



Small school

North Branch School students write and stage a “Big City” play. See Arts+Leisure.



In the swing

The Tiger boys’ tennis team got ready for the season by taking on an MIT adult squad. See Page 1B.



Prayer power

Check out our special section with extensive information about local places of worship.

ADDISON COUNTY

INDEPENDENT

Libraries face Trump’s budget ax



SATURDAY’S TRUMP PROTESTS in hundreds of places around the country included this protester on Main Street in Vergennes pushing back against the president’s executive order defunding libraries. Independent photo/John S. McCright

Local institutions seen under threat

By ADDISON INDEPENDENT STAFF

ADDISON COUNTY — Local libraries, which have become the latest target in President Donald Trump’s war on free expression and sharing of ideas, are bracing for the loss of federal funding.

A recent executive order likely will have a significant effect on the Vermont Department of Libraries, which supports 183 local public libraries, as well as public school libraries throughout the state. That department gets a huge chunk of its budget from federal funds.

It uses those funds to heavily subsidize the inter-library loan program, programming grants, training, online research database access, ABLE Library (materials for the blind or sight-impaired), among many other services

at most, if not all, of Addison County’s other libraries, including Shoreham’s Platt Memorial Library.

“If we lose those services,” said Platt Library Director Abby Adams, “what we’re able to provide for patrons is definitely more of a 20th century library experience, rather than the 21st century experience our communities have come to expect.”

Katie Male-Riordan, director of Lawrence Memorial Library in Bristol, says every library will be hurt when Vermont’s state library department is defunded.

“The services provided by the State Department of Libraries are not a redundancy, they are absolutely critical to a library ecosystem that keeps our communities informed, connected

“When you have an informed citizenry then you have a thriving democracy, and you have an informed citizenry when you have libraries filled with books and databases.”

— Mary Danko

(See Libraries, Page 9A)

College taking new steps to tackle its deficit

By MARIN HOWELL

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury College last week announced several new steps it will take to balance its budget, including limiting employee benefits, offering a financial incentive for Vermont employees to retire early and growing undergraduate enrollment in the coming years.

College officials announced those and other steps in an April 2 letter addressed to the college community and signed by Interim President Steve Snyder, Executive Vice President and Provost Michelle McCauley and Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer David Provost.

The letter noted the college is projecting a \$14.1 million deficit this fiscal year, up from a projection of \$8.9 million in October. The letter just arrived before the announcement

of trade tariffs caused stock prices to plunge and increased financial uncertainties for the economy at large.

“We’ve concluded that it will take new — and in some ways difficult — steps to shore up Middlebury’s finances, building on work we’ve already been doing. Your dedication to this effort, resourcefulness in figuring out how to do more with less, and patience have brought us far. But the reality is that we have further to go,” college officials wrote. “We must finally put Middlebury on its strongest financial foundation so we can

“To say it as clearly as possible, our challenge is this: We haven’t been able to balance our books despite significant progress in how we do business. We simply must get ourselves to the balanced budget.”

— Middlebury College officials

continue to advance our mission to best serve our students, our workforce, higher education, and society at large.”

Middlebury Political Science Professor Bert Johnson said he’s heard a range of reactions to the budget letter, “from grim acceptance to feelings of betrayal and anger.”

“Many faculty and staff feel that we’ve been asked to ‘do more with less’ (per the wording of the letter) for years, and feel exhausted by the further belt-tightening announced in the letter and the prospect of even more cuts in the future,”

(See College, Page 13A)



The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is receiving reports of bears coming out of their dens as the weather warms. Now’s the time proactive steps to help prevent bears from looking for food in your yards and neighborhoods.

Among other things, you should take down your birdfeeder, make your garbage inaccessible and dispose of it frequently, demand bear resistant dumpsters for your community, keep your compost in a sturdy tumbler or bin, use electric fencing to keep chickens and bees safe, and clean your grill after every use. For added effectiveness, keep your grill in a secure outbuilding between

(See By the way, Page 9A)

Lawmakers talk education funding

By JOHN FLOWERS

SALISBURY — The Vermont House was expected to vote this week on a bill H.454, House Education Committee blueprint for revamping the financing and delivery of public-school services.

It’s a vision that — among other things — contemplates a system in which school districts are reduced from the current 119 to 10-25, a more aggressive move toward regional middle and high schools, and financed through a foundation formula tailored to proven educational programming at individual schools.

Rep. Peter Conlon, D-Cornwall and chair of the House Education Committee, and Rep. Charlie

(See Legislature, Page 13A)



MIDDLEBURY’S HOLLY Puterbaugh, left, and Lois Farnham were among three Vermont couples whose successful lawsuit led to Vermont’s landmark civil unions law, and ultimately, full marriage rights for same-sex couples. The two women this year are helping mark the 25th anniversary of the law. Independent photo/Steve James

‘We do’

Pioneers helped forge path to gay marriage in Vt. 25 years ago

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — There are more than 744,000 same-sex married couples in the United States, and each one owes a debt of gratitude to two endearing, persistent and empathetic women now living their best lives at the Middlebury retirement community.

Holly Puterbaugh, 78, and Lois Farnham, 80, were among three-same sex couples who in 2000 became the face of Vermont’s groundbreaking civil unions law. It was the first domino to fall in a national movement — both in the courts and legislatures — that led to same-sex marriage in Massachusetts in 2004, Vermont in 2009, and culminating in

(See Civil unions, Page 8A)

“We said, ‘We love each other, just like you love your wife or husband.’”

— Holly Puterbaugh

Eastview retirement



Honk for Hands Off

MOTORISTS COMING THROUGH Brandon Saturday during the “Hands Off” protests on Center Street were greeted by hundreds of posters expressing distaste for the Trump Administration. Nearly 800 people were in Brandon. See more photos on Pages 4A and 10A. Photo by Jonathan Blake

Sugarmakers see a more traditional season

By MARIN HOWELL

ADDISON COUNTY — A proper Vermont winter has led to a more traditional maple season for some local sugarmakers this year.

Producers across Addison County said they’ve had average or above-average seasons, with some noting this year saw lower sugar content, heavy snow and sap starting to flow later than in previous years.

“Just when you think Mother Nature couldn’t throw you another curve ball, she did again,” Don

Gale of Lincoln’s Twin Maple Sugarworks told the *Independent*. “This year started late, later than usual, cold, lots of snow, deep

(See Maple syrup, Page 2A)

Expansion of Panton farm raises questions

Residents voice concerns, support

By MARIN HOWELL

PANTON — The Panton Town Hall was packed this past Thursday, when over 60 residents gathered to voice concerns or show support for the Vorsteveld Farm, which has applied to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture for authorization to grow its operation.

The April 3 public informational meeting was hosted by the Agency as part of the process intended to give residents a chance to learn more about the proposed project.

During the hour-long meeting, several attendees asked about the proposal and shared worries

(See Vorsteveld, Page 15A)

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Groundbreaking set for Cornwall rec park

By JOHN FLOWERS

CORNWALL — The hard work of one of the most laser-focused ad hoc committees in Cornwall’s history will begin to bear tangible fruit this Saturday, April 12, when the first spades of earth are turned on the highly anticipated Cornwall Outdoor Recreation Area.

CORA, as it’s called, is a two-acre parcel just south of the community’s elementary school that will eventually offer pollinator gardens, an ADA-compliant walking path, pickleball and tennis courts, and other amenities.

As previously reported by the *Independent*, members of the CORA Committee had originally targeted last summer for groundbreaking. But that was before the volunteer group learned the CORA blueprint would trigger a state-mandated stormwater remediation project. This required the group to hire an engineer and company to design and install a stormwater system that will funnel accumulating rainfall through pipes to two catchment basins, noted CORA Committee member Stan Grzyb.

“We have 100% clay,” Grzyb said of the CORA site. “The remedies required by the state were astronomical. The bottom line is, the combination of the remedies and (engineering) services are approximately \$100,000. So we are in the process again of doing another major fundraiser.”

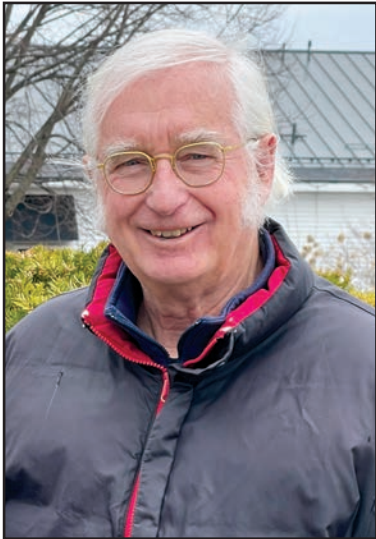
Clay soils, pervasive in Addison County, tend to pool — rather than absorb — stormwater.

Grzyb and CORA Committee leader Gail Isenberg believe the extra work will be worth it. The stormwater diversion should increase the longevity of the park amenities, such as a walking path that will be tailored to users of all abilities — including those reliant on walkers and wheelchairs.

“That stormwater assessment in the long run will be very helpful because of the placement of the property, the soil, and the fact that we’re building courts,” Isenberg said. “We’ve heard from other parts of the state where they’ve not done this, that within a year or two, those courts had started to ripple and be destroyed.



GAIL ISENBERG



STAN GRZYP

Ultimately this is a good thing; it’s just disappointing that it’s affecting our timing and our budget.”

The CORA project had originally been estimated at \$350,000. The new forecast is \$450,000-\$500,000. The seven-member CORA Committee has redoubled its fundraising efforts and now has a roughly \$100,000 gap to fill, according to Grzyb.

The committee hasn’t only relied on donations.

Last year, the group used \$21,000 in local gifts to leverage a \$40,000 grant through the Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development. The Middlebury Tennis Club lobbied in a \$7,000 gift, to go along with another \$70,000 from Cornwall’s (See Cornwall, Page 3A)



Let the transformation begin

DEMOLITION BEGAN AT Ilisley Public Library the week of March 24 in preparation for the library’s extensive rehabilitation and expansion project. The tear-down work is slated to finish up by the end of April, when new construction and renovation will begin.

Independent photos/Steve James



Orwell voters to field revised school budget

By JOHN FLOWERS

ORWELL — Orwell voters will go to the polls on April 15 to consider a revised fiscal year 2026 Slate Valley Unified Union School District (SVUUSD) that is \$463,256 less than the spending plan voters rejected, 1,181-720, on Town Meeting Day.

The SVUUSD delivers Prek-12 public education to students in Orwell, Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven, Hubbardton and West Haven. District voters on March 4 rejected a proposed FY’26 spending plan of \$32,086,270 that would have resulted in education property tax decreases in four of the district’s six towns — including in Orwell.

Orwell residents will cast ballots on a revised budget of \$31.623

million from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. this coming Tuesday at their town clerk’s office. District officials will hold an informational meeting on the revised budget on Monday, April 14, at 6:30 p.m. in the Fair Haven Union High School Band Room. That meeting will follow an earlier gathering, set for 5 p.m. and also in the band room, during which area legislators will be on hand to provide insights and answer questions on school funding issues.

