3 Year)  
Lister (3 Year)  
Auditor (1 Year)  
Auditor (2 Year)  
Auditor (3 Year)  
Water Commissioner (3 Year)  
Cemetery Commissioner (2 Year)  
Cemetery Commissioner (3 Year)  
First Constable (1 Year)  
Second Constable (1 Year)  
Collector Of Delinquent Taxes (1 Year)
2. Shall the voters of the Town of Addison approve the sum of \$788,653.50 for the Selectboard 2025 proposed budget, (\$248451.33) the proposed amount to be raised in taxes)
3. Shall the voters of the Town of Addison approve the sum of \$1,024,005.00 for the highway 2025 proposed budget, (\$868,804.00 the proposed amount to be raised in taxes)
4. Shall the voters of the Town of Addison approve the Selectboard or its agents to enter into leases of portions of the Addison Community Building for a maximum term of five (5) years with a right to renew for an additional five (5) years.
5. Shall the Town of Addison establish a reserve fund to be called the Addison Community Center Reserve Fund in accordance with 24 V.S.A. 2804 to be funded by the former Addison Central School Fund in the amount of \$23,143.65 commencing March 4, 2025 with future funding to be voter approved budget appropriations for the purposes of covering expenditures that can not be supported by a regular budget.
6. Shall the voters of the Town of Addison approve or disapprove a sum requested from the following:

• Add Cty Rest Justice Svcs	1500
• Add Cty Home Health & Hospice	1500
• Add Cty Humane Society dba Homeward Bound	1000
• Add Cty Parent Child Center	1300
• Add Cty Readers	350
• Age Well	900
• Atria Collective Inc formerly Womensafe Inc	1250
• Bixby Memorial Free Library	30162
• Bridport Seniors	700
• Charter House Coalition	1275
• Counseling Service of Add Cty	1500
• Elderly Services/Project Independence	850
• John W. Graham Emergency Shelter	1250
• Grandview Cemetery Association	1500
• HOPE	1500
• Lake View Cemetery Association	1500
• Open Door Clinic	2500
• Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)	250
• Town Line First Response Squad	10000
• Tri-Valley Transit (ACTR)	1644
• Turning Point Center of Add Cty	1000
• Vt Adult Learning	500

Dated at Addison, Vermont this 2nd day of February, 2025

Jeff Kauffman, Sr., Chair  
Roger Waterman, Vice-Chair  
Peter Briggs  
Robert Hunt  
Steven Torrey

[www.addisonindependent.com](http://www.addisonindependent.com) — CHECK IT OUT.



# Signs of impairment end with DUI citation for Middlebury driver

ADDISON COUNTY — Vermont State Police meanwhile issued a couple driving under the influence citations in the past week.

On Feb. 10 at around 9:30 p.m. saw a motor vehicle violation on Elm Street in Middlebury and stopped the car. After seeing signs of impairment in the driver, the officer cited Martin Niemo, 26, of Middlebury for DUI.

## Vt. State Police Log

Three nights later, on Feb. 13, at a quarter to 11 p.m., noted a motor vehicle violation on South Middlebrook Road near Route 7 in Waltham and stopped the car. The driver, identified at Justin

P. Jackman, 50, of Bristol, was issued a DUI citation. Separately, troopers responded to Route 17 in West Addison at a quarter after midnight on Feb. 16 on a report that a car had slid off the road. They ended up citing 39-year-old Buddi Tamang of West Henrietta, N.Y., for refusing to take a DUI test. Since there was a child in his car, they also cited him for cruelty to a child, though

no one was injured. In other recent activity, troopers: • On Feb. 11 just before 3 p.m. stopped a vehicle on Tuppers Crossing in Ferrisburgh and ended up citing Brett B. Boucher, 63, of South Burlington for driving without a required ignition interlock device. He also netted traffic tickets for using a portable electronic device, driving a vehicle more than 15 days after it

needed an inspection, and driving without insurance. Together those tickets carried fines of \$429 and four points on his license. • On Feb. 13 found Megan R. Lussier, 39, of Middlebury, who was wanted as part of an investigation of a Feb. 8 incident outside a Waltham home. Police cited Lussier for simple assault. • On Feb. 13 located Isaac Fleming, 44, of Charlotte, who was sought in an investigation initiated in January in Monkton. Police cited Fleming for home improvement fraud. • On Feb. 13 at 9:30 p.m. stopped a car for a violation on South Middlebrook Road in Waltham for a violation, identified the driver as Brian LaFountain, 37, of Weybridge, who had an in-state warrant for his arrest. Police arrested LaFountain, took him to the New Haven barracks for processing, and released him on \$200 bail. County sheriff’s deputies assisted state police.

• On Feb. 15 at around 3:13 p.m. responded to a two-vehicle crash at the intersection of Route 116 South and Hewitt Road in Bristol. Police report that Michael Lacross, 42, of Middlebury was driving a 2022 Ram pickup truck southbound on Route 116 when he made a left turn in the path of a northbound 2022 Subaru Crosstrek driven by a 17-year-old Hinesburg driver. The front of the Crosstrek struck the passenger’s side of the pickup and both vehicles came crashing to positions of uncontrolled rest. Lacross was transported to the hospital by ambulance for suspected minor injuries. The 17-year-old was not injured but her car was considered a total loss. Lacross was given a ticket for improper left turn, which carries a \$220 fine and two points on his license. Bristol police, fire and rescue helped out.

### WARNING ANNUAL CITY MEETING MARCH 3, 2025

The qualified voters of the City of Vergennes are hereby warned and notified that the Annual City Meeting will be held on Monday, March 3, 2025, commencing at 7:30 p.m. at the Vergennes Opera House located at 120 Main Street. The meeting can be accessed via Zoom using the following information:

- Join by Computer: <https://zoom.us/j/561577976>
- Join by Phone: Dial: 1 (312) 626-6799
- Meeting ID: 561 577 976
- Meeting Password: 1234

The Annual City Vote will be held on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at the Vergennes Fire Station located at 50 Green Street. The polls will open at 9:00 a.m. and will close at 7:00 p.m. The following Articles will be included on the ballot:

Article [1]: To elect by Australian ballot: one Mayor, three Aldermen for respective two-year terms; one Lister for a three-year term and one Lister for a one-year term; one Auditor for a three-year term, one Auditor for a two-year term and one Auditor for a one-year term; one Grand Juror for a one-year term and two to Addison Northwest School District Board for a three-year term; one Commissioner to the Vergennes-Panton Water District Board of Water Commissioner’s for a three-year term.

Article [2] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the voters approve a reduction of the liquor liability insurance from \$2,000,000 to \$1,000,000, both per occurrence and in the aggregate, in the voter-approved lease between the City and the Friends of Vergennes Opera House, as required by Section 26 of the City Charter that requires all leases to be approved by the voters?

Article [3] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the voters approve a 15-year easement between the City of Vergennes and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, that protects the historic features of the Vergennes City Hall/Opera House, and satisfies the terms of a \$500,000 grant awarded to the Friends of Vergennes Opera House via the Historic Preservation Fund, as administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, as required by Section 26 of the City Charter that requires all leases to be approved by the voters?

Article [4] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the voters approve the issuance of general obligation bonds or notes, pursuant to 24 V.S.A., Chapters 53 and 57 by the City of Vergennes in an amount not to exceed One Million Two Hundred Thirty-Three Thousand Dollars (\$1,233,000.00), that may be reduced by the receipt of available state and federal grants-in-aid, for the purpose of financing the purchase of a used heavy rescue fire truck, a used ladder truck, and upgrading radio and safety systems?

Article [5] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the voters approve the establishment of a Parks and Recreation Fund, so that residents, visitors, organizations and foundations may make tax-deductible donations to benefit the Vergennes Parks and Recreation programs and facilities; and for the city to account for revenues and expenses?

Article [6] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the voters approve the establishment of the Vergennes Burying Ground Fund Reserve to fund improvements to the old cemetery on School Street, no longer in use, so that residents, visitors, organizations and foundations may make tax-deductible donations; and for the city to account for revenues and expenses?

Article [7] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the voters of the City of Vergennes advise the City Council to adopt the following pledge? We, the Vergennes City Council, affirm our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people; We oppose all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; and we declare ourselves an Apartheid-free community and to that end, we pledge to join others in working to end all support to Israel’s Apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation?

Article [8] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$5,000 to Addison County Home Health & Hospice, Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [9] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$2,000 to the Addison County Humane Society, Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [10] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$3,074 to Addison County Parent/Child Center, said sum to come from City funds?

Article [11] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$750 to Addison County Readers, Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [12] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$1,500 to Addison County Restorative Justice Services, Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [13] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$5000 to Age Well, Inc., formerly known as CVAA, said sum to come from City funds?

Article [14] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$5,000 to Boys & Girls Club, of Greater Vergennes Inc., said sums to come from City funds?

Article [15] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$2,500 to Counseling Service of Addison County, Inc., said sums to come from City funds?

Article [16] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$2,000 to Elderly Service, Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [17] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$4,000 to Habitat for Humanity of Addison County, VT Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [18] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$3,000 to HOPE, said sum to come from City funds?

Article [19] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$4,000 to John Graham Housing and Services, Inc. said sum to come from City funds?

Article [20] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$3500 to Open Door Clinic, said sum to come from City funds?

Article [21] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$1,000 to Otter Creek Child Center, Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [22] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$950 to RSVP of Addison County, said sum to come from City funds?

Article [23] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$3,000 to Turning Point Center of Addison County, Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [24] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$2,000 to Vergennes Area Seniors Association, Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [25] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$890 to Vermont Adult Learning, said sum to come from City funds?

Article [26] To vote by Australian ballot on the following: Shall the City appropriate \$4,000 to WomenSafe, Inc., said sum to come from City funds?

Article [27] To transact any other non-binding business that may come before the meeting.