Revisions to the FY’26 SVUUSD budget proposal for the Tuesday vote include:

- \$200,000 from buildings and grounds.
- \$150,130 that would have allowed SVUUSD to fill a vacant school nurse position. Instead, plans call for the spot to remain vacant and for the Benson and Orwell schools to share a nurse.
- \$84,480 from professional development.
- A \$34,000 savings in the replacement cost for the Castleton School principal.
- \$25,646 earmarked for cafeteria aides.
- \$10,000 from the software line item.

The revised budget of \$31.623 million reflects an \$3.69% increase compared to this year, a 3.61% increase in per-pupil costs, but an education property tax decrease in all six SVUUSD communities.

For Orwell, it would result in an estimated homestead education property tax rate of 93.6 cents per \$100 in property value — a 4.17%

“We know the primary concern is the amount of taxes that folks pay in Vermont.”

— Brooke Olsen-Farrell

drop from this year, according to SVUUSD Superintendent Brooke Olsen-Farrell.

That translates to about \$93.60 less in taxes per \$100,000 of assessed value, or about \$327 less in school taxes on a home assessed at \$350,000. That estimate assumes the homeowner pays on the full assessed value of a home and does not pay based on income.

“My hope would be that this budget would pass,” Olsen-Farrell said during a recent phone interview. “We’ve heard a lot of community concerns over the past couple of weeks and have met individually with a lot of different community members. We know the primary concern is the amount of taxes that folks pay in Vermont.”

At the same time, Olsen-Farrell notes the SVUUSD is currently the 111th-lowest of the state’s 119 school districts in the category of per-pupil spending (\$11,162 per child). The statewide average is \$12,881. Closer to home, the Addison Norwest School District is at \$15,132 and Addison Central is at \$16,099, according to information supplied by the SVUUSD.

“People don’t want to compare us to others, but it’s a statewide funding system, so it absolutely

matters what other districts are spending,” she said.

As has been the case for most districts statewide, some of the major FY’26 budget drivers for the SVUUSD are employee wage increases, an 11.9% jump in health insurance premiums, and a need to address deferred maintenance in buildings and grounds.

Olsen-Farrell pointed to the district’s recent efforts to cut expenses, including reducing the SVUUSD’s footprint from six to five buildings, decreasing staffing by around 30 positions during the past seven years, and consolidating bus routes, technology, maintenance services and athletics.

But the district has also faced tough financial headwinds. Olsen-Farrell noted the SVUUSD has seen an increase in students with greater needs, inadequate mental health supports, and an increase in the need for professional development for inexperienced educators.

She hopes voters support the district’s reduced spending on April 15.

“We think this budget takes into account taxpayers’ feelings as they relate to spending, but we’ve also tried not to totally strip the district of all the resources we need. It’s a balancing act, for sure,” Olsen-Farrell said.

For more information on SVUUSD budget matters, go to tinyurl.com/nfbz58hk.

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

Thanks, Tatiana!

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- all the Otters & friends



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Apr 9 - Apr 15

Sears to leave Salisbury principal job, will reprise role as a teacher at MUMS

By JOHN FLOWERS
SALISBURY — Longtime Addison Central School District educator Bjarki Sears later this spring will see his career as an educator come full circle. On June 1, he'll officially step down as principal of Salisbury Community School and reprise his prior vocation as a secondary school classroom teacher.

"To the community of Salisbury: I hope you have felt my genuine enjoyment of our time together and our interactions. I have been proud of my responsibilities towards you and have tried to honor them well," Sears wrote in a recent email to the Salisbury community announcing his decision. "To the faculty and staff: I would just say (for now) that I hope you have felt my genuine admiration of, and support for, the great work you do. I have learned so much from you. I also appreciate so much how you accepted me and supported me from the beginning and are such a team. I look forward to saying more over time."



BJARKI SEARS, PRINCIPAL of both the Salisbury and Ripton elementary schools, will leave those posts later this spring to resume his career as a Social Studies teacher at Middlebury Union Middle School.

Sears this fall will resume teaching a social studies class called "Individuals and Societies" — this time at Middlebury Union Middle School. He previously taught that course for 16 years at Middlebury Union High School.

Sears interrupted his teaching career in 2022 after becoming intrigued with school administration. He successfully applied to fill the Salisbury Community School principal vacancy that year after veteran Principal Fernanda Canales stepped down.

He became a much-liked and well-respected leader — so much so that the district recruited him to simultaneously serve as Ripton Elementary School principal after Megan Cheresnick left the post suddenly on Sept. 16, 2024.

Ultimately, Sears could become a brief but significant historical footnote in Ripton. Since Ripton Elementary is slated to be shuttered indefinitely this fall due to declining enrollment, Sears could become known as its last principal. The ACSD board will spend the next year weighing the future of public schooling in Ripton.

"I'm sure it is small solace, but I want you to know that from (Ripton Elementary Associate Principal) Roxanne (Greene) and my perspectives, we are committed to making sure that the rest of this school year is filled with celebrations, opportunities to practice and honor traditions,

and chances for our RES students to connect with their new schools and communities, especially Salisbury," Sears stated in an April 1 email to Ripton residents.

While Sears has found his time as a school administrator rewarding, he's felt a tug, of late, back into the trenches of public education.

"I have really missed being a teacher — missed it enough to make me willing to leave a really awesome job at an amazing place, with the most outstanding colleagues a person could ever ask for," Sears said.

"Being a principal has been an honor, and it has granted me an incredible sense of responsibility and community," he added. "But for me, being a teacher is a lot of — for lack of a perfect word — fun, and I'm really excited to get back to it. I am also excited to join MUMS, and to be a part of all the good things they are doing."

Sears's ACSD resume includes stints as MUHS Social Studies Department coordinator (2010-2020), and service on the MUHS Commencement, Scheduling and National Honor Society Selection committees.

Prior to joining the MUHS faculty, he served as a paraeducator at both Mary Hogan

Elementary School in Middlebury and at Twinfield Union School in Marshfield. Sears's time at Mary Hogan included work at the school's Success Center, a program for children experiencing emotional difficulties.

Sears gave a shout-out to his current and future students.

"It's pretty cool to think that I will see many of you very soon at MUMS," he stated in his job-switch announcement. "I'd like to think you'll be excited by the possibility that I might be your teacher. I know I think it will be pretty neat. I'm very proud to have been your principal, and to see the growth you've made in just a few years. We'll have a fun end of the year together."

Michaela Wisell, principal of MUMS, is looking forward to having Sears on board.

"We feel so lucky to have Bjarki joining our school community in the fall. Bjarki has great energy, is insightful and reflective and knows students and our community well. Bjarki's spark for teaching is contagious and evident in his day-to-day work. We feel grateful for the experience that he will bring to our Individuals and Society Department and our school."

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

"For me, being a teacher is a lot of — for lack of a perfect word — fun, and I'm really excited to get back to it."

— Bjarki Sears

Café Provence chef stabbed in his own restaurant

BRANDON — Chef Robert Barral, who founded and runs Café Provence in Brandon, is back home from the hospital after being attacked by a man with a knife in the popular restaurant on Saturday.

After being closed for several days, the 11 Center St. bistro was due to reopen on Wednesday.

"Chef is recovering at home and eager to heal and get back to doing what he loves!" said a Monday post on the Café Provence Facebook page.

The restaurant posted a Facebook photo of Barral smiling as he left UVM Medical Center. The post drew more than 200 responses from well-wishers. A typical one looked like this post from Barbara Ebling: "Photo of the year! This just made a whole town (and legions of fans beyond) breathe a huge sigh of relief! Welcome home, Chef!"

It is easy to see why so many people were worried about Barral. Six or seven cruisers from Vermont State Police and Brandon Police rushed to Café Provence at around 4:30 p.m. this past Saturday, April 5. Police say that a former employee, Jozef I. Eller, 32, of Hancock, came to the restaurant and stabbed his former boss. The business had previously got a court order to keep Eller off the premises.

Barral, 71, suffered wounds to his head, left shoulder, left arm, left hand and his right finger, according to VTDigger.org. He was taken by ambulance to Rutland Regional



CHEF ROBERT BARRAL of Café Provence early this week is happy to be leaving UVM Medical Center, where he was treated for wounds suffered in a stabbing at his Brandon restaurant.

Medical Center for wounds that were initially believed to be non-life-threatening. Then he was taken to UVM Medical Center.

Troopers did not give a motive for the attack. They simply report that following the assault, Eller fled the scene driving north on Route 7 in a white, 2017 Ford F-150 pickup truck. Authorities put out a call for the public's help

in locating him. They released photos that they said were of Eller stabbing Barral.

Eller was jailed without bail and was arraigned Monday in Rutland Superior Court, criminal division, on charges of attempted second-degree murder and violating a no-trespassing order. VTDigger reported that Eller pleaded not guilty.

Cornwall

(Continued from Page 2A)
cut of American Rescue Plan Act money.

The biggest project assist has come through the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) Community Grant Program, which will reimburse CORA expenses up to \$248,231. Local officials have been told that the VOREC grant is expected to survive the myriad cuts to federal grants and programs currently being pushed by the Trump Administration.

So what's the revised opening

date for CORA? Organizers are cautiously pointing to October, but stressed the recreation amenities will be phased in.

Tentatively, phase one will include the stormwater system, installing a kiosk, building the ADA-compliant walking trail, planting the pollinator garden and constructing the tennis and pickleball courts.

Phase two will includes building the picnic pavilion, a bocce ball court, a horseshoe/cornhole pitch, and paving an ADA-compliant parking lot. Ongoing planting

of gardens and trees will also continue during this phase.

A phase three calls for installation of exercise stations along the walking trail, and lighting.

This Saturday's groundbreaking is slated for 11 a.m. at the CORA site, and is expected to last around 30 minutes, according to Isenberg.

To learn more about CORA or to contribute to the project, go to coravt.org.

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



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Editorials

Calm, not chaos, needed when changing Vt’s education system

As Vermont tackles education reform, two visions have emerged: a radical consolidation of the current 52 school districts to 5 large regional districts as proposed by Gov. Scott and Education Secretary Zoie Sanders, or a more cautious step-by-step process outlined by two legislative committees that will be rolled out over the next four years. The differences in the plans are significant, yet the goals are similar and both sides agree to a move to a foundation formula for funding. While Scott has labeled his plan a “bold” proposal, Rep. Peter Conlon, D-Cornwall, chair of the House Education Committee, said his committee’s approach “embraces change and transformation, but at a pace that can actually be achieved without crippling our public school system and leaving kids behind. It is hard work that needs to be done carefully and methodically.”

In light of the chaos Trump and his team have wrought on the global economy with his inexplicable tariffs, something less than a chaotic change in how Vermont manages its complex educational system seems prudent.

We’re also suspect of the Scott administration’s sudden rollout of a plan that still lacks detail. Also, a bit of context: For the past eight years he’s failed to propose any comprehensive changes to the state’s education system for legislative review. Yet this year, with a new Education Secretary from Florida, who just barely has had any opportunity to understand the state’s ethos let alone the history and underpinnings of the state’s school system, he rushes out a simplified plan that would radically change the state’s educational system in two quick years.