Ballot boxes will remain open from nine o’clock in the forenoon until seven o’clock in the afternoon on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at the Vergennes Fire Station on Green Street for voting by Australian ballot on Articles I through XXVI. The legal voters of the City of Vergennes are further notified that voter qualification, registration and absentee voting shall be as provided in Chapters 43 and 51 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated. Approved by City Council on January 28, 2025

### Public Notices can be found in this ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 11B, 12B and 13B.

#### TOWN OF WEYBRIDGE PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE (In Person and Online) PLANNING COMMISSION

A public hearing before the Weybridge Planning Commission will be held in person and via Zoom at the Weybridge Town Office on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 7:00 PM, to pursue the following business:

To consider the request of Middlebury College to adjust the boundary between the two parcels they own at the southern end of Sheep Farm Road where it intersects with Weybridge Road (Route 23).

Persons wishing to be heard at this Public Meeting may do so in person or may be represented at the meeting by a licensed Vermont Attorney or an authorized agent; please note that in accordance with Chapter 117, Section 4464 of the Vermont statutes that participation in the Public Meeting is a prerequisite to the right to take subsequent appeal.

The full application and sketch plan can be viewed at the Town Clerk’s Office – call 545-2270 for access instructions. Please call or email [jwolson23@gmail.com](mailto:jwolson23@gmail.com) or [clerk@townofweybridge.org](mailto:clerk@townofweybridge.org) for instructions on participating in the hearing via Zoom.

Jeff Olson, Chair  
Weybridge Planning Commission

#### TOWN OF MONKTON NOTICE OF ORDINANCE ADOPTION AND OF RIGHT TO PETITION

Notice is hereby given by the Town of Monkton Selectboard of the adoption on February 11, 2025 of a Code of Ethics Investigation and Enforcement Ordinance.

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE** The purpose of this ordinance is to enact procedures for the investigation of complaints that allege a municipal officer has violated Vermont’s Municipal Code of Ethics and the enforcement in instances of substantiated complaints, including methods of enforcement and available remedies.

**PRINCIPAL PROVISIONS**  
The principal provisions of the ordinance relate to municipal ethics complaints and municipal ethics investigations.

##### LIST OF SECTION HEADINGS OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE:

- SECTION 1. AUTHORITY
- SECTION 2. PURPOSE.
- SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.
- SECTION 4. COMPLAINTS.
- SECTION 5. ENFORCEMENT
- SECTION 6. APPEALS
- SECTION 7. OTHER LAWS
- SECTION 8. SEVERABILITY
- SECTION 9. EFFECTIVE DATE

The full text of the proposed ordinance may be examined at the Town Offices during normal Town Office hours. Selectboard Chair Stephen Pilcher may be contacted at 453-3800 if there are questions concerning the ordinance.

**NOTICE OF RIGHT TO PETITION:** 24 V.S.A. § 1973 provides that not less than five percent (5%) of the qualified voters of the municipality may petition for a vote on the question of disapproving an ordinance if presented to the Board of Selectmen or the Town Clerk within forty-four (44) days (before March 27, 2025) following the date of adoption of the ordinance by the Board of Selectman. Reference is made to 24 V.S.A. § 1973 for more particulars concerning this right to petition. If no petition is filed within this time period, the ordinance will become effective on April 13, 2025.

#### WARNING ANNUAL MEETING OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL DISTRICT MARCH 3, 2025, 6:00 P.M.

##### BURNHAM HALL, 52 EAST RIVER RD., LINCOLN, VT

Article 1: To elect a clerk who shall assume the office immediately and serve a one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.

Article 2: To elect a Treasurer who shall assume office immediately and serve a one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.

Article 3: Shall the legal voters of the Lincoln School District accept the report of the School District Board of Directors?

Article 4: Shall the voters of the Lincoln School District approve the following annual stipends for district officers?  
•Moderator: \$50  
•Clerk: \$500  
•Treasurer: \$500  
•School District Board chair: \$750  
•Each School District Board member (other than chair): \$500

Article 5: Shall the voters of the Lincoln School District authorize the District Board of Directors to borrow money by the issuance of bonds or notes not in excess of anticipated revenues for fiscal year 2026, per 16 V.S.A. §562(9)?

Article 6: Shall the voters of the Lincoln School District authorize the School Board to transfer up to \$380,000 of the District’s audited surplus funds to the District’s Education Reserve Fund? The District anticipates having a surplus of \$481,173.55 and the proposed budget amount in Article 7 is based on applying \$100,000 of the surplus to offset taxes for fiscal year 2026.

Article 7 (School Budget): Shall the voters of the Lincoln School District approve the School District Board to expend \$5,179,244.76, which is the amount the Board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year (FY2026)? The Lincoln School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of \$13,455.51, which is 8.3% lower than per pupil education spending for the current year.

Article 8: Shall the Lincoln School District adopt its budget by Australian ballot, beginning with the FY2027 budget?

Article 9: To elect Lincoln School District Officers and Directors as follows, for the indicated term, by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, polls to be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Burnham Hall, 52 East River Road:  
1 – School Meeting Moderator (1 year)  
1 – School Director (3 years)  
1 – School Director (2 years)

Article 10: To transact any other legal business coming before said meeting.  
Dated this 22nd day of January, 2024.  
/S/ Lincoln Board of School Directors

#### TOWN OF STARKSBORO DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

The Starksboro Development Review Board (DRB) will hold a public hearing on Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 7:00 P.M. to review the following application:

Continuation of Application #24-501 requested by Kevin P. and Sandra E. Kelley for an amendment of previously approved subdivision #2012DRB-02SD on original parcel (F4171E)(Book 99, pg. 174) resulting in parcel 11097 for as built location of home and driveway (F4171W.4 -former Lot 5). The hearing review will be conducted pursuant to Sec 428 of the Starksboro Land Use and Development Regulations. Parcel 11097 (F4171W.4) is a 7.3-acre parcel with frontage on Meadow Brook Dr. in the Agricultural, Scenic, and Rural Residential (ASRR) district. Application #24-501 is available for review at the Town Office.

##### Zoom Meeting

Topic: Kelley DRB March 13

Time: Mar 13, 2025 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85109434630?pwd=3T62FrOfn8Le7aQN1FCCwzqYy5xZXy.1>

Meeting ID: 851 0943 4630

Passcode: t7#my7gw

Dial by your location

• +1 309 205 3325 US

Meeting ID: 851 0943 4630

Passcode: 91184397

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kdQqYOWLsl>

Interested persons may attend or send a representative. Pursuant to 24 VSA § 446 (a)(1)(C) and 4471 (a), participation in this local proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.

Zoning Administrator

Date: February 14, 2025

#### ACT 250 NOTICE MINOR APPLICATION #9A0386 10 V.S.A. §§ 6000 - 6111

Steve Pomarico has filed application #9A0386 for a project generally described as construction of a 7-unit Planned Unit Development (PUD) upon a ±10.34-acre parcel consisting of two duplexes and one triplex, along with associated roadway and utility infrastructure. The project is located off Pond Road (across from Morse Park; SPAN: 399-124-10477) in Monkton, 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 project number “9A0386.”

No hearing will be held, and a permit may be issued unless, on or before Wednesday, March 12, 2205, 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 Coordinator listed below.

Josh Donabedian  
District 9 Coordinator  
111 West Street  
Essex Junction, VT 05452

[Joshua.Donabedian@vermont.gov](mailto:Joshua.Donabedian@vermont.gov)

#### ACT 250 NOTICE MINOR APPLICATION #4A0100-3 10 V.S.A. §§ 6000 - 6111

J.P. Carrara & Sons has filed application #4A0100-3 for a project generally described as construction of a new, standalone ±9,600 square foot manufacturing facility for Addison Residential Housing Works with associated access drive expansion and improvements. The project is located at 2160 Route 7 South in Middlebury, 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 “4A0100-3.”

No hearing will be held, and a permit may be issued unless, on or before Wednesday, March 12, 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 Coordinator listed below.

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Essex Junction, VT 05452

[Joshua.Donabedian@vermont.gov](mailto:Joshua.Donabedian@vermont.gov)

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MIDDLEBURY SELECTBOARD





THE ALMENDROS, FROM left: Naunau Belu, Pete Ryan, Mark Pelletier, Kemi Fuentes-George, Doug Wilhelm (in front), John Wallace, Addison Tate and Liz Cleveland, will headline Willowell Foundation’s 2nd annual Boogie benefit on Saturday, March 8.

## Boogie benefit set in Bristol March 8

BRISTOL — Join the Willowell Foundation for its annual Boogie Benefit at Holley Hall in Bristol on Saturday, March 8. Shake off winter with this fun, family-friendly, community event. Willowell will host its benefit dance and silent auction from 6-9:30 p.m. The evening will feature live music by The Almendros, a cash bar, and a silent auction packed with exciting items from local businesses and artists. All proceeds benefit Willowell’s scholarship fund, which helps all children attend Willowell programs, regardless of ability to pay.

The Almendros are coming back to Boogie after an exciting performance at the benefit last year. The eight-piece band is a multinational group whose diverse repertoire ranges from rock, country and blues to reggae, ska, calypso, and West African styles. The Almendros include Willowell teacher Addison Tate on saxophone and clarinet, with bandmates on guitars, drums, keyboards, trumpet, congas, djembe drum and other percussion. The band is preparing to release its second album of original songs; its first album, “All Over the Place,” is available on

Spotify and Apple Music and at alمندrosband.com. All funds raised will support Willowell’s scholarship fund for youth programming for programs such as Pond Brook Middle School, New Roots, Wren’s Nest Forest Preschool, and Summer Camps. Come out and celebrate Willowell’s mission of cultivating healthy communities by connecting people to the arts, education, the environment and each other. Tickets are \$10 at the door. Children 12 and under are free!