The House Education Committee’s approach charts a saner path. First, rather than picking the number of districts randomly or perhaps by what looked geographically symmetrical on a map, the legislature will appoint a five-member panel of retired Vermont school superintendents and business managers “with a broad knowledge of Vermont’s current school system” to propose new districts. The panel will present the Legislature with three scenarios in 2026 with a minimum of 4,000 students in each district. (Gov. Scott’s proposal, by comparison, had Chittenden-Franklin-Addison counties all in one district of 34,000 students.)

Second, class size minimums under the committee’s proposal would increase to 12-18 pupils per class, depending on the grade, rather than the governor’s proposal of a pupil-per-teacher ratio of 25-1 — a standard that would force mergers and consolidation in almost every school in the state.

The House Education Committee’s approach also takes a stricter view of funding private schools with public dollars, going only to those current schools in the state (such as the four academies) that serve as public schools. “This keeps tax dollars in Vermont and concentrates those dollars on the schools that mainly fund public school students,” Conlon said.

Weighing in on the Education Committee’s work, this week the House Ways and Means Committee approved funding by a foundation formula in H.454, which would be implemented in 2029, two years later than Scott’s proposal. While the committee’s plan factors in \$200 million annually in higher costs until the transformation is complete, the committee suggests Scott’s plan left out “significant costs” that would likely hike the price of his proposal.

Gov. Scott and several state Republican legislators were, unfortunately, quick to pan the Committee’s proposal, calling it too cautious and exclaiming the need for reform was paramount.

Their claims, however, ring hollow. After years of doing next to nothing, Scott apparently hoped to ride public outrage over the 2024 surge in school taxes to force a radical reduction in school spending — without ensuring the damage to public schools was minimized.

The Legislature’s plan is the better model, and if it takes two more years to get there, that’s far superior to blowing up the current system with a radical plan that would likely create chaos in our schools and hamper educational outcomes for two, three or more years.

That sentiment was expressed by the head of the state teacher’s union. “(The governor’s) risky proposal is big on rhetoric but short on the details. And the details matter — a lot,” Don Tinney, the union’s president, said in a statement. “It doesn’t explain how these changes would be better for students... And it doesn’t provide immediate and on-going property tax relief for middle-class Vermonters.”

Given adequate time, the Democrat’s plan should be able to check off those concerns, plus create a better way for Vermonters to finance its schools. Hopefully, the governor and his team will agree to work with the Legislature’s initiatives and move forward with reasonable changes that will stand the test of time.

Angelo Lynn

Trump’s credibility is toast

On Tuesday this week, the U.S. president said he would never back down from his tariff strategy. “Don’t be weak. Don’t be stupid,” he told his lemming-like faithful on Truth Social. “Instead be strong, courageous and patient. And greatness will be the result.”

The next day, Trump caved, leaving his newly formed party of Panicans — the truly ‘weak and stupid people’ who believe him — dangling.

Trump backed off his misguided tariff plan because the markets crashed. Pure and simple. Even Elon Musk called Trump’s tariff plan idiotic, and Trump’s tariff guru, Peter Navarro, a “moron” and “dumber than a sack of bricks.” Economists had been saying the same.

What’s worrisome is Trump can’t admit he was wrong, and he’s surrounded himself with “yes” men who won’t challenge him.

But Diane Swonk, the chief economist at KPMG, put it to the American people straight. “This is nuts. Damage done. Market relief is a headfake, unless the administration makes a major course correction,” she said, adding, “Uncertainty is its own tax on the economy.”

Nor is that uncertainly likely to change. Trump’s very unreliability, and the fact that he assaulted our closest allies in such unseemly ways, will likely erode the basis for the strong economy he inherited, along with America’s reputation as a reliable, well-intentioned ally. And over the next four years, what country will believe anything Trump says?

Only MAGA Republicans will fall for the foolishness that backing down was Trump’s strategy all along.

Angelo Lynn

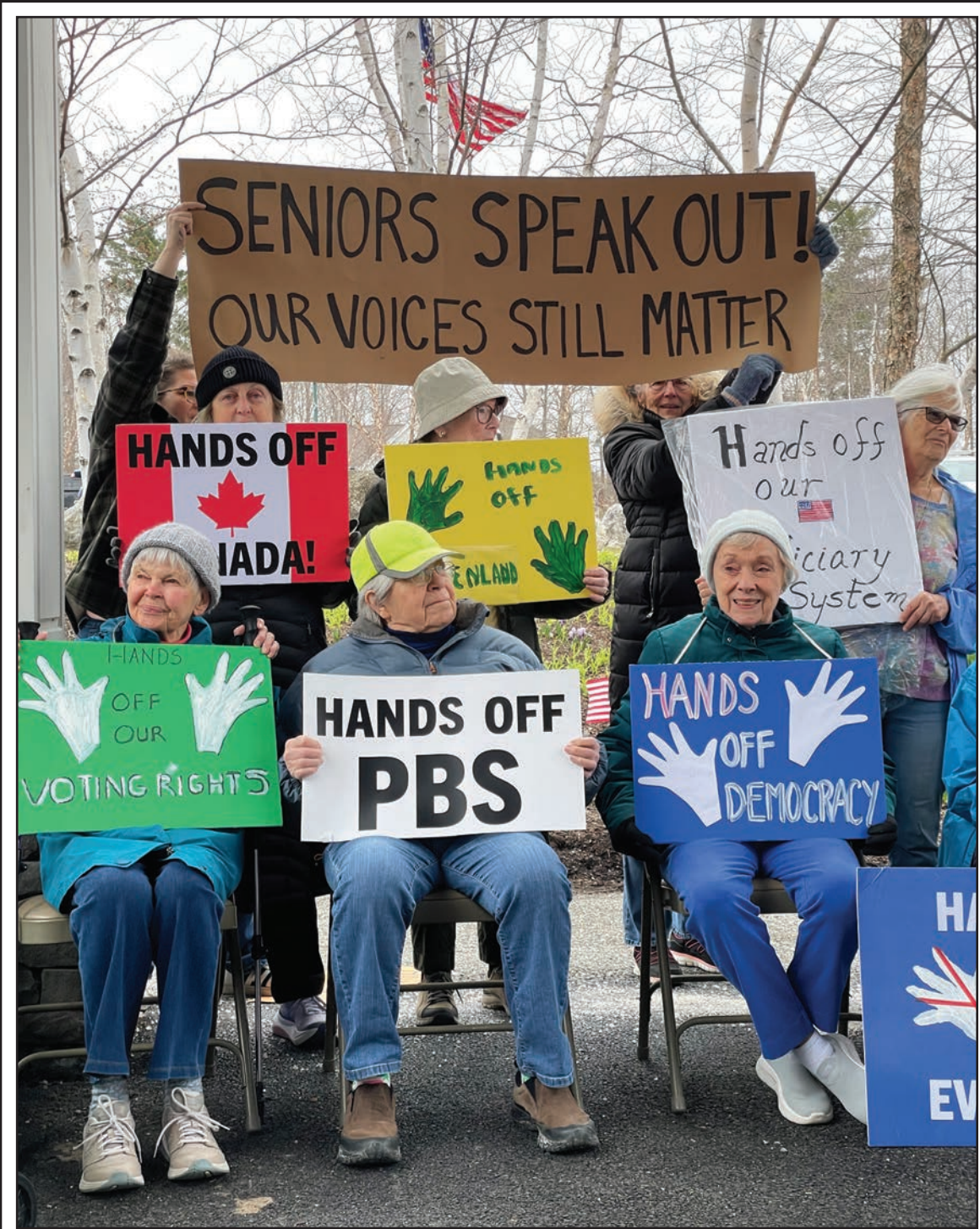
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Seniors speaking out

AROUND 45 SENIORS — most of them inhabitants of the Residence at Otter Creek — gathered outside the Middlebury retirement community’s main building this past Saturday in support of the national “Hands Off” demonstration protesting the Trump Administration’s budget priorities, which include cuts to Medicaid, the federal Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education. Among the rally-goers were Mary Lou Bright, Judith Siegel and Monica Shattuck. This was far from the first rally for each of the three women, who recounted some of their experiences demonstrating for civil rights and against the Vietnam War during the volatile 1960s. Residence officials said Saturday’s event was spearheaded by several members of the retirement community.

Independent photo/John Flowers

‘Us vs. Them’ needs to be left behind

When I was growing up in eastern Montana, all the kids told North Dakotan jokes. For example, how many North Dakotans does it take to change a lightbulb? Three: one to hold the bulb and two to rotate the ladder.

You may be wondering how much difference there is between North Dakota and eastern Montana. Answer: not much. But it felt good to pick on them anyway.

People love opposition. Whether it’s a school rivalry or a business competition, it doesn’t take much difference to turn things into “us v. them.” In fact, it doesn’t take any. Researchers have assigned people to groups based on the flip of a coin, and watched as the participants start rewarding their team members and punishing, bad-mouthing, or in extreme cases, fighting the people on the opposing team. Even when we know the divisions are arbitrary, we still think our own group is better, faster, more moral, more skilled, and more worthy of reward. The more people’s identity gets wrapped up in a group, the more likely they are to excuse the group’s bad behavior, spend their own resources to support them, and even to fight or die for them.

Why am I talking about this now? Because we’re living in a giant sorting hat of polarization. According to the *Washington Post*, Americans as a whole are making political decisions more and more based on our feelings about the opposition, rather than policy preferences.

It’s hard not to get emotional about politics these days. Whether you incline Democrat or Republican,

Progressive or Libertarian, I can pretty much guarantee that you’ve been shocked and appalled by something an opposing party has done in the past ten years. I can also pretty much guarantee that you felt smug or at least happy when your side upset the other camp. When the stakes get this high, it can feel imperative to hit hard and fast, to glean any kind of advantage.

It’s also hard not to see everything through a political lens, even when it’s not appropriate. Look at news reports characterizing Supreme Court opinions as liberal or conservative without discussing the underlying reasoning, even though they will be applied in very different circumstances in the future. For example, liberals decried last year’s Loper decision as a blow against the environment and scientific expertise, but now that RFK Jr. is taking aim at vaccines and ADHD medication and the EPA is jettisoning decades of research as to climate change, the left should be glad that courts won’t have to defer to questionable decisions by administrative agencies.

I certainly am personally inclined support anything that stops the current dynamiting of our democracy and can slow the implosion of basic rights and our environment. The problem is, any hardline tactic invented by one party can be wielded to devastating effect by another. Progressives who fought to silence objectionable speakers like Charles Murray rather than explain why they’re wrong are now finding themselves shut out of public debate in places as the

(See Ruble, Page 5A)

Ways of Seeing

By Erin Ruble



and disappeared into the adjacent woods. This man and his wife were Addison County people. As they grew up in this valley, they would not have imagined the turns their lives would take. They met in high school, fell in love, married and had good jobs and beautiful children.

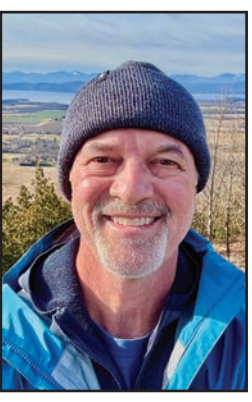
As the years rolled along, they experienced a series of health crises and suffered the associated financial devastation when basic human needs collide with our broken healthcare system. Impoverishment and strained familial relationships followed. And then there they were, homeless in Vermont.

Our Green Mountain home is experiencing increasing disparities and inequities between “the haves” and “the have-nots.” The rich are getting richer, and the poor are falling off a cliff. The status quo may be working well for the enfranchised. But it is not working for the disenfranchised. Homelessness has increased by over 300% in Vermont in the past five years. More neighbors are experiencing hunger and food insecurity than ever before. Thankfully, opioid deaths seem to be down, but alcohol use is up. And

(See Morgan, Page 5A)

Freedom & Unity

This week’s writer is Tom Morgan, founder of Green Mountain Justice (greenmountainjustice.org) and a member of the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society (cvuus.org), part of the Vermont Interfaith Action (viavt.org) network.



His wife scurried to collect their things as her half-asleep, disheveled partner hollered at the authorities who had come to “move them along” from their encampment under a bridge. The nights prior, the couple had been sleeping in their car. But when it broke down, the unhoused couple had no choice but to sleep outside while their vehicle was in a mechanic’s garage waiting to be repaired.

As the police watched, the past-middle-aged husband and wife walked away. Awkwardly carrying their tent, sleeping bags, and trash bags containing their medicines, some groceries and clothing. Not sure where they’d be allowed, they walked past the parking lot where they had been sleeping in their car

between “the haves” and “the have-nots.” The rich are getting richer, and the poor are falling off a cliff. The status quo may be working well for the enfranchised. But it is not working for the disenfranchised. Homelessness has increased by over 300% in Vermont in the past five years. More neighbors are experiencing hunger and food insecurity than ever before. Thankfully, opioid deaths seem to be down, but alcohol use is up. And

(See Morgan, Page 5A)

Letters to the Editor

Repair, learn and save

An example of what’s right, helpful and good, curious and creative, problem solving, community building, inter-generational collaboration, with respect, laughter and skills, took place right here in Middlebury Vermont at The Repair Fair in the American Legion on Saturday, April 5. While the sign I had prepared for the “Hands Off” rally languished in my car, I experienced what I had handwritten on my sign:

Yes Humanity - No Technocracy

Thank you Jordy, Paul, Sophie, Nora, Amaya, Dave, Ben, Josh, so many more, all the AmeriCorps volunteers, all the people whose names I didn’t learn, all those who still tinker and figure it out. Thank you for your laughter and your service.

Well done. Say it again
Yes Humanity - No Technocracy

Deborah Felmeth
Waltham

Childhood guide strengthens our community

We’re writing to extend our heartfelt thanks to the *Addison Independent* for the recent Early Childhood Guide insert. What a helpful and inspiring resource!

The guide not only offers valuable information for families and providers, but also gives voice to the critical importance of childcare in our community. The contributions from local childcare providers are powerful—thoughtful, grounded, and full of clarity about the needs and strengths of this sector.

Strong and healthy childcare is truly the backbone of a thriving community. This guide is a wonderful way to deepen understanding, share resources, and highlight the collective efforts underway in Addison County. It’s work like this that supports the kind of vibrant, welcoming place we all strive for—a place where people can truly live, work, and play.

Congratulations to all involved in producing such a timely and meaningful pullout.

Kathryn Torres
and Kelly Flynn
Better Middlebury
Partnership

Kudos to the Addy Indy

To Angelo Lynn and the staff of the *Addison Independent*: Congratulations on winning so many awards in the recent New England Newspaper & Press Association competition. We folks around here have known for a long time that you do a fine job of covering local and state news. It is good to see that your peers also see it that way.

Jim Peabody
Bristol

Good night, Ilsley

Good night, Ilsley, our old friend.

With thanks and admiration we’ll watch with eager eyes and hearts your budding transformation.

Last month your weary doors swung shut.

For sixteen months, we’ll wait, full-knowing they will swing again to help us celebrate.

It’s not goodbye, dear loyal pal, but rather, au revoir.

We’ll see you on the other side when you’ll become our shining star.

We say good night to threadbare rugs, and cramped and danky spaces, to bumpy ramps and dim-lit lamps, and undersized bookcases.

To elevators getting stuck,
(See Scheu, Page 5A)

Letters to the Editor

Family’s story an example of havoc at federal level

My Fellow Americans, for three years we traveled to Boston for our son’s medical care. We live three and a half hours north of Boston. We made this trip three or more times a year for three years. It meant leaving at 6 a.m. to make an 11 a.m. appointment — hanging out in the hospital for three, four, maybe five hours.

Typically, we would book a hotel room for one night because we were too exhausted to make the drive home. One trip we skipped

the hotel room because a winter storm was blowing in the next day. So, we headed out as the storm was starting. Plus, a house sitter for the pets was not in the financial cards at the time.

Boston Children’s Hospital is the only hospital on the East Coast of America that houses the one Doctor on the East Coast of America that specializes in the medical diagnosis of my son. This doctor saved our son’s life. This doctor improved our son’s life so dramatically we have

been able to take our son on many adventures to see the spectacular sites of America.

Harvard receives around \$9 billion in grants from the federal government. Boston Children’s Hospital receives funding from Harvard through these grants. Trump and Elon are messing with our son’s medical services. Hang on because we are going to the mattresses!

Matthew Stone
Middlebury

Ruble

(Continued from Page 4A)

power dynamic shifts. Meanwhile, the conservatives who celebrated a single judge halting Biden’s immigration policy or restricting abortion pills nationwide are outraged by Judge Boasberg’s temporary restraining order against Trump’s use of the Alien Enemies Act.

I’m not saying all our leaders are the same — they manifestly aren’t. I’m saying we, the people who support them, have to enforce some ground rules: freedom of speech, tolerance of difference, absolute commitment to the rule of law. Because if there’s one thing we can count on in this bewildering political climate, it’s that what goes around will soon come around, with a vengeance.

We all have the inclination to remake the world in our image. Wouldn’t it be great if those people over there stopped saying X or doing Y? The problem is, they think the same about us.

Living in a pluralist democracy, with varied religions, values, histories, and cultures, means that we’re going to disagree about the

way things should go. Our neighbor may raise their kids in a way we don’t approve of. Our own kids may be exposed to influences we find pernicious. We will certainly personally come across things we find offensive.

But pluralism has its benefits. It can point us toward different and better strategies, by showing us other ways of doing things. It protects individuals’ and groups’ rights. It guarantees a place for all of us.

What it demands is to stop dividing the world into “us” and “them.” This doesn’t mean agreeing with misguided positions or policies, but it does mean trying to understand why people might vote for a person who promotes them, without automatically writing them off as corrupt or bigots or fools. Stopping a minute before celebrating a court decision or political move to think whether we’d still be in favor of it if the politics were flipped. Finding common ground on the things we can agree rather than shunning people because of the things we can’t.

Demanding representatives who do the same.

Pluralism is the opposite of easy, especially when everything from gun rights to personal autonomy to history is a battlefield. Setting minimum standards — civil rights, the rule of law — can seem impossible when no one agrees what those should be. That’s why we need to be able to talk without slinging mud. To realize that, no matter whom we voted for, we’re all part of this American project. An us, not a them.

Even the North Dakotans.

Erin Ruble is a writer and immigration lawyer. She enjoys volunteering with local organizations such as Addison County Restorative Justice Services, Treleven, Middlebury Friends Meeting, and others, and has recently completed the Vermont Master Naturalist Program (she even has the hat to prove it). She lives in New Haven with her husband and kids and the occasional flock of chickens. You can find her at erinruble.wordpress.com.

Morgan

(Continued from Page 4A)

to be clear, the majority of folks facing increasing marginalization in Vermont are from Vermont.

The virus of political polarization is also spreading in Vermont, which has always prided itself as a home for those who value individual freedoms, but not at the expense of the unifying interest in our common well-being and justice for all. That unity is being strained by peddlers of division. Politicians who promote fraudulent narratives of scarcity, blaming others for their grievances, and rallying their tribes with the validation of like-mindedness. As these tribes retreat further apart, deeper into their respective echo chambers of like-mindedness, the disenfranchised and oppressed remain. Always paying the highest price for political divisiveness.

Last week, Vermont started “exiting” hundreds of unhoused neighbors from its motel/hotel

emergency housing program. Over 235 folks were thrown out on April 1. Victims fleeing domestic abuse, veterans suffering traumatic brain injuries, and pregnant women in their first or second trimester. Young people with complex untreated mental needs and older people with dementia. The motel shelter program is expensive, and it is not the effective, long-term solution Vermont needs to end chronic homelessness. But instead of sitting down and figuring out a better strategy, our increasingly politically divided elites have given us this scenario. Throwing Vermonters out into an overburdened network of already-full shelters and human services facing growing federal cuts. On the horizon are waves of impoverished Vermonters struggling to keep their lights on and their kids fed.

Among the Vermonters being exited from motel shelter last

week was the couple from under the bridge. Still in love and doing their best to remain sane. Trying to survive the dehumanizing effects of marginalization together.

Our little state is facing some big problems. Justice reminds us that we are all created equal and worthy of dignified, interdependent lives. Will we surrender to division and the temptation to subordinate the needs of the marginalized to those of the privileged?

When we see the increasing number of unhoused, unsheltered people in our communities, will we cynically judge and question their decisions? Will we entrench in our ideologies where the voices tell us, “They are not like us.” Or will we step out of our comfort zones to more deeply and generously connect and care for each other in our community of communities? How shall we live in this special place of “freedom & unity?”

Booker’s marathon speech draws praise in poetry

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Cory’s Song | considerable donation. Using every part of speech possible. Verb and noun. The coveted interjection. Oh or wow. Watching what no senator had ever done | A grange or town hall. A square. Public as a made-up participle. My neighbor calls Gary’s supposed soap box. That place in one of his |
| Not that you or I couldn’t have stood on our feet. For twenty-four hours. Speaking impassionately. | Sat in a chair. Lain in a bed. Reading words cast on a ceiling. Rising, as we could, to the occasion. | poems. Where his speaker speaks for himself. From a rooftop. A belfry. From anywhere a bird is |
| Meeting the moment. Pushing back. As far as a night would take us. Even if there was noone there | before. (He spoke for that long! In the well of the chamber.) Even when it feels like a Coliseum. And not a Forum | likely to hear him. Screeching and cooing. Making any sound known to a citizen. |
| to listen. Take what was said to heart. Consider making a | for exchanging ideas and feelings. Proposals for a nation’s country. | |

Gary Margolis
Cornwall

Founders of our nation used flexible foresight

The ARPA is the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. It is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden to support communities in their economic and health response to COVID-19. Like many federal programs, they send block grants to the states and allow the states to use that money to best help that particular state.

This Bristol skate park is a project that cannot be outsourced. It will provide jobs for local businesses to provide the material and the labor, which is a small local economic shot in the arm. It will also improve a well-used recreation spot for our local youth that gets them outside and away, for a time, from their electronic devices, providing exercise and social interaction skills. It may help keep them out of trouble as well.