## Local students earn honors at Champlain College

Champlain College has released its honors list for the fall 2024 semester. Local students on the dean’s list, achieving a grade point average of 3.5 or higher, include: **Brandon:** Natasha Shepard, Economic Crime Investigation. **Bristol:** Kaia Companion, Graphic Design & Visual Communication, and Kayden Matis, Filmmaking. **Middlebury:** Wu Dong,

ADDISON COUNTY	School Briefs
Computer Networking & Cybersecurity.	
<b>Vergennes:</b> Lydia Kimball, Business Management.	
Local students on the president’s list for achieving a grade point average of 4.0 or higher include:	
<b>Bristol:</b> Shane Catell, Tyler	

Chasse and Ezekiel Savage. **Middlebury:** Lili Boe. **North Ferrisburgh:** Neo Weaver. Those named to the trustees’ list, achieving a 4.0 grade point average for two or more consecutive semesters include: **Starksboro:** Kenneth Moran and Akiva Nugent. **Vergennes:** Isaiah River.

## Shoreham voter info session is Feb. 22

SHOREHAM — Each year on the Shoreham Town Meeting Ballot, voters are asked if the town should contribute funds for a variety of local social service agencies. You may not know much about some of them. Here is your chance to find out more

Shoreham Congregational Church will host a Voter Information Panel on Saturday, Feb. 22, at 1 p.m. Each of the groups that request funding at the Shoreham Town Meeting will be offered an opportunity to provide information about their program, and

they will be available afterwards for further questions you may have. Last year’s presentation was lively and informative. It is a good opportunity to learn more about them, so invite your fellow Shoreham voters to attend.

## 2 towns win historic preservation grants

MONTPELIER — The Vermont Division for Historic Preservation and the Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation recently announced grants totaling \$357,207 to 22 municipalities and non-profit organizations in nine counties for the restoration and rehabilitation of Vermont landmarks and important historic buildings and structures. These grants will help support more than \$1 million in restoration and rehabilitation efforts.



“These Historic Preservation Grants revitalize our communities and honor the past.” — Gov. Phil Scott

rural communities. This year’s grants include \$20,000 awarded to the Brandon Congregational Church. The church was awarded matching grant funds to make repairs to its steeple, including the town clock. The Brandon Congregational Church, incorporated in 1785, was built in 1832. The church is a public place of worship conducting Sunday services, funerals, weddings, baptisms, a yearly community remembrance service and prayer vigil, and providing space for a variety of community events.

and opened in town. It closed in 1951 and was repurposed as the town’s library until 1990. In 2012 the Corner School Resource Center of Granville acquired the building, which now hosts summer workshops, a children’s day camp, art shows, etc. CSRC was awarded \$10,075 in matching grant funds to replace the building’s metal roof. “Investing in these projects is investing in Vermont’s story,” said Housing and Community Development Commissioner Alex Farrell, who oversees the Division of Historic Preservation. “The Division of Historic Preservation is committed to helping these towns and nonprofits maintain these structures that mean so much to their communities.” “These Historic Preservation Grants revitalize our communities and honor the past,” Gov. Phil Scott said in a press release. “Investing in these projects creates opportunities for Vermonters and visitors to learn more about the history of our great state.” Visit the DHP website for a

## Vt. State University names top students

Vermont State university has released its academic honor awards for the fall 2024 semester. A number of local students are on the lists. **DEAN’S LIST** **Addison** — Ava Almeida and Wyatt Rochon. **Brandon** — Raluca Aurelia, Henry Bart, Abbie Blandy, Keith Carrara, Raluca Cristea, Morgan Currier, Kylee Forrest, Jamie Dube-Bordeau, Pajua Gamba, Cole Letourneau and Elyse Singh. **Bridport** — Ainsley Busby. **Bristol** — Madison Gile, Owen Mayhew, Kelsey McCormick and Bre Rockwell. **Ferrisburgh** — Gwen Gill and Thane Gill. **Leicester** — Jordyn Bessette and Kinsey Moyer.

**Lincoln** — Emma Reen and Chris Wood. **Middlebury** — Tyler Buxton, Robin Chamberlain, Rosie Nop, and Jillian Nop. **New Haven** — Benjamin Brown and Caleb Russell. **North Ferrisburgh** — Abram Francis and Sam Moriglioni. **Orwell** — Declan Anderson, Carson Babbie, Dylan McKee, and Vin Paquette. **Ripton** — Hana Doria. **Salisbury** — Fraser Pierpont, Alanna Trudeau and Alexa Whelan. **Shoreham** — Kailyn LaDuke and Carter Paquette. **Vergennes** — Elsa Michaels and Eyon Tembreull. **Presidents list** **Brandon** — Luca Polli.

**Bristol** — Sherman LaRose. **Cornwall** — Bridget Audet. **Ferrisburgh** — Samantha Hallock and Megan Mentzer. **Middlebury** — Io Binder, Courtney Countryman and Bella Gale. **Leicester** — Ryleigh Laporte. **North Ferrisburgh** — Kimari Collins and Sam Cowan. **Orwell** — Jack Almeida, Allison Lanthier and Clarabel Redondo. **Starksboro** — Jack Eickenberg. **Vergennes** — Audrey Tembreull. **Weybridge** — Jackie Prime. **Whiting** — Jordan Bertrand and Grant Thurston. **GRADUATES** **Middlebury** — Izzy Gogarty. **Panton** — Samantha Marszalkowski.

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# ARTS + LEISURE

The Addison Independent

February 20, 2025



Ambar Vasques-Mitra is the Middlebury College student curator and designer of the new exhibit "Scrapped!" The exhibit will open with a reception on Friday, Feb. 21, at 3 p.m., in the Davis Family Library atrium. It is free and open to all.

PHOTO / MIKAELA TAYLOR

## A CENTURY OF MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE SCRAPBOOKS ON DISPLAY IN DAVIS FAMILY LIBRARY

**M**ost of us (and probably all Gen-Zers) carry around digital phones that can record video, capture photos, call, text, post on social media, and recall memories in an endless scroll... So, it's a curious thing that students at Middlebury College recently put together an exhibit that highlights actual, hardcopy, paper scrapbooks that previous Midd students have put together over the past century.

BY ELSIE  
LYNN PARINI

"I think with growing up in the digital age we've lost the art of keeping and preserving physical memories," said curator and designer of the exhibit "Scrapped!" Ambar Vasques-Mitra. "Sure having the ability to take and store pictures on your phone is useful and convenient, but what happens when you lose those files to some tech issue or lose the device itself? Those images are gone forever.

It was only a generation ago that we were keeping family albums with pictures from decades ago it would be nice to continue these memories even with technology."

Vasques-Mitra, along with fellow student Yvette Fordjour ('26), library preservationist Joseph Watson and the Davis Special Collections staff, have put together an exhibit that provides insight into student life, popular culture and milestones from decades past. The exhibit opens on Friday, Feb. 21, with a reception at 3 p.m., in the Davis Family Library atrium.

"The art of scrapbooking, which dates back to the Middle Ages, has evolved into an innovative and personal way of preserving memories," reads the exhibit's description. "At Middlebury, students have embraced this craft for well over a century, with the earliest scrapbooks in the archives dating back to the late 1800s."

These scrapbooks offer a tangible, physical record of experiences that invite reflection on what Middlebury students once deemed worthy of preserving.

While exploring the pages of these scrapbooks, the exhibit shows themes of community, celebration, and self-expression on campus that have transcended time and reflections of the changing ways in which the definition of a "Midd Kid" has been captured and reinvented.

"[I was surprised] how close to home the materials felt," said New York City resident Vasques-Mitra. "There were many events, inside jokes and memories in these scrapbooks that I myself had lived through or seen around me and I was surprised to see the similarities."

Today, as it ever was, a "Midd Kid" means

SEE SCRAPPED ON PAGE 3



# MORTAL COIL: Spring exhibition at Vergennes art gallery

**R** Grant Fine Art in downtown Vergennes presents "Mortal Coil," the gallery's fourth exhibition, featuring works by Misoo Bang, Austin Furtak-Cole, Suzy Spence, Kalin Thomas, Mollie Ward, and Corrine Yonce. This six-person show explores the human experience through the lens of self-possession, connection, and vulnerability, all rooted in the physicality of the body.

The exhibit will open on March 1, with an opening reception from 6-9 p.m. It will be on view through April 26.

"Mortal Coil" takes its title from Shakespeare's "Hamlet," a phrase signifying the troubles and entanglements of human existence. The show invites viewers to engage with the subjective experience of inhabiting a body — a vessel through which we experience life, connection, and the profound intimacy of being. Through various mediums and perspectives, the participating artists explore themes such as the folds and contours of the human form, the emotive resonance of everyday scenes, and the delicate balance between strength and fragility inherent to mortal life. The works reflect on our shared vulnerabilities and joys, capturing moments of intimacy, discomfort, humor, and celebration.

## MISOO BANG

Misoo Bang is a Korean-born artist currently based in Vermont. Her emotionally charged paintings and drawings explore narratives of identity, trauma, and resilience. Her "Giant Asian Girls" and "Lotus Flower" series address the intersection of racial stereotypes and gender-based violence with a powerful, raw intensity. Bang's work has been exhibited widely, and she has received numerous grants and fellowships in support of her artistic practice.

## AUSTIN FURTAK-COLE

Austin Furtak-Cole, a Vermont-based painter

and printmaker, delves into the distortions of human perception, exploring how we simplify and reshape reality to cope with its complexities. His paintings and drawings



AUSTINE FURTAK-COLE



KALIN THOMAS



MISOO BANG

employ abstraction to evoke both a sense of intimacy and a curiosity about the unseen. Furtak-Cole has exhibited across the Northeast and participated in residencies that explore the intersection of memory and mark-making.

## SUZY SPENCE

Suzy Spence is a painter and printmaker whose evocative equestrian portraits and hunt scenes weave historical and contemporary influences. Spence, who has exhibited nationally and internationally, captures the tension and grace of movement, drawing connections between ritual, body, and landscape. Her work has been featured in major publications and is included in numerous private and public collections.

## KALIN THOMAS

Kalin Thomas, an artist and scholar steeped in Renaissance technique and Stoic philosophy, juxtaposes the ideals of historical art with contemporary themes. His classically inspired yet uniquely modern works reveal the dualities of human nature — reason and impulse, strength and vulnerability. Thomas has shown his work in museums and galleries across the U.S. and teaches art history and technique, emphasizing the enduring relevance of traditional methods.

## MOLLIE WARD

Mollie Ward, a Plattsburgh, N.Y., based sculptor and painter, creates vibrant, body-like ceramic sculptures and pastel drawings that confront the discomfort of being in one's skin. Her work celebrates the human form by transforming physical discomforts into objects of humor and celebration, challenging cultural stigmas around the body. Ward has been recognized for her innovative use of materials and her ability to evoke emotion through tactile form.

## CORRINE YONCE

Corrine Yonce, a multidisciplinary artist and advocate based in Vermont, focuses on the connections between people, memory, and place. Through a blend of portraiture and abstraction, her work invites viewers to consider how the spaces we inhabit shape our sense of self and our relationships. Yonce, who is also known for her community-driven art projects, has exhibited throughout New England and works extensively in housing advocacy through the arts.

For more information, visit [kgrantfineart.com](http://kgrantfineart.com), follow @kgrantfineart on Instagram, or contact Kristen at [kristen@kgrantfineart.com](mailto:kristen@kgrantfineart.com).



CORRINE YONCE



# SCRAPPED

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"being passionate," said Vasques-Mitra, "whether it's about academics, athletics, clubs or community."

Through these distinct and shared experiences, Vasques-Mitra and the curating team invites viewers to think about the timeless nature of memory-making and the creativity each generation uses to tell its story.

Of course, Vasques-Mitra uses social media and digital pictures to make her memories. "But," she acknowledges, "in all honesty, lit's] not the best way to preserve memories long-term."

Vasquez-Mitra, who plans to graduate this spring, is a History major and Museum Studies and Portuguese minor who works in Special Collections as a Student Associate and Oral History Intern. She has been working on this exhibit since this past October, and has figured out that there's something special about a tangible memory.

"I've been collecting ephemera/mementos from my college experience: tickets, posters, pictures, which are currently in a collage on my dorm wall," she said. "Once I graduate I hope to turn it into a scrapbook of my own Midd experience."

So maybe we don't scrap the scrapbooks just yet. Head over to the Davis Library and check out what memories are actually made of — the exhibit will be on display through the spring.

Editor's Note: For more info visit [middlebury.edu/library/news](http://middlebury.edu/library/news).



This scrapbook by Elizabeth Parker, class of 1930, features letters, programs, photos, dance cards, and a cigarette.



Ruth Hesselgrave, class of 1918, created this scrapbook.

**"I'VE BEEN COLLECTING EPHEMERA/ MEMENTOS FROM MY COLLEGE EXPERIENCE."**

— Ambar Vasques-Mitra

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Directed by Terry O'Brien  
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"On The Water" by Julia Purinton, 22 x 28 inches, oil on canvas.

## Edgewater Gallery on the Green 'shimmers' with new oil paintings

Shimmer" presents new oil paintings by Julia Purinton at Edgewater Gallery on the Green, 6 Merchants Row, in Middlebury. The solo exhibition opens on Feb. 28, with an opening reception March 7, from 5-6:30 p.m.

Purinton is a regional painter who understands the unique quality of Vermont's open spaces with its shifting seasonal light, varied terrain

and changing palette. She captures an emotional response to her surroundings through gentle tones and a hazy painterly application. The result creates a dreamlike impression of the landscape. Julia presents this body of work at a time that she feels we need to remember the healing abilities of the natural world.

The exhibit will be on view through April 5.

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# ART ON EXHIBIT

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### "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.

## JACKSON GALLERY

68 S Pleasant St, Middlebury

For more info visit [townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery](http://townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery) or call 802-382-9222.

### "Landscape Complexions: Paintings by H. Keith

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 15

# Cosmic Forecast

**ARIES:** March 21/April 20. People are not mind readers, Aries. If you want others to know how you are feeling, you are going to have to give them some sort of indication this week.

**TAURUS:** April 21/May 21. You may discover that you enjoy a great deal of support from other people right now, Taurus. This includes those who you didn't realize are on your side.

**GEMINI:** May 22/June 21. Even though it can be challenging at certain times, try to see the positives in every situation, Gemini. This may make it easier to overlook some of their faults.

**CANCER:** June 22/July 22. Try to stretch beyond your comfort zone and limits this week, Cancer. This likely will involve meeting new people and asking a lot of questions along the way. You will develop and grow.

**LEO:** July 23/Aug. 23. Leo, this is a great time to communicate with friends and socialize. Put aside any worries and engage in lighthearted activities that will enable you to laugh and smile.

**VIRGO:** Aug. 24/Sept. 22. The more peaceful and understanding you are this week, Virgo, the more you will get along with the other people in your life. Be the diplomat instead of a warrior this time around.

**LIBRA:** Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Libra, this is a good week for cleaning up your space and devising a better organizational system at work. You might

be so good at cleaning up that you forget where you put things.

**SCORPIO:** Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Scorpio, do not feel like you have to change your personality to fit certain situations this week. Just be yourself. Those who want to be around you will naturally gravitate to you.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Nov. 23/Dec. 21. A great deal of information is available if you simply request it, Sagittarius. Word your request in a way that guarantees cooperation from others.

**CAPRICORN:** Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Capricorn, you are so focused on a personal project that you may completely forget about the needs of others. Make a change this week to be more receptive to others' needs.

**AQUARIUS:** Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Aquarius, take a look at the bigger picture to identify what you will need for the next few months. Then discuss your ideas with others to see if what you

have planned is plausible.

**PISCES:** Feb. 19/March 20. Your good mood will be elevated for much of the week, Pisces. Don't fret about a little hiccup along the way. You will bounce back quickly with a smile on your face.

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## FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

FEB. 21 — Jordan Peele, filmmaker, actor, comedian (46)  
FEB. 22 — Edward Gorey, artist (d)

FEB. 23 — Emily Blunt actor (42)  
FEB. 24 — Winslow Homer, artist (d)  
FEB. 25 — George Harrison, guitarist (d)  
FEB. 26 — Johnny Cash, musician (d)  
FEB. 27 — Joanne Woodward, actor (95)



CALENDAR

FEB. 20-MARCH 8  
2025

THURSDAY, FEB. 20

**BIRDING ON EASTER ISLAND IN VERGENNES.** Thursday, Feb. 20, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library., 258 Main St. Join world-traveling birder Hank Kaestner as he shares highlights from his journey to Easter Island and Chile, where he sought out 30 unique bird species. You can join in person in the Bixby Library's Community Room or use the zoom link at [bixbylibrary.org/event/easter](https://bixbylibrary.org/event/easter).

**TIM MCKENZIE IN LINCOLN.** Thursday, Feb. 20 7:30 p.m., Lincoln Library, River Rd. The 5 Town Winter Into Spring Musical Library Tour continues with this performance. Tim McKenzie hails from Burlington and is one of the very finest singers and guitarists in the state. Admission is free with donations welcome.

**"PRIVATE PEACEFUL" ON STAGE IN BRANDON.** Thursday, Feb. 20, 8 p.m., Brandon Town Hall, 1 Conant Sq. Adapted from the beloved 2003 novel by Michael Morpurgo, this one-man show is about a fictional young soldier, Pvt. Thomas "Tommo" Peaceful, who is looking back on his life so far and his entering the First World War. The story focuses on the harsh realities of English rural life and warfare. Tickets \$20 + tax/fees. More info at [toneromtheatrics.com](https://toneromtheatrics.com).

**"MORNING'S AT SEVEN" ON STAGE IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Come see Middlebury Community Player's February production. Step into a small-town neighborhood in the 1920s, where four sisters navigate life,

love, and family in all its messy, hilarious glory. Full of quirky characters and timeless humor, Morning's at Seven is a delightful reminder that it's never too late to embrace change and chase happiness. Tickets \$17 Thursday, Feb. 20. \$20 all other performances, available at [townhalltheater.org](https://townhalltheater.org).

FRIDAY, FEB. 21

**AFTER-HOURS MOVIE ADVENTURE IN VERGENNES.** Friday, Feb. 21, 5:30 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library., 258 Main St. Come to a viewing of the first movie in the "Lord of the Rings" series and feast on recipes from the world of Middle-Earth. From Lembas bread to honey cakes and the Prancing Pony's potato and garlic soup, head to [rhubarbandlavender.com/themes/lord-of-the-rings](https://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.

**"MORNING'S AT SEVEN" ON STAGE IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Feb. 20 listing.

**"PRIVATE PEACEFUL" ON STAGE IN BRANDON.** Friday, Feb. 21, 8 p.m., Brandon Town Hall, 1 Conant Sq. See Feb. 20 listing.

SATURDAY, FEB. 22

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB SNOWSHOE**

**IN SOUTH STARKSBORO.** Saturday, Feb. 22. Snowshoe up the Jerusalem Trail to the Orvis window. Five miles and about 1,500 vertical feet. Rated difficult because of elevation gain. Contact Morris Earle at [morrisearle@gmail.com](mailto:morrisearle@gmail.com) or 802-734-0984 for information or to register. More at [gmcbreadloaf.org](https://gmcbreadloaf.org).

**EXTRA STOUT IN BRANDON.** Saturday, Feb. 22, 6-8 p.m., Brandon Inn, 20 Park St. Get warmed up for St. Patrick's Day with Vermont's premier Irish band. Extra Stout will have you tapping your toes as you finish off a pint or a hot toddy. The Pub in The Brandon Inn will be open. Free.

**"MORNING'S AT SEVEN" ON STAGE IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Feb. 20 listing.

**COMMUNITY CONTRA DANCE IN BRISTOL.** Saturday, Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. Warm your spirits by dancing with your neighbors and enjoying the live music! No experience is necessary. If you know how to walk and smile at the same time you have the most essential skills. Lausanne Allen will teach a variety of easy dances. Don Stratton and Cynthia Huard will provide the music. \$5-\$10 suggested.