Could our Founding Fathers have envisioned this as a role for our federal government? No, they probably could not. At the time of our Founding Fathers, they could not have envisioned anything more than a muzzle loader for the writing of the 2nd Amendment. They could not have envisioned that women, people of color, or even white men who did not own property “All men are created

equal” found in our Declaration of Independence. The term “men” in that phrase meant, white, male, landowners. Everyone else was excluded.

Our founding fathers were smart. They came up with a very loosely worded constitution with the ability to add amendments in the future because they knew they could not predict what the world would look like in the distant future and wanted a document that was structured enough to give a basis for democracy, but fluid enough to change with the times.

We don’t live in 1776 anymore.

Peter Ryersbach
Bristol

Scheu

(Continued from Page 4A)

and heating that was spotty. To anxious bottoms plopping down in locked and chilly potties.

It’s our great fortune, as we wait, your staff has set, with speed, a home for our books, with lovely looks—most everything we need.

Just down the street, inside the Bank, you’ll find, without a doubt, the perfect mini-Ilseley home—be sure to check it out.

So, buckle up, our Ilseley friend; prepare to shift your gears. Like us, we know you’ll serve and grow another hundred years.

Ted Scheu
Middlebury



Elderly Services Inc. ESI College

The South China Sea: Hotspot of Conflict?

Wednesdays, April 30 & May 7, 10-11:30 AM
Congregational Church of Middlebury

One fifth of world shipping moves through the South China Sea. In the face of overlapping territorial disputes the U.S. insists on freedom of navigation. Can the issue be peacefully resolved or will it lead to open conflict? **Jeff Lunstead** is Diplomat in Residence at Middlebury College. Previously a Foreign Service Officer for the Department of State, U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives, he also served as State Department Afghanistan Coordinator after 9/11.

The Economics of Climate Change

Tuesday, May 20, 1:30-3:00 PM
Congregational Church of Middlebury

What does economics have to do with global climate change? In this lecture, we will discuss relationships between climate and economic activity, why economic theory predicts that climate change is a hard problem to solve, and the economic view of some potential solutions. **Julia Berazneva** is Associate Professor of Economics and affiliate faculty in the Environmental Studies program at Middlebury College, teaching courses in microeconomic theory, environmental and climate change economics, and development economics.

Book Group: Fitzgerald, Hemingway and Woolf

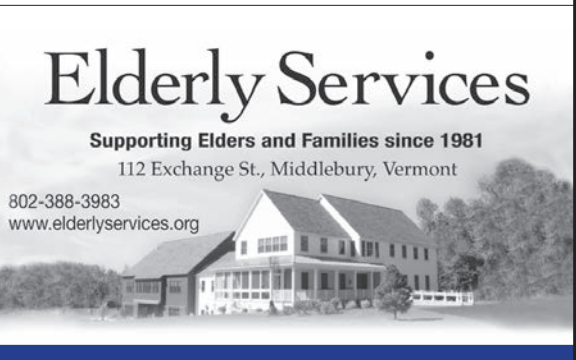
Tuesdays, May 13, 20 & 27, 10-11:30 AM
Congregational Church of Middlebury

It’s been a century since publication of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway* and Ernest Hemingway’s breakthrough early collection of short stories, *In Our Time*, all published in 1925. For each of the three sessions, we will read and discuss one of these three works of fiction, what we think it meant in its era and how all three have stood the test of time. After earning his Ph.D. at Stanford, Professor Emeritus of Chinese **John Berninghausen** established Middlebury College’s Department of Chinese Language and Literature. He also led popular seminars on Western and Asian literature.

Alfred Hitchcock: Master of Suspense

April 16 and 23: A few seats remain!

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DO YOU HAVE AN OPINION?
Email your Letter to the Editor to: news@addisonindependent.com

ADDISON
COUNTY

Obituaries

Joan Dundon Carlyle, 91, of Orwell

“May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be always at your back, may the sun shine warm upon your face, and the rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the hollow of His hand.”

— Traditional Irish blessing

ORWELL — Joan Mary Raymond Dundon Carlyle of Orwell, Vt., age 91, died peacefully in her sleep with her daughters by her side on Wednesday April 2, 2025. She was born in Springfield, Vt., Feb. 7, 1934. She graduated from Springfield High School in 1952 and received a scholarship to attend Castleton Teacher’s College where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science in 1956. She was captain of her basketball team in high school, captain of Castleton College Athletic Association and queen of the Castleton Winter Carnival. She married her college sweetheart, Gael Martin Dundon in 1955. Her teaching career began in a one-room stone schoolhouse in Sudbury, Vt.

Following the birth of her seven children she founded a kindergarten in Orwell and taught there for one year. The following year she transitioned to teaching 4th grade in the Orwell Village School until her retirement in 1999. She received Vermont Teacher of the Year awards in 1983 and 1984 and is remembered by her students for her dedication to exceptional learning, including innovative field trips. In 2000 she married her second husband Robert Jerome Carlyle and spent her remaining years in travel and nature.

Joan was beautiful, sweet, kind, and curious. She was wonderful and generous; a mother and grandmother extraordinaire who taught her children to embrace life. A lover of nature and wild things; of lakes, walks in the woods, birds, wildflowers, flower gardening and wild berry



JOAN DUNDON CARLYLE

picking. She was a natural athlete with a love for hiking, swimming, rowboating and skiing. She was a passionate dog lover, with a dog always by her side or sticking a head out the window of her jeep, most recently her beloved dog Rudy. She was a lifelong learner and adventuresome traveler who expanded her world and those around her with her wide-ranging interests, including her love of Vermont history. She was introduced to Catholicism and the Latin mass as a young girl by her beloved brother Russell “Bub,” and she carried a strong religious faith and love for God throughout her life.

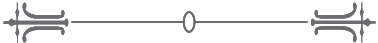
Joan is survived by her daughter Carolyn Marie Dundon, son-in-law Laurie Tully Reed III and grandsons Donny Michael Phillips and Jesse Kimberly Smith, and honorary granddaughter Stephanie Lynn Menotti of Bristol, Vt.; daughter Cathleen Ann St. George, son-in-law John St. George and grandchildren Sarah Mae Chen, Rebecca Joan Mees, Jacob Abraham St. George and Lucas John St. George of Economy, Pa.; daughter Cynthia Dundon Del Bianco and son-in-law Robert E. Del Bianco of Center Rutland, Vt; daughter Colleen Elizabeth Dundon, son-in-law Michael Arthur Desrochers and grandson Matthew Gael Desrochers of Newfields, N.H.; son Christopher

Joseph Dundon and daughter-in-law Stacey Stanhope Dundon of Orwell, Vt.; son Michael Gael Dundon, daughter-in-law Kathy Ellen Dundon and grandsons Ryan Michael Dundon and Mitchell Gael Dundon of Orwell Vt.; daughter Jennifer Joan Sanderson, son-in-law John Harold Sanderson and grandchildren Father Joseph John Sanderson, Alexander Michael Sanderson and Adella Rose Drago of Orwell, Vt.; stepdaughter Dorothy Levine of Valley Cottage, N.Y.; stepson Robert Carlyle of West Nyack, N.Y.; and stepson Keith Carlyle of West N.Y., New York. In addition, Joan is survived by 13 (almost 14) great-grandchildren.

She is predeceased by her parents Russell Dusham Raymond Sr. (d. 1950) and Beulah M. Raymond Roys (d. 1994), brother Russell Dusham “Bub” Raymond Jr. (d. 1941), sister Shirley Ann Giroux (d. 2014), sister Sally R. Gabert (d. 2023), first husband Gael Martin Dundon (d. 1992), sister-in-law Mary D. Yungfleisch (d. 2022), sister-in-law Eleanor “Dee” Rita Dundon (d. 2022) and second husband Robert Jerome Carlyle Sr. (d. 2019).

A wake was held on Monday, April 7, from 3 to 6 p.m. at Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon, Vt., followed by a Catholic Mass Tuesday April 8 at 10 a.m., at St Paul’s Church in Orwell, Vt. A reception followed the service at the Firehouse in Orwell, Vt.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be made to Saint Paul’s Parish (45 North Rd., Castleton, VT 05443) or Addison County Humane Society (236 Boardman St., Middlebury, VT 05753). The family wishes to extend special thanks to the wonderful staff at Gardensong Memory Care Unit at Eastview and Addison County Hospice, along with Dr. David Turner for their kind and loving care.◊



Wyatt Jameson Rochon celebration of life

MIDDLEBURY — A celebration of life for Wyatt Jameson Rochon, who passed unexpectedly on March 23, 2025, will be held at the

Middlebury American Legion Post 27, Boardman St., Middlebury on Saturday, April 12, from 11-2:30 p.m.

Obituary Guidelines

The Independent will publish paid obituaries and free notices of passing. Paid obituaries cost 25 cents per word and will be published, as submitted, on the date of the family’s choosing. For those who do not wish to purchase an obituary, the Independent offers a free notice of passing up to 100 words, subject to editing by our news department. Photos (optional) with either paid obituaries or free notices cost \$10 per photo. Obituaries may be emailed to obits@addisonindependent.com. Submissions must be received by 11 a.m. on Wednesday for publication in the Thursday paper. Email obits@addisonindependent.com or call 802-388-4944 for more information.

Maria Christina ‘Chris’ Runcie, 75, of Starksboro

STARКСBORO — Maria Christina Runcie, always known as Chris, passed away at her home in Starksboro on March 31, 2025. Her life was full of family, music, outdoor adventures, community service, great food, and curiosity about the natural world.

Chris was born on Oct. 12, 1953, to Armando and Liese Dal Molin of Oyster Bay, N.Y. The Dal Molin family were enthusiastic skiers, and Chris fell in love with Vermont during childhood ski trips to Mad River Glen. She graduated from Middlebury College and earned a Ph.D. in zoology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she studied termite foraging behavior. She and her husband Jim Runcie first crossed paths at Middlebury College, reconnected five years later in North Carolina, and stayed together for the next 48 years. Chris and Jim married in Salisbury, Vt., in 1979, moved to Starksboro, had three children, and enjoyed a wonderful, happy life together. Chris’s 50th Middlebury College reunion was to be this summer, and she wrote the following passage about her life for the reunion yearbook:

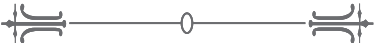
“I’ve been lucky to have two fulfilling careers. When the children were young, I was a full-time mom focusing on family, friends, and our home life, and volunteering in our small, rural Vermont town. I served on the preschool board, the library board, the Fire Department Auxiliary, and the Watershed Center, volunteered in Robinson Elementary School, and worked successfully to keep the school open when it was threatened with closure. When our youngest was in third grade, I began my



MARIA CHRISTINA “CHRIS” RUNCIE

second career as an environmental educator, first with the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, and then in 2006, I helped to found the Four Winds Nature Institute. Writing and leading natural science workshops for adults and children has been as rewarding a career as anyone could hope for. It’s always a joy watching kids and adults spying on spiders, netting caddisflies in a stream, popping a hard-boiled egg into a milk bottle (no hands!), or laughing at the puppet shows that introduce each science topic.