**UNITED FOR UKRAINE IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. This fourth annual event celebrates the culture and resilience of the nation of Ukraine with music, poetry, film and more. Featuring a parade of performances by Middlebury College's Ukrainian students, the Middlebury College Choir, and other special guests.

Free. Information about donating to Ukrainian relief organizations will be provided.

**"PRIVATE PEACEFUL" ON STAGE IN BRANDON.** Saturday, Feb. 22, 8 p.m., Brandon Town Hall, 1 Conant Sq. See Feb. 20 listing.

SUNDAY, FEB. 23

**"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.

**WASSAIL CELEBRATION IN SHOREHAM.** Sunday, Feb. 23, 1-7 p.m., Champlain Orchards, 3597 Route 74 W. As the days begin to lengthen and we prepare for the spring, Champlain Orchards invites you to visit the orchard and join in a blessing of the trees. Hearty food and drink, songs, dancing, and the warmth of a bonfire together. Dress warmly. Bring a lantern. Weather and snow-cover permitting, you are welcome to come early to cross-country ski, snowshoe or sled in the orchard.

**BINGO IN VERGENNES.** Sunday, Feb. 23, 2-4 p.m., American Legion Post 14, Armory Lane. Doors open at 1:30 p.m., Bingo starts 2. Game packets are \$15 for one sheet of three cards for each regular

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="https://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> Through the Nights: Vermont Statehouse & Public Affairs <b>Friday, February 21</b> 6:30 a.m. Energy Week 7:30 a.m. Congregational Church Service 9 a.m. Press Conference 10 a.m. Selectboard & Public Affairs 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Church Service 5:30 p.m. Press Conf. & Public Affairs <b>Saturday, February 22</b> 5 a.m. Vermont State House 10 a.m. Selectboard & Public Affairs 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Church Service 5:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Public Affairs 11 p.m. Energy Week <b>Sunday, February 23</b> 4 a.m. Energy Week 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Church Service	12:30 p.m. Selectboard & Public Affairs 4 p.m. Congregational Church Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:45 p.m. Vermont State House <b>Monday, February 24</b> 4:30 a.m. Energy Week 5:30 a.m. Eckankar 6:05 a.m. Press Conferences 10 a.m. Selectboard & Vt State House 5 p.m. Selectboard & Public Affairs 8 p.m. Vermont State House <b>Tuesday, February 25</b> 7 a.m. Press Conferences 9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard & Public Affairs 4 p.m. Congregational Church Service 5:30 p.m. Governor Scott's Weekly Update 7 p.m. Selectboard & Public Affairs <b>Wednesday, February 26</b> 5 a.m. Press Conferences 7:30 a.m. Memorial Baptist Church	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 27</b> 5 a.m. Selectboard 8 a.m. Congregational Church Service 12 p.m. Selectboard & Public Affairs 8 p.m. Energy Week 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10:05 p.m. Vermont Statehouse <b>Channel 1091</b> Through the Night: Statehouse: Education <b>Friday, February 21</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, Nature & Gardening Programs 4:30 p.m. Authors and Poets	8 p.m. Sharpe Takes <b>Saturday, February 22</b> 5 a.m. Science, Nature & Gardening Programs 6 a.m. ACSD Board Meeting 8:30 a.m. Foltz Studio 9:05 a.m. All Brains Belong 10 a.m. Education Transformation Proposal Governance 3:30 p.m. Festival On the Green 5 p.m. Sharpe Takes 8 p.m. Authors and Poets <b>Sunday, February 23</b> 5 a.m. North Branch Nature Center 6:30 a.m. Science, Nature & Gardening Programs 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 24</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 11 p.m. Sharpe Takes <b>Tuesday, February 25</b> 5 a.m. Sharpe Takes 5:35 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 12 p.m. North Branch Nature Center 6 p.m. Sharpe Takes 7 p.m. School Board Meeting/s <b>Wednesday, February 26</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 27</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	



game. There is no limit to the number of packets you purchase. Special "Winner Take All" games are extra \$1. Bring your own daubers or borrow one of ours. Food available. Sponsored by the Auxiliary Unit 14. More info: Contact Michelle Eastman at 802-349-6370.

**"MORNING'S AT SEVEN" ON STAGE IN MIDDLEBURY.** Sunday, Feb. 23, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Feb. 20 listing.

**"PRIVATE PEACEFUL" ON STAGE IN BRANDON.** Sunday, Feb. 23, 8 p.m., Brandon Town Hall, 1 Conant Sq. See Feb. 20 listing.

## MONDAY, FEB. 24

**FIBER ARTS CIRCLE IN STARKSBORO.** Monday, Feb. 24, 1 p.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116. Explore the world of fiber arts in this weekly gathering. 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. All towns welcome.

**CRIBBAGE NIGHT IN BRISTOL.** Monday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m., Libanus Lodge, 2 Elm St. Hosted by the Masons of Libanus Lodge. Free and fun for all ages.

## WEDNESDAY, FEB. 26

**"FROM 'ARAB STREET' TO STAGE: MUSLIMNESS AND MASCULINITY IN MAGHREBI CONTEMPORARY DANCE IN MIDDLEBURY.** Wednesday, Feb. 26, 4:30-6 p.m., Franklin Environmental Center, The Orchard-Hillcrest 103, 531 College St. Over the past two decades contemporary dance in North Africa has emerged as a fusion form of street vocabulary, bboy virtuosity, traditional Sufi ritual, Orientalist trope, and postmodern aesthetic. This talk will focus on how shifting notions of Muslim corporeality in the region intersect with gender performativity, local political economies, and transnational artistic production networks.

## THURSDAY, FEB. 27

**ROCK-IT SCIENCE CONCERT IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Feb. 27, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Lovers of rock, connoisseurs of punk, come to Town Hall Theater to see an epic rock concert brought together by Middlebury teens and led by musician Clint Bierman. Free.

**SO YOU WANT TO WRITE A BOOK PRESENTATION IN MONKTON.** Thursday, Feb. 27, 7 p.m. Russell Memorial Library, 92 Monkton Ridge. It's surprising how many have dreamt of authoring their own tale. Step into this presentation and discover how to elevate that thought into a breathtaking narrative. Speakers will be Eugenie Doyle and Ivor Hughes. Additional information from

the library at 802-453-4417 or email: russellmemlibrary@gmail.com.

## FRIDAY, FEB. 28

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE OR SNOWSHOE IN WEYBRIDGE.** Friday, Feb. 28, North Country Trail. Start waking up from winter with an easy 5-mile walk along a section of the North Country Trail across pretty fields with wide open space. We will also check out the possible ice formations at Bittersweet Falls. Snowshoes or microspikes may be needed. Minimal elevation change. Contact Ken Corey at 802-349-3733 or kencorey53@gmail.com to register. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

# TOP PICK

**COME CONTRA DANCE IN BRISTOL ON SATURDAY, FEB. 22, AT 7:30 P.M., IN HOLLEY HALL, 1 SOUTH ST. IF YOU KNOW HOW TO WALK AND SMILE AT THE SAME TIME YOU CAN CONTRA DANCE! LAUSANNE ALLEN WILL TEACH A VARIETY OF EASY DANCES. DON STRATTON AND CYNTHIA HUARD WILL PROVIDE THE MUSIC. BRING \$5-\$10 CASH FOR A DONATION.**

**VERMONT MANDOLIN TRIO IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The Vermont Mandolin Trio, comprised of Grammy-nominated Matt Flinner, Jamie Masefield and Will Patton, will join Town Hall Theater's Wintertide Music Series for this performance. Tickets \$15-\$30, available at townhalltheater.org, by calling 802-382-9222, or at the door.

## SATURDAY, MARCH 1

**"ONCE UPON A STORY" IN BRISTOL.** Saturday, March 1, 10-2 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. Step into a world of magic and imagination at Once Upon a Story: Vermont Literacy Network's immersive fairytale event. This family-friendly, enchanting event brings classic fairytales to life through engaging activities, captivating read alouds from beloved characters, and fun shopping in our Fairytale Marketplace. Cost \$8-\$12, Register at vermontliteracynetwork.com/event-details-registration/once-upon-a-story.

**THE PIG RACE IN GOSHEN.** Saturday, March 1, 11 a.m., Blueberry Hill Outdoor Center. Get ready for the revival of the "Pig Race" — a classic Nordic ski event with a legacy dating back to the 1970s, when it was founded by Tony Clark. Around 7.5km and 15km self-timed "races" (plus a kid's race). Rain or shine, snow or no, the race will go on! Post-race there will be pig and pizza and piñata. Join in celebrating winter fun,

tradition and friendly competition at the Pig Race. Info and registration at blueberryhilltrails.com.

### TRAIL CAMERA WORKSHOP WITH VT FISH AND WILDLIFE IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 1, 1-2:30 p.m., location TBD. Learn how to work trail cameras in this information-filled workshop led by Josh Morse of Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's outreach team. The first half of this workshop will be in a Middlebury College classroom to see footage on a projector from a real trail camera. We will then transition to an outdoor space on campus where Josh will give us a trail camera demo. Free. More info and registration at maltvt.org/events.

### KEVIN KARECKAS IN BRANDON.

Saturday, March 1, 4-6 p.m., Red Clover Ale Co., 43 Center St. Enjoy an eclectic live music set. Selections of this set will be recorded for an upcoming live album release of new originals from Kevin Kareckas. All welcomed. Free.

### EUREKA SHOES IN LINCOLN.

Saturday, March 1, 7:30 p.m., Burnham Hall, 52 E. River Rd. Burnham Presents. Featuring delicious three-part harmonies, other-worldly twin fiddling, and lyrics that will break

your heart and put it back together again better. Doors open at 7 p.m. Homemade refreshments available. Tickets \$20-\$25 sliding scale. More info at burnhampresents.org.

### LC JAZZ "WINTER THAW" IN VERGENNES.

Saturday, March 1, 7:30 p.m., — Rescheduled from Saturday, Feb. 8. — Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. Everyone who reserved a ticket through our online system for Feb. 8 will be automatically moved to the new March 1 date. If you are unable to make that date, please let us know (info@vergennesoperahouse.org) so that we may open the reserved spot to others.

## THURSDAY, MARCH 6

### "JOIN OR DIE" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, March 6, 6 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Join Vermont Public for a 45-minute excerpt of the highly acclaimed 2023 documentary "Join or Die," a film about why you should join a club — and why the fate of America depends on it. A social hour will follow to practice lessons from the film. Free. More info at tinyurl.com/JoinDieTHT.

## FRIDAY, MARCH 7

### OPENING RECEPTION OF

**"PORTRAITURE: UNVEILING IDENTITY" IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, March 7, 4-7 p.m., PhotoPlace Gallery, 3 Park St. This heartfelt photography exhibit

showcases the depth, emotion and personal stories that make each of us unique. Featuring work from talented artists, this collection goes beyond physical appearance to explore the hidden layers of identity and the human experience. Come enjoy an evening of art, conversation, and community as we celebrate the power of photography to connect us and tell our stories.

### PIANIST IYAD SUGHAYER IN

**MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, March 7, 7:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. Acclaimed Jordanian-Palestinian pianist Iyad Sughayer embodies a captivating blend of exceptional skill and profound musicality. A prize-winner with the Young Classical Artists Trust International Auditions, he was named a ClassicFM Rising Star Artist, and "One to Watch" by International Piano Magazine. Tickets: \$25/20/10/5, available at go.middlebury.edu.

## SATURDAY, MARCH 8

**MONTHLY WILDLIFE WALK.** Saturday, March 8, 8-10 a.m. Meet at Otter View Park parking lot, corner of Weybridge St. and Pulp Mill Bridge Rd. Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust invite community members to help survey birds and other wildlife at Otter View and the Hurd Grassland. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome. For more information, call 802-388-6019.

### BOOK CLUB ON THE TAM IN

**MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, March 8, noon-2 p.m., Otter Creek Gorge, Northern Trailhead, Morgan Horse Farm Rd. Join MALT and Ilsley Public Library to discuss "Flight Behavior," by Barbara Kingsolver. We will meet in Otter Creek Gorge underneath an ancient and beloved oak tree (the large oak with a swing), a short walk away from the northern parking lot on Morgan Horse Farm Rd. All ages are welcome. Light refreshments provided. No bathrooms on site; please plan accordingly. Free. Club continues Saturday, March 22. More info and registration at maltvt.org/events.

### WILLOWELL BOOGIE BENEFIT IN

**BRISTOL.** Saturday, March 8, 6 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. The Willowell Foundation's annual benefit dance and silent auction features a cash bar, and the Almendros, a popular Addison County band whose infectious repertoire ranges from rock, country and blues to reggae, ska, calypso and African styles. Tickets are \$10 at the door, children free. Proceeds support the Willowell's scholarship fund, which helps children access local nature-based programming and education.

### AN EVENING OF SONGS AND ARIAS IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 8, 7:30-9 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. Music Department vocal students present a lively evening of songs and arias. More info at middlebury.edu/events/event/songs-and-arias-2.



# UPCOMING MUSIC IN MIDDLEBURY



The Vermont Mandolin Trio, featuring (from left to right) Jamie Masefield, Pat Melvin, Matt Flinner, and Will Patton, will play at Town Hall Theater on Friday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m

COURTESY PHOTO

## Vermont Mandolin Trio warms up the Wintertide series in Middlebury next Friday with special guest

The Vermont Mandolin Trio, comprised of Grammy-nominated Matt Flinner, Jamie Masefield, and Will Patton, will join Town Hall Theater's Wintertide Music Series on Friday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m. The trio brings together three of Vermont's finest mandolinists for a rare evening of bluegrass, jazz, and roots music in the unique (and very happy sounding) setting of three mandolins. Joined by journeyman bassist Pat Melvin, the group performs music of Bill Monroe, Django Reinhardt, J.S. Bach and everything in between, all with the flair of virtuosity and originality.

Masefield, Patton and Flinner come from quite different musical backgrounds, each of which can be heard in what has become their shared sound. Masefield's origin is in traditional New Orleans Jazz. Between 1996 and 2006, Masefield toured the country with his group, the Jazz Mandolin Project. Today, mandolin is oftentimes more associated with bluegrass and Appalachia but of course it's a key component of jazz as well and Masefield reminds his audience of this with his lively

and captivating jazz sound. Besides touring his music, Masefield is also a dry stone mason living in Monkton, and his projects can be seen all around the northeast.

Patton started on the piano as a child but took up strings in his teenage years, quickly playing for a range of genres: folk, bluegrass, jazz. He graduated from Middlebury College having found a deep connection to the green mountains. Despite this love for Vermont, Patton has traveled far during his music career, gaining influence from time spent in Brazil, the Caribbean, and Paris. He has collaborated many times with Parisian guitarist Ninine Garcia winning this dynamic duo critical acclaim both at home and abroad.

Grammy-nominated Flinner has been playing banjo and mandolin from the start and dedicated himself to Bluegrass from a young age. Living in Ripton, Flinner has spent the last several decades of his life touring with the Matt Flinner Trio and the Modern Mandolin quartet. He also writes musical compositions, some of which have

## MORE TUNES

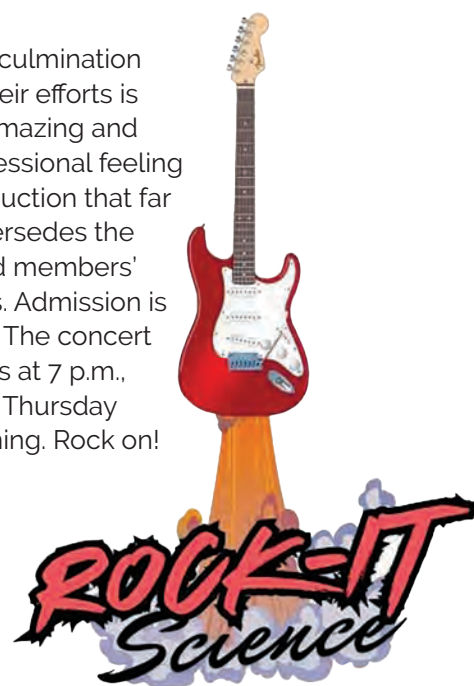
### ROCK-IT ON OVER TO THE TOWN HALL THEATER NEXT THURSDAY, FEB. 27

Calling lovers of rock; connoisseurs of punk! Come to Town Hall Theater on Thursday Feb. 27, to see an epic rock concert brought together by Middlebury teens and led by musician, Clint Bierman.

Bierman and members of rock band The Grift, have run the Rock-It Science workshop for over 12 years. Throughout the week of February break, Middlebury youth come together and break out into bands where they write original songs as well as rehearse classic covers before performing them on Thursday and recording them on Friday. The band members work together to develop their identity, push their capabilities, and make songs that reflect their personalities.

During the week, every corner of the Town Hall Theater is flooded with the sounds of rock music being created. Bruce Springsteen can be heard from the office, Green Day can be heard from the bathroom, and originals lyrics are flowing from all sides.

The culmination of their efforts is an amazing and professional feeling production that far supersedes the band members' ages. Admission is free. The concert starts at 7 p.m., next Thursday evening. Rock on!



been performed by the Ying Quartet and the Nashville Chamber Orchestra.

The Vermont Mandolin Trio will be an exciting spectacle of music, sure to bring something new to audiences' ears. Tickets for next Friday's show are \$15-\$30, and are available at townhalltheater.org or by calling 802-382-9222. Lounge-style table seating or traditional riser seating available.



# PUZZLES

sponsored by SPARROW ART SUPPLY

## ACROSS

- 1. Tropical Asian plant
- 5. Yankees' slugger Judge
- 10. Helps to preserve food
- 12. Plant disease
- 14. One who predicts
- 16. Equally
- 18. Burundian franc
- 19. Pouch
- 20. Arizona city
- 22. Surround
- 23. Hard, heavy timber
- 25. Witnessed
- 26. They --
- 27. French river
- 28. A way to drink
- 30. Small