“Walking is a big part of our life, and we’ve had some nice vacations that way. We hiked the Tour du Mont Blanc, walked across England, ticked off the 46 Adirondack High Peaks (many during the COVID summers), and hiked to the Ciudad Perdida in Colombia with our four-year-old grandson. Our three children and four grandsons all live out west, for which we blame those Rocky Mountain ski trips when they were teens. We visit frequently and hope to keep on hiking and



Graydon Barron Stevens, 72, of Monkton

BURLINGTON — Graydon Barron Stevens passed away peacefully, surrounded by family and friends on Dec. 27, 2024, in Burlington, Vt., at the age of 72.

Born on March 27, 1952, in Barton, Vt., Graydon was the beloved son of Bruce and Priscilla Stevens. Graydon spent the early years of his life on his family farm in West Glover. At the age of 10, his family moved to a house that had several rental cabins, known as Mack’s Cottages, on Lake Salem in Derby, Vt. These formative years, surrounded by Vermont’s natural beauty, shaped his love for the outdoors and close-knit community living.

Graydon attended grade school in Barton and went on to graduate from North Country Union High School in Newport, Vt., in 1970. During his high school years, he participated in theater, excelled as a soccer and basketball player, and showcased his passion for music by forming a party band with his classmates. This early musical endeavor led him to a lifelong journey as a folk musician, performing and organizing events, such as the Cabin Fever Folk Festival, that brought people together through the power of music.

In the mid-1980s and early 1990s, Graydon was a chimney sweep, operating a business called Soot n’ Cinder Chimney Sweeps. He grew the business to service about 1,600 properties per year in Chittenden and Addison counties. He will always be remembered as a championship horseshoe player and for creating the political bumper sticker, “Moonlight in Vermont OR STARVE.”

In the mid-1990s, Graydon founded a business called Adventure Guides of Vermont, Inc., which served as a precursor to the nonprofit organization VOGA (Vermont Outdoor Guide Association). In 2001 he launched Vermont Outdoors Woman and



GRAYDON BARRON STEVENS

Doe Camp. Graydon served as the executive director of these initiatives for the remainder of his life, passionately championing their impact. His efforts advocated for outdoor professionals and enhanced access to Vermont’s natural resources, bolstering the state’s image as a premier destination for outdoor adventure and skill development.

In 2019 Graydon collaborated with senator John Rodgers to establish September as River Cleanup Month in Vermont. Additionally, Graydon stepped up to help ensure the LCI Father’s Day Derby would continue when its existence was threatened in 1997. He served for many years as a volunteer on the board of its parent organization, Lake Champlain International, helping to guarantee that its mission of protecting fisheries and water quality continues to this day. Graydon also contributed his expertise as a board member of the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council.

Graydon was an avid hunter and fisherman who loved the land and enjoyed teaching others to appreciate Vermont’s natural resources and wildlife. His tender heart was evident in his rescue and raising of wolf dogs. He was a founding father of the Vermont

joining kids and grandkids on their adventures for as long as we can.”

Back home in Vermont, Chris and Jim loved skiing the bumps at Mad River Glen, exploring the woods and fields of Starksboro, and sugaring every spring. Chris’s knowledge of natural history made her the local go-to for questions about bird songs, strange insects, and animal tracks. She was a wonderful hostess and was known for always having a pie in the oven.

Chris was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia in early 2024. Her courage, dignity, and humor through her illness were a lesson in grace. During her treatment she befriended the entire oncology and infusion staff of the University of Vermont Medical Center, where she received wonderful and compassionate care. Chris was a truly generous person who built her life around caring for and giving to others. She will be very deeply missed.

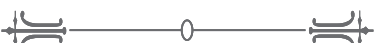
Chris is survived by her beloved husband, Jim and her children: Dan, his wife Alexandra and son Matias; Tom, his wife Laurel and sons Luca and Aidan; and Julia, her husband Victor and son Levi. She is also survived by her brother Tony Dal Molin and his wife Kathy Wolff, her sister Francesca Dal Molin, her brother-in-law, John Runcie, and many nieces and nephews. A celebration of Chris’s life will be held on May 17 at 11 a.m. at the Robinson School playground in Starksboro. More details about Chris’s life and memorial can be found at memorialsources.com/memorial/maria-christina-runcie. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to Four Winds Nature Institute. ◊

Traditions Coalition and the Champion Lands Leaseholders Association, which was the voice for thousands of Vermonters who protect the traditional values of hunting, fishing, recreation, farming and timber harvesting, to name a few.

Graydon’s life was a tapestry woven with music, cooking and a deep connection to his Vermont roots. He worked tirelessly with tact, diplomacy and curiosity to promote the enjoyment of the great outdoors, with respect for both the environment and the individual. He will be remembered for his warm smile, his talent for bringing people together, and his unwavering love for his family, friends, and community. Graydon was a man who was not driven by money but rather by principle.

He is predeceased by his parents, Bruce Larrabee Stevens and Priscilla Barron Stevens; stepfather, Ernest Mack; aunt, Ruth Barron; and beloved nephew Taylor Stevens McLaughlin. He is survived by those who knew and loved him, including his brother, Larry Bruce Stevens; sisters, Rowena Stevens Drown and Carley Stevens-McLaughlin; nieces and nephews, Eric Stevens, Tinah Stevens, Rhonda Coates, Jarrett Drown, Jamie Drown, Cassandra Townshend and Calista Corley; lifelong best friend, Frank Stanley; and many others.

A celebration of Graydon’s life will be held to honor his legacy at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Vermont Traditions Coalition, PO Box 323, Williamstown, VT 05679. ◊



Steven A. Germain celebration of life

HUNTINGTON — Please join us in celebrating the life of Steven A Germain, June 15, 1960-Nov. 15, 2025, on Saturday, May 10, at 10 a.m., at Huntington Community Church, 4910 Main Rd., Huntington. Refreshments will be served. Come and share your stories.

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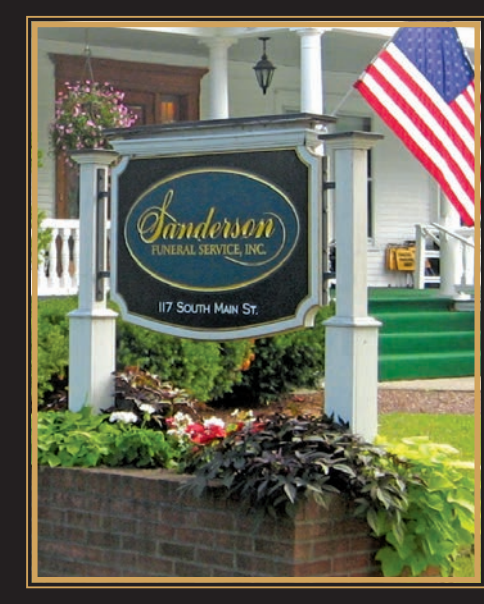
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Obituaries

Ernest Henry Malzac, 92, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Ernest Henry Malzac, 92, passed away on Friday, April 4, 2025, at his home in Middlebury.

He was born on Jan. 8, 1933, in Middlebury, the son of Henry and Marceen Bolduc Malzac.

He enjoyed hunting and muzzle loader biathlons, where he was one of the best senior shooters. He owned a carpentry business with his cousin Eddy and they built houses all over Addison County. He built a house in Hardwick that was featured in a leading magazine in New York City. He traveled all over Vermont, New Hampshire, New York and Maine with his best friend Harley Grice. He loved all of his grandchildren and



ERNEST HENRY MALZAC

great grandchildren. He enjoyed camping and collecting antiques,

and he raised Welch and Morgan Horses.

Ernest is survived by his children, Michelle and Karen; a brother, Leo Malzac; three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his wife, Lorraine Whittemore Malzac.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, April 19, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the American Legion in Middlebury, with a luncheon catered by Pratt's Store. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Homeward Bound Animal Shelter, Boardman Street, Middlebury, VT 05753. To send online condolences to his family please visit www.brownmccclayfuneralhomes.com. ◇

Öztürk's detainment is a blatant disregard of free speech and free press protections

On March 25, masked federal immigration authorities detained Tufts University Ph.D. student Rümeysa Öztürk for engaging in what Trump administration officials said were "activities in support of Hamas, a foreign terrorist organization that relishes the killing of Americans."

Öztürk's attorney, however, has said she is not aware of any criminal charges against the student and when asked to detail the specific activities warranting the student's visa being revoked, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio would not do so. Meanwhile, a Tufts spokesperson has said Öztürk is a student "in good standing."

The only publicly known activity one might tie to Öztürk's detention is an op-ed she penned for The Tufts Daily more than a year ago — a column critical of the Israel-Gaza war but one that university officials said did not violate campus policies on protests and expression.

If this is the basis for her detention, Öztürk's current incarceration is a blatant disregard for the principles of free speech and a free press. It's also a warning to student newsrooms that mere criticism of government can be punished despite protections for such speech entrenched in our country's history and enshrined in our constitution.

The Student Press Law Center and the New England First Amendment Coalition — joined by other journalism advocates such as Freedom of the Press Foundation and PEN America — are asking the Tufts administration to: (1) publicly demand that ICE release Öztürk; (2) clarify that her detention undermines the university's values and; (3) reaffirm protections for international students' free speech rights.

While Öztürk's op-ed is critical of the Israel-Gaza war, many Americans across the political spectrum, regardless of where they were born, share similar concerns. Öztürk and her co-authors say nothing in the op-ed remotely supportive of Hamas or terrorism. Instead, they focus on their university's actions and call upon the administration to engage with and listen to its students. This is precisely the type of speech that should be welcomed and protected at universities.

The opinion pages of student newspapers have a long tradition of open dialogue and debate on the important issues of our time. Students must have the room to lawfully express themselves free from government interference. Rounding up a student for an article that she published is a clear attempt to silence speech and interfere with

Öztürk's First Amendment rights.

This alarming incident is the latest example of the Trump administration unlawfully targeting student speech. Mahmoud Khalil was arrested on March 8 for his peaceful protest and social media posts while attending Columbia University. Khalil's case marked the beginning of a dangerous pattern of using immigration enforcement to punish dissent, a tactic straight out of the playbook of authoritarian regimes. Our country must not follow the lead of authoritarian governments it has worked for decades to counteract by weaponizing visa status against criticism. When students face detention or deportation for lawful expression, it sends a message to all that the price of dissent is exile.

In response to Öztürk's arrest and other detentions, international students are now removing social media posts and refraining from political speech altogether. This is a violation of our First Amendment right to hear from and associate with noncitizen students, according to a lawsuit recently filed by several academic associations against federal officials. The Trump administration's ideological-deportation policy, they argue, makes it more difficult for them to learn from these students. Student speech is now chilled due to the "all-too-real possibility" that noncitizens "will be arrested, imprisoned, and deported for exercising rights that the Constitution guarantees."