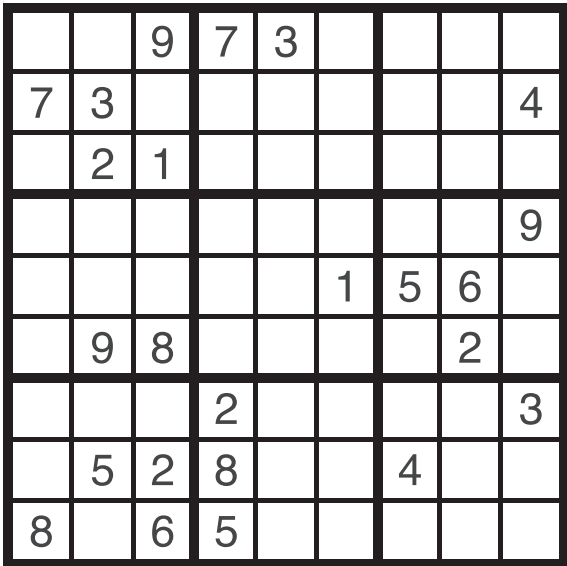
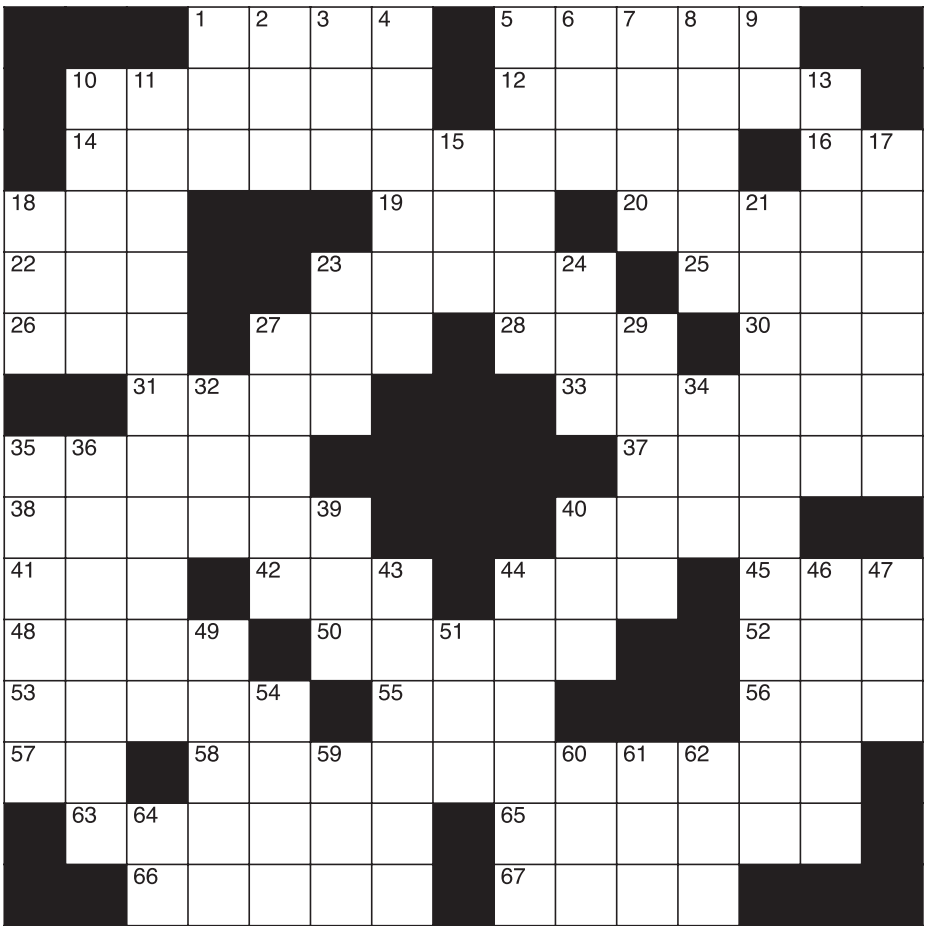
constellation

- 31. Peruse a written work
- 33. Type of hound
- 35. Plant of the goosefoot family
- 37. Evade or escape
- 38. A way to confine
- 40. Volcanic crater
- 41. Weekday
- 42. Women's service organization (abbr.)
- 44. Local area network
- 45. Sensory receptor
- 48. Posted
- 50. Tibetan pastry
- 52. Licensed for Wall Street
- 53. Very willing
- 55. Golf score
- 56. Consume
- 57. Touchdown

- 58. Tends to remind
- 63. In a way, smoothed
- 65. Poke holes in the ground
- 66. Herbaceous plants
- 67. Taiwanese river

## DOWN

- 1. Body art
- 2. Boxing's GOAT
- 3. Film for posterity (abbr.)
- 4. Prayer
- 5. Calculating machine
- 6. Keyboard key
- 7. Outburst
- 8. Man-eating giants
- 9. New Hampshire
- 10. Type of sword



## 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

- 11. Counting
- 13. Pants style
- 15. Political action committee
- 17. U.S. government legislative branch
- 18. Civil Rights Act component
- 21. Contractors take one
- 23. Spanish soldier
- 24. A person's brother or sister
- 27. Expressed pleasure
- 29. Song of praise
- 32. Shock treatment
- 34. Patti Hearst's captors
- 35. Counteract
- 36. Goes over again
- 39. Popular Dodge truck
- 40. Male adult
- 43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
- 44. Rope used to lasso
- 46. Become less
- intense
- 47. Subway rodent
- 49. Lead alloy
- 51. Japanese honorific title
- 54. Advise someone
- 59. Famous NYC museum
- 60. Ocean
- 61. Cathode-ray tube
- 62. Cologne
- 64. It starts with these two

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 12.



44 Main St  
Middlebury, VT 05753  
(802) 989-7225

Tuesday-Saturday  
10:30 AM - 5:30 PM

info@sparrowartsupply.com  
sparrowartsupply.com  
@sparrowartsupply

### MAKE ART? MAKE FRIENDS!

Casual Art Hangout with the Collective  
Tuesday, February 25 @ 5:30 PM

Join us after-hours for an exclusive night of creativity and camaraderie. Bring your current project, meet fellow artists, and enjoy making art together. No pressure, just fun.

**ONLY \$20 A MONTH!**  
Sign up at [sparrowartsupply.com](https://sparrowartsupply.com)

Don't art alone!

ATTN: ARTISTS!





# ASK A MASTER GARDENER

## THE BEWITCHING WITCH HAZEL TREE

**Y**ou may be familiar with its name from the bottle of astringent found in your home medicine cabinet or for sale on pharmacy shelves near rubbing alcohol and hydrogen peroxide. What you may not know is that the leaves, bark and twigs from American witch hazel, a small native tree, are used in the manufacture of this product.

BY **DEBORAH J. BENOIT**

Historically, witch hazel was used by Native Americans and, later, colonists for a variety of medicinal treatments.

To a gardener, witch hazel is something else entirely. Depending on the variety, it might be the very first plant to bloom in your garden in the spring or provide the very last flowers in the fall. There are four species of witch hazel.

American witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) is native to the eastern United States, ranging northward to Nova Scotia in Canada and south to Florida, and to the west from the Great Lakes south to Texas. Also called "common witch hazel," it is a deciduous small tree or shrub, generally 6-15 feet in height though sometimes as tall as 20 feet. Its leaves turn yellow in autumn with fragrant yellow flowers blooming after its leaves fall.

Witch hazel's seeds mature the following fall and take a year after that to germinate. American witch hazel is hardy in United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Plant Hardiness Zones 3-8.

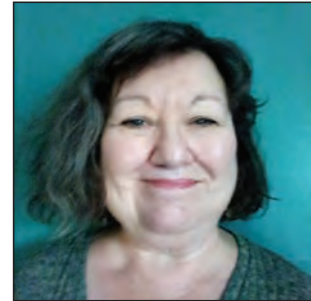


Witch hazel with its clusters of vibrant, four-petaled, spidery flowers is sure to brighten any garden when in bloom.

PHOTO / DEBORAH J. BENOIT

Ozark witch hazel (*Hamamelis vernalis*), also called vernal witch hazel, is native to the southern and central United States. Unlike American witch hazel, Ozark witch hazel blooms in late winter or early spring.

Its fragrant, spidery yellow flowers can be seen January to April before its foliage unfurls. Its seeds mature in early fall and require



Deborah J. Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from North Adams, Mass., who is part of the Bennington County Chapter.

cold stratification over the winter, before germinating in the spring. This small tree or shrub grows 6-10 feet high and is hardy in USDA Zones 4-8.

Japanese witch hazel (*Hamamelis japonica*) is native to Japan and blooms in the spring for up to four weeks. It grows 10-15 feet high with mildly fragrant yellow flowers. Its foliage turns yellow, red or purple in the fall. It's hardy in USDA Zones 5-8.

Chinese witch hazel (*Hamamelis mollis*) is native to China and is also hardy in USDA Zones 5-8. It grows 10-20 feet high. Its fragrant yellow flowers appear January to March.

In addition to the four species of witch hazel, there are numerous spring-blooming hybrid varieties (*Hamamelis x intermedia*) available that are crosses between Japanese witch hazel and Chinese witch hazel. Hardiness varies, so be sure to check the hardiness zone for the cultivar you are interested in.

Whatever type of witch hazel you choose, you can expect a show of bright yellow (or orange or red) clusters of four-petaled, spidery flowers to brighten your garden when there is little other color. For spring-blooming varieties, leaves will unfurl after the flowers have faded.

Plant witch hazel in light, richly organic, well-drained soil in full sun or partial shade. As with any new plant, be sure it's adequately watered until it's established.

Overall, witch hazel is easy to grow and low maintenance. It can serve as a focal point in a garden or as a stand-alone feature.

If you already have a spring-blooming witch hazel in your garden, pruning a few small branches in February, bringing them indoors, and forcing them to bloom can provide an early preview of spring. You can find information about forcing branches at [go.uvm.edu/forcing-branches](http://go.uvm.edu/forcing-branches).

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### Paws To Consider

with Dr. Bri Letaw, Medical Director,  
Bristol Animal Hospital



#### Q: What are common signs of breathing trouble in a cat?



A: Cats can be very secretive animals when it comes to illness. If your cat has stopped eating, hiding, fast breathing, using its abdomen to breathe, has more than 35 breaths per minute at rest, open mouth breathing or slightly purple gum color then I would call your veterinarian or go to the ER immediately. Breathing issues can be life threatening if not addressed in a timely manner.

Bristol Animal Hospital, 167 Monkton Rd., Bristol  
(802) 588-7387 • <https://bristolvtvet.com>



# Pet of the Week



## Meet Finch!



Finch is a 10-year-old goldendoodle.

He is very attached to his favorite person in the whole world, Tracey, and ignores almost everyone else. He hardly eats unless she is around.

He loves going for walks in the woods twice a day and barking/bragging to the neighbor dogs whenever he gets a special dinner treat.

He can't believe it when people pass by without wanting to meet him, they must not know how soft he is.

He misses his favorite wrestling buddy, Baxter, who went to college this past fall.

Jay Harrington  
Ripton

## Pets In Need

### HOMEWARD BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society

#### Agnes

**Agnes** is a lovely 1-year-old. She enjoys attention and just wants to be pet and held.



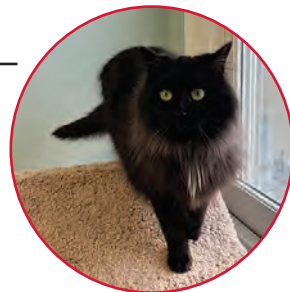
#### Ellis

**Ellis** is a sweet floppy 9-month-old. He enjoys being pet and likes to sleep in his cat tower. He gets along with other cats, but we are unsure about dogs.



#### Madame Vide

**Madame Vide** is an outgoing girl, 1.5 years old. She is very friendly and loves being pet. She gets along with other cats, but we are unsure about dogs.