The First Amendment is an asset, not an inconvenience. Citizens and noncitizens alike are entitled to free speech. Institutions that value free speech rights don't seek out opportunities to disregard them. Student visas may be the lowest hanging fruit for now, but those who revoke visas of op-ed writers are sure to seize upon any legal theory that might permit them to punish others with whom they disagree. Academic freedom cannot thrive if students face deportation for participating in campus discourse and there is nothing more central to the American tradition of free speech on campus than student commentary on U.S. foreign policy.

Journalism is not a crime. Criticism is not a crime. They are instead essential parts of a healthy democracy, one that we are seeing quickly erode. This effort to chill dissent may start with students, but it likely will not end there. If the federal government can punish a student for an op-ed in a campus newspaper, what will prevent it from doing so with professional journalists and others with whom it disagrees?

Community Forum

This week's writers are Josh Moore, assistant director at the Student Press Law Center and Justin Silverman, executive director of the New England First Amendment Coalition.

Maple syrup

(Continued from Page 1A)
snow for tapping. Just a struggle, and then the sap finally started to flow."

Twin Maple Sugarworks started tapping on Feb. 1, though Gale noted they didn't collect much sap until the beginning of March.

"This was like a traditional sugaring season. The old timers didn't start tapping until Town Meeting Day, and it was almost around that time this year," he said.

Gale said his Lincoln sugarworks saw a record year in 2024, collecting around 150,000 gallons of sap to make 2,600 gallons of syrup.

"I don't know if we'll get that far or not, it depends on the weather we get this week," he said this past Friday.

As of April 4, Twin Maple had collected about 112,000 gallons of sap and made around 1,800 gallons of syrup. Gale noted the sugarworks saw a record day of transporting sap this season, during which they transported around 14,000 gallons.

"All in all, it's been a great season. Syrup flavor has been excellent," Gale said, adding that the sugarworks has made a lot of Amber Rich and Robust grade syrup.

This year's maple season has also gone well for Hillsboro Sugarworks in Starksboro, according to sugarmaker Brian Heffernan.

The sugarworks has 65,000 taps on Hillsboro Mountain. Heffernan said this year, the team began tapping on Dec. 5 and finished in March.

He said the team's biggest challenge was snow depth.

"We had a lot of snow, and it took a while for the snow conditions to get right for (snowshoeing) to be effective," Heffernan said.

This year Hillsboro Sugarworks didn't boil at all during February, which Heffernan noted has led to a more condensed season.

"We made the majority of our crop in March in a short timeframe," he said.

When the *Independent* spoke with Heffernan this past Friday, he said Hillsboro Sugarworks was on track to have an average season in terms of syrup production.

"I would note that the sugar content's been low, which has

resulted in taking a lot more sap to make a gallon of syrup," he said.

In Middlebury, David Werner of Werner Tree Farm also reported seeing lower sugar content this season.

"The sugar content of the sap was down significantly from what it has been other years," he said.

It's unclear what exactly has caused the change.

"I could make assumptions, like the health of the trees. It could be related to climate change," Werner said. "We've seen over

the course of 40 or 50 years the sugar content has dropped from, let's say it used to average about 3%, and this year we averaged 1.5%, but it's been a gradual process over 40 years, and it's just continually dropped a bit."

Werner said that overall, it's been an average maple season for Werner Tree Farm. He noted this year saw one particularly great run in March.

"To me, a good run is when you get a gallon a tap, some runs you get more than that," he explained. "This one run we had this year, I gathered 2,080 gallons of sap over 1,000 taps."

As of this past Monday, Werner Tree Farm had made 220 gallons of syrup, which Werner said is on par with other seasons.

While some sugarmakers saw lower sugar content this season, the sap at Cornwall's Bread Loaf View Farm was on the sweeter side this year. Sugarmaker Kenn Hastings said the sugar content has been higher, which has allowed the farm to make about 110 more gallons of syrup this year than last year using about the same amount of sap.

Bread Loaf View Farm had about 5,000 taps out this season. Hastings said while they began tapping at the end of January, they didn't start making syrup until Feb. 27.

He noted the farm saw an around three-day-long warm spell in the middle of the season, which made it more challenging to make good syrup.

"It was really hard to filter for a

couple days, but then things came back around, and we finished the season pretty well," Hastings said.

He added that Bread Loaf View Farm has made a lot of lighter-colored syrup this year, more so than usual.

Asked about other things of note from this season, Hastings pointed to how tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump could impact sugarmakers and their sales.

"I think right now our biggest worry or concern is the tariffs,

obviously," he said. "I think as sugarmakers we may have the tendency to be better off with the tariffs, in other words we may get more for our syrup on the bulk market, but I'm not sure we can afford to raise our prices in relation to the tariffs in terms of our sales. It's kind of a

catch-22; you're going to make more on one end, but you can't raise prices on the other because you might lose some sales."

In Leicester, Donna Hutchison of Mount Pleasant Sugarworks noted this year's season was "fast and furious."

"We were able to make a full crop, so it went well," she told the *Independent*.

The sugarworks has around 5,000 taps and typically starts tapping in the first week of February. Hutchison said Mount Pleasant Sugarworks didn't face any out-of-the-ordinary obstacles this year.

"There's always challenges because its agriculture," she said. "I can't say we had any major challenges; it was all within reach."

Sugarmakers that spoke with the *Independent* had either pulled their taps for the season or planned to do so soon, as signs of spring continue to pop up around Addison County.

At Twin Maple Sugarworks, Gale said he believed the team would be wrapping up the season by the end of this week.

"The buds are starting to show," he said.

"This year started late, later than usual, cold, lots of snow, deep snow for tapping. Just a struggle, and then the sap finally started to flow."

— Don Gale

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Civil unions

(Continued from Page 1A)
federal recognition through the Obergefell v. Hodges U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 2015.

Catalyzed by the Freedom to Marry Task Force and the Vermont Supreme Court’s 1999 Baker v. State decision, the civil unions law mandated that same-sex couples be conferred the same rights — such as hospital visitation, medical decision making, inheritance and joint insurance policies — as heterosexual married couples.

True, couples don’t get “civil-unioned” anymore. From both a practical and legal standpoint, it’s now an anachronistic, separate-but-equal protection rendered superfluous by full marriage rights. But it’s still regarded by many same-sex couples as the critical forerunner to the full equality they enjoy today.

Lois and Holly are helping mark this year’s 25th anniversary of the law they helped push over the finish line. They’ll appear, with other major players in the civil unions effort, on a panel discussion at Middlebury College on Friday, April 25, from 3–5 p.m., at Davis Family Library.

“The world did not end,” Holly, a diminutive spitfire, said while recalling civil-union opponents’ predictions that the law would somehow cheapen heterosexual marriage and result in a major influx of gay and lesbian couples.

For Holly and Lois, the journey began during the early 1970s.

Holly had graduated from Ohio’s Wright State University and transplanted to Vermont to take a job teaching math at the University of Vermont, from which she would retire in 2007.

Lois, an aspiring nurse born in Jay, Vt., learned in 1971 she’d need to complete a statistics course to get into graduate school at Albany Medical Center.

“Guess who my teacher was?” Lois asked playfully, smiling at her partner.

The pair struck up a friendship after the course had ended.

“Lois started to show me Vermont; that’s her favorite activity,” Holly said. “On Oct. 20, 1972, we decided that this was something that should last forever. We’re still working on it; it’s only been 52 years.”

While Holly taught at UVM, Lois spent a big portion of her

career as an RN at Fannie Allen Hospital in Colchester, and as a nurse at three elementary schools in the Essex area. She and Holly lived primarily in Chittenden County before retiring and moving into Eastview in 2014.

‘ROOMMATES’

“On Oct. 20, 1972, we decided that this was something that should last forever. We’re still working on it; it’s only been 52 years.”

— Holly Puterbaugh

Both women gave back to their community wherever they lived, from Scout leader to non-profit board member, to Habitat for Humanity home builder.

Early on, they referred to themselves as “roommates” or “partners.” It was a time during which many lesbian and gay couples lived their lives in the shadows, rather than be subjected to myopic scorn.

But as they rubbed shoulders with heterosexual married couples, they became increasingly aware of what they were missing out on. And they weren’t happy about it.

Fifty years ago, major employers like UVM weren’t extending benefits to the domestic partners of employees; that was confined to heterosexual married couples. The institution would later greenlight what it called “same-spousal equivalent” benefits, which Holly and Lois were grateful to receive.

They began attending meetings where same-sex couples commiserated and talked about the benefits they weren’t getting. Their collective hopes for change got a boost in 1995 with creation of the Freedom to Marry Task Force (FMTF), led by attorneys Susan Murray and Beth Robinson. Both at the time were working for Middlebury’s Langrock, Sperry & Wool.

GETTING STARTED

Holly and Lois decided to get involved.

“On the way home (from a meeting), Lois said to me, ‘I don’t know about you, but I think I’d like to be involved in this FMTF (effort).’” Holly recalled. “I replied, ‘That’s good, because I was going to say the same thing.’”

Like all good lawyers, Murray and Robinson (now U.S. Circuit Court Judge) looked beyond the legal arguments. And they noted the court-focused, same-sex marriage effort that had failed a few years prior in Hawaii.

“We knew that in order to win marriage equality, we needed to win people’s hearts and minds — and not just make great legal arguments... And in order to do that, we needed people to tell their stories,” Murray told the Independent.

Lois and Holly emerged as perfect parties in the Vermont court case in part because, among other things, they’d already been together for 25 years, had been dedicated community volunteers and devoted members of their church.

“They were doing all the things we do to help Vermont work,” Murray said. “On top of that, they were — and still are — salt-of-the-earth Vermonters.”

Asked how important the couple was to the success of Baker v. State, Murray was succinct: “They were critical.”

Joining Lois and Holly as plaintiffs were two other same-sex couples: Stan Baker and Peter Harrigan, and Nina Beck and Stacy Jolles.

“They were looking for a lesbian couple, a gay male couple, and a couple with kids,” Lois recalled.

She acknowledged she and Holly initially had to think over the attorneys’ request.

“They told us about all the stuff that could happen,” Lois said, noting in part tragic fate of Matthew Shepard, a gay man who had been beaten, tortured and left to die in Wyoming on Oct. 6, 1998.

“They told us that people’s cars had been vandalized, and they could burn down your house,”

Lois continued.

“They painted a very bleak picture. But we decided somebody had gotten us the same-sex spousal-equivalent (benefits), and now it was our turn to do something.”

Of the six plaintiffs in the Baker v. State complaint, only Farnham was a native Vermonter — a distinction she still wears with pride.

“She’s the native; I’m an import,” Holly joked of her own Ohio roots.

Their participation went beyond court dates. They appeared at press conferences, photo ops and gave interviews to help explain and publicize the Freedom to Marry Task Force’s goals.

Lois and Holly didn’t wilt under the spotlight. They helped make the case in the court of public opinion. They spoke at Rotary Clubs, churches, forums, town halls — any venue where people wanted to learn what the plaintiffs were seeking, and why.