#### Spade

**Spade** is a shy but sweet boy, 10 months old. He warms up with some gentle petting and will roll over to show you his belly! He gets along with other cats, but we are unsure about dogs.



#### Tash

**Tash** is a fluffy boy full of love, just 9 months old. He is super friendly and loves attention. He gets along with other cats, but we are unsure about dogs.



**Homeward Bound**  
Addison County's Humane Society



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236 Boardman Street | Middlebury, VT



# COMMUNITY DANCE EVENTS



SCAN FOR  
THE FULL  
SCHEDULE

## Come learn about ‘Muslimness and Masculinity’ through dance, Feb. 26

The Carol Rifelj Faculty Lecture Series presents a talk on Wednesday, Feb. 26, from 4:30-6 p.m., discussing “From ‘Arab Street’ to Stage: Muslimness and Masculinity in Maghrebi Contemporary Dance.” This lecture will be held in the Franklin Environmental Center, The Orchard-Hillcrest room 103, 531 College Street in Middlebury, and is free and open to the public.

Over the past two decades contemporary dance in North Africa has emerged as a fusion form of street vocabulary, bboy virtuosity, traditional Sufi ritual, Orientalist trope, and

postmodern aesthetic. This talk will focus on how shifting notions of Muslim corporeality in the region intersect with gender performativity, local political economies, and transnational artistic production networks. Through case studies of works by choreographers Abou Lagraa, Khalid Benghrib and Hervé Koubi, fieldwork research illuminates how dancers navigate the possibilities and constraints of artistic aspiration and their expressions of religious identity both on and off stage.

For more information visit [middlebury.edu/events](http://middlebury.edu/events).

### WEST AFRICAN DANCE & DRUM CLASS CONTINUES, OPEN TO ALL!

Let the beat of the drum move your body. Participants will learn songs, rhythms, dances, and culture as we embark on a journey of dances from the African diaspora.

Class is accompanied by live musicians to help participants understand the communication between the music and the dance.

Open to Middlebury College students, faculty, staff and community members age 13 and up. Classes will be held Mondays at 4:30 p.m., in Wilson Hall at the McCullough Student Center in Middlebury.

## CHALLENGE: Tell an original story using only two sentences

For a third consecutive year, the Children’s Literacy Foundation (CLiF) is challenging young writers to tell an original story using only two sentences. The theme of this year’s contest is “Love,” and entrants are encouraged to write about anything that evokes that sentiment for them.

CLiF’s Two-Sentence Story Contest is free to enter and open to all Vermont and New Hampshire children ages 12 and younger. The winning submission in each of four age groups will be awarded a five-book mini-library curated to the recipient’s reading level and interests.

“We see this contest as a really fun exercise

“WE SEE THIS CONTEST AS A  
REALLY FUN EXERCISE THAT  
ENCOURAGES CHILDREN TO  
THINK CREATIVELY.”

— CLiF Executive Director Laura Rice

that encourages children to think creatively,” CLiF Executive Director Laura Rice said. “Writing is, of course, an essential literacy skill, and we love reading the imaginative stories the kids come up with!”

Last year’s contest, held in the weeks leading

up to the total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, asked children to “tell a story that takes place in the sky.” CLiF received over 900 entries. In 2023, the inaugural Two-Sentence Story Contest challenged young writers to “tell a story about winter,” and drew over 700 entries.

For full contest guidelines, as well as free supplementary materials for educators and caregivers, please visit [clifonline.org/clifs-2025-two-sentence-story-contest](http://clifonline.org/clifs-2025-two-sentence-story-contest). Entries must be received by email or postmarked by March 14. Email submissions to [communications@clifonline.org](mailto:communications@clifonline.org) or addressed them to CLiF Two-Sentence Story Contest, 3579 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677.

# PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

FEB. 20, 2025

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41 WEST MAIN STREET, VERGENNES  
\$519,000

# THE HOME

A LOOK AT ADDISON COUNTY PROPERTIES FOR SALE

## A special place in the heart of the Little City

Extra! Extra! If you would like to be in the heart of the Little City of Vergennes then this home is for you. The entire property has been upgraded with a sense of style and purpose. There are multiple gathering areas to accomodate everyone's needs. The loft area is the perfect place to escape to a home office. A sunny living room with a gas fireplace and beautiful built-ins graces the front of the home offering a cozy spot for reading or intimate conversations away from the open kitchen/dining/sitting area. The kitchen is a chef's dream and a focal point for family gatherings. Then at the end of the day, retreat to the primary bedroom with en suite that offers a spa-like bath. This floor also offers 2 additional bedrooms and main bath. The lower level of the home boasts 2 multipurpose rooms; and topping it all off, the home is energy efficient with low maintenance solar. The great functionality of the home carries into the fenced in yard being well thought out with a patio/ fire pit, hot tub, green house, shed and garden space. Park you car and walk to UTC/Collins, Otter Creek Falls, incredible eateries, shops, recreational parks and all the Little City has to offer. This is a must see property!

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*This week's property is managed by Berkshire  
Hathaway HomeServices. More info at [vtregroup.com](http://vtregroup.com).*







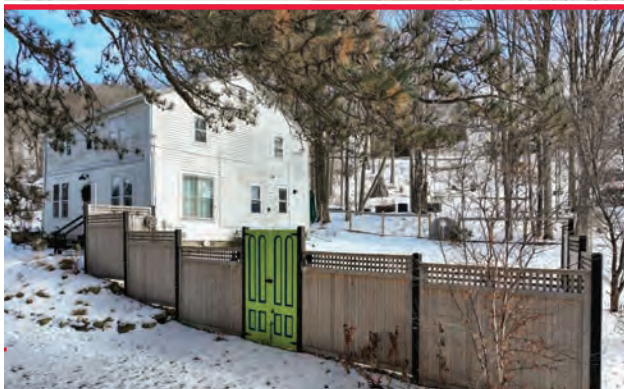
**NEW HAVEN *NEW LISTING!***  
**606 DOG TEAM ROAD**  
MLS #5029519 | \$849,000  
3 BD | 3 BA | 2630 SF | 10.79 AC

Thoughtful design, gracious spaces and incredible westerly views give this property much of what you've been looking for in your next home! Large, welcoming entry, 9 ft. ceilings and open lines of sight through primary living spaces. Light-filled primary suite with gas fireplace, jetted tub, and huge walk-in closet. Abundant closets throughout, plus a huge insulated basement ready to finish (or make it into a workshop or exercise area). Direct entry from the garage into the home, keeping you out of the elements! Gardens, decks, patios, and gorgeous views of the sunset over the Adirondack Mountains.



**MIDDLEBURY *NEW LISTING!***  
**1282 PAINTER ROAD**  
MLS #5029109 | \$449,000  
2 BD | 1 BA | 1261 SF | 0.96 AC

A well-cared for property just outside of Middlebury, ready for you to move right in! The standing seam roof, newer windows and fiber cement siding are low maintenance features. Through an inviting eat in kitchen with yellow birch cabinets, granite counters and stainless appliances, access a fantastic screened in porch, with deck beyond—great for warmer weather entertaining and relaxing! Attached one-car garage leads you through a mudroom into the home. Outside, a spacious yard and a yurt (perfect for a studio, office, music or meditation space!).



**MIDDLEBURY *NEW LISTING!***  
**73 NORTH PLEASANT STREET**  
MLS #5029096 | \$385,000  
4 BD | 3 BA | 2030 SF | 0.29 ACRES

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## EXHIBITS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

**Wagner."** Wagner combines free artistic exploration with his more deliberate designer's eye to create balanced compositions that are simultaneously simple and complex. On view through March 15,



See Molly Doe Wensberg's oil paintings in "Winter's Gold" before the exhibit closes this weekend at Edgeater Gallery on the Green in Middlebury.

COURTESY IMAGES

### K. GRANT FINE ART

37 Green St, Vergennes

For more info visit [kgrantfineart.com](http://kgrantfineart.com).

**"Mortal Coil,"** featuring works by Misoo Bang, Austin Furtak-Cole, Suzy Spence, Kalin Thomas, Mollie Ward, and Corrine Yonce. This six-person show explores the human experience through the lens of self-possession, connection, and vulnerability, all rooted in the physicality of the body. An opening reception will be held on March 1, from 6-9 p.m. On view through April 26. .

### MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

72 Porter Field Road, Middlebury

For more info visit [middlebury.edu/museum/exhibitions](http://middlebury.edu/museum/exhibitions)

**"Rania Matar: SHE."** The photographs of Lebanese Palestinian American artist Rania Matar — captured through car windows, in abandoned buildings, snow-strewn fields, or floating in the Mediterranean Sea — tell the stories of young women through portraits

taken throughout Lebanon, France, Egypt, and the United States. An opening reception will be held Thursday, Feb. 13, at 5:30 p.m., in the lower lobby of Mahaney Arts Center, Olin C. Robison Concert Hall. On view Feb. 14-April 20.

### "MuseumLAB: Teaching with the

**Collection."** Each year, professors in departments ranging from Classics to Economics teach hundreds of students in the largest classroom on campus: the Middlebury College Museum of Art. Discussing art produced throughout history and around the globe offers students perspective on the topic at hand — and space to reflect on their own place in today's complex world. On view Jan. 17-April 20.

### PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street, Middlebury

For more info visit [photoplacegallery.com](http://photoplacegallery.com).

**"Monochrome"** explores the beauty and powerful 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.

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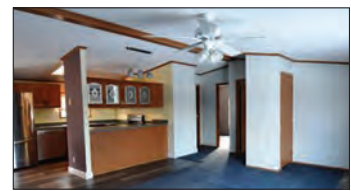
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\$395,000

MLS: 5028699



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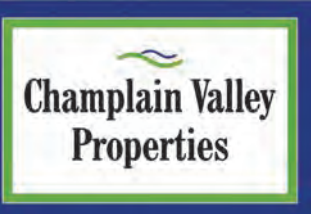
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