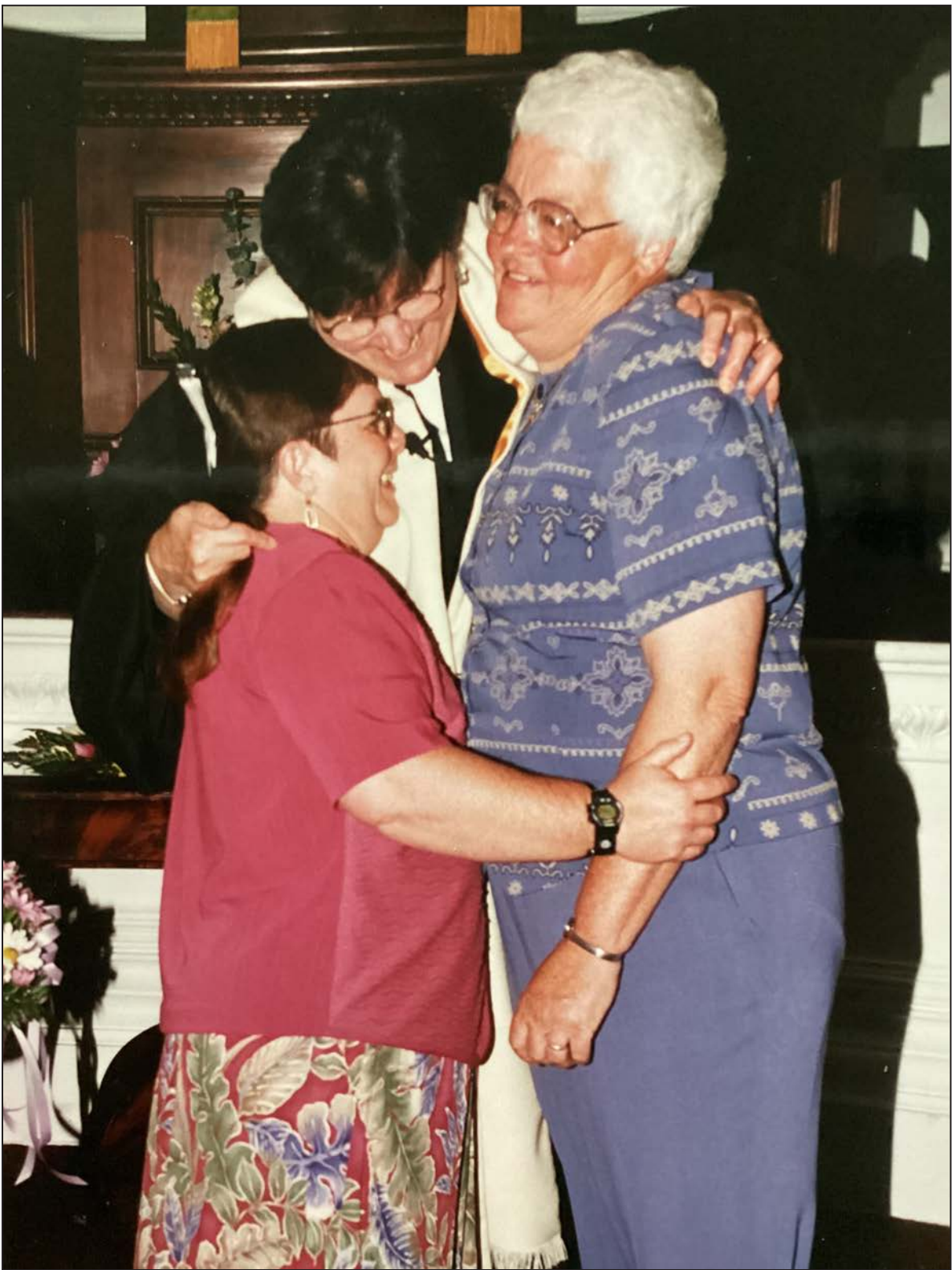
“We basically told them what we were missing out on,” Holly said. “We said, ‘We love each other, just like you love your wife or husband.’”

It’s a message that gained traction as FMTF advocates attended forum after forum. Meanwhile the Vermont Supreme Court was reviewing Baker v. State.

“A lot of people had no idea we were denied all these rights. You could see people listening and shaking their heads,” Lois said.

“A lot of people had no idea we were denied all these rights. You could see people listening and shaking their heads.”

— Lois Farnham



THE MINISTER AT the Burlington Congregational Church congratulates Holly Puterbaugh, left, and Lois Farnham at the conclusion of the civil union ceremony in 2000. The couple helped pave the way for gay marriage.

The mostly positive public reaction was gratifying for Holly and Lois.

“We had a couple people tell us, from the next generation down, that we were their role models,” Lois said.

“That helped a lot,” Holly added.

FIRST VICTORY

Meanwhile, Murray and Robinson made headway on the legal front. And on Dec. 20, 1999, The Supreme Court ruled that denying marriage benefits to same-sex partners was a violation of the Vermont Constitution.

It was an encouraging decision for freedom-to-marry stakeholders, but they still needed to win over state lawmakers — during the second year of the legislative biennium.

“They weren’t planning on that,” Holly said. “They were told (by the court) on Dec. 20, ‘This is what you have to do.’”

Both women credited former Rep. Tom Little, a Shelburne Republican, for keeping the House Judiciary Committee on task as it

crafted, and eventually passed to the House floor, a civil unions bill.

“He said afterwards they did a graduate-level course in benefits and equality,” Holly recalled.

Opponents — including some religious groups — descended upon the Statehouse to demand the civil unions bill be killed. Among the most vocal was the late Fred Phelps, then a Kansas-based minister who infamously coined the term “God hates fags.” Phelps’ hateful rhetoric ended up having the opposite effect.

“He was the one who probably helped us the most,” Lois grinned.

Holly and Lois were in the well of the Vermont House on April 25, 2000, for what was — for same-sex-union stakeholders — a cathartic 79-68 roll-call vote on civil unions that followed three hours of impassioned debate.

They said they kept tabs on each vote, ending with the final one — former Rep. (and Lt. Gov.) David Zuckerman, P-Hinesburg,

Zuckerman voted “yes.”

House Speaker Mike Obuchowski had warned those assembled against loud reactions until after he’d gavelled the end of the proceedings.

Once he did, the celebrating began.

“We erupted and hugged each other; many of us broke into tears,” Lois said.

The civil union law had poked a metaphorical hole in a dam holding back marriage equality, and the floodgates had opened. That dawned on Murray while part of a contingent of Vermonters who participated in a march for marriage equality in Washington, D.C., in late April of 2000.

“The response from other people from the rest of country was overwhelming,” Murray said.

State contingents at the march had been lined up alphabetically. Organizers insisted Vermont be moved to the front of the marching line.

“That’s when I realized this was a huge deal, nationally,” Murray said.

ONLY IN VERMONT

Vermont’s civil unions law took effect on July 1, 2000. Lois and Holly were among the first in line to get “civil unionized” (See Marriage, Page 9A)



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By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)

uses after cleaning. If you spot a bear near your home, make some noise — yell, bang pots and pans, or use other noise devices from inside your home. Never shoot a bear to scare it.

Report your bear encounters to Vermont Fish & Wildlife. These reports allow officials to help you prevent future bear incidents. They also give us information to help all Vermonters better coexist with bears. Check out tinyurl.com/4jb7bcn2. You can reach the Vermont Fish & Wildlife department at 802-828-1000 or fwinformation@vermont.gov.

Looking to meet people and make a difference? Stop by the Bristol Volunteer Fair next Wednesday, April 16, from 4–7 p.m. at Bristol’s Holley Hall. At the fair, you’ll meet local organizations looking for volunteers, learn about opportunities that match your interests, and discover how you can make an impact. Volunteering is one of the best ways to feel at home in a community. Plus, studies show that volunteering can boost happiness, reduce stress, and increase your sense of purpose. Whether you’ve just moved to the Bristol area or have lived there for years, this is your chance to connect, contribute, and build meaningful relationships. This event is presented in partnership with Bristol Recreation Department, the Addison County Chamber of Commerce and Bristol CORE.

The New Haven Vermont State Police Barracks and other law enforcement agencies in Addison County will conduct DUI sobriety checkpoints next week. These checkpoints are

focused on people who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Vermonters are urged to use a designated driver when necessary.

Vermont’s trout fishing season opens on Saturday, April 12. Despite lingering snow cover in some areas, Vermont Fish & Wildlife officials note anglers can still have fun and be successful early in the season if they keep a few strategies in mind. Among the tips: Finding a small-to medium, low-elevation river or stream that’s not too murky from spring runoff so the still sluggish trout can see your bait, lure or fly. Also, larger baits can be more effective for enticing early-season trout into biting. Anglers are advised to check the 2025 Vermont Fishing Guide and Regulations, which is available free from licensed agents, and may also be found at the Vermont Fish and Wildlife’s website.

The Middlebury Community Players will award two \$1,000 scholarships to students who will graduate from high school this year, or have graduated within the past two years, and who plan to attend college. To be eligible for either of these scholarships, you must have worked with the MCP in some capacity during middle school and/or high school, either participating in a production or assisting at an MCP-sponsored event, such as the organization’s costume sale. The application deadline is April 15. Applications are available on MCP’s website, middleburycommunityplayers.org. Any questions? Email info@middleburycommunityplayers.org or leave a message at 802-377-3540.

Marriage

(Continued from Page 8A)

that same day, at the Burlington Congregational Church.

The couple was pleased with the victory, but knew their civil union was only recognized within Vermont.

“We were allowed on the bus, but we had to sit in the back,” Murray recalled. “That became a tough pill for some of us to swallow.”

Lois and Holly were game to continue the quest for marriage, a step Massachusetts had taken in 2004.

“If the (federal government) had done it first, we wouldn’t have had to do anything,” Holly said.

Even as momentum built for same-sex marriage legislation in Vermont, the two women found reminders that some folks’ minds would never be changed.

“There were the ‘Take back Vermont’ signs,” Lois recalled.

Both the Vermont House and Senate passed S.115, the same-sex marriage bill, during spring 2009. Gov. James Douglas of Middlebury vetoed the bill.

Both women were initially angry about the veto, which the Legislature overrode the day after it was recorded.

Ironically, Holly and Lois worship at the same place as Jim and Dorothy Douglas — the Congregational Church of Middlebury.

“We’re friends with (Jim Douglas),” Holly said. “I talk to him many Sundays; we laugh, joke, but neither of us has ever mentioned the (marriage veto). I wouldn’t do that to him; I have too much respect for him.”

“At that time, he thought (a veto) was the right thing to do,” Lois added.

On Sept. 1, 2009 — the day same-sex unions became legal in Vermont — Lois and Holly walked across Burlington’s Battery Park to the Congregational Church to tie the knot. Ben & Jerry’s Homemade was giving out free pints of ice cream that day. The women noted the containers of “Chubby Hubby” and joked with the person who was passing them out.

“We said, ‘Wait a minute... What about the lesbians getting married?’” Lois said.

And then Holly provided a second punchline: “How about a pint of ‘Skinny Wife?’”

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



HEATHER ZELONIS AND her daughter Anna, 11, and son Liam, 7, expand their minds with some good reading at Lawrence Memorial Library in Bristol this week. The Bristol family says the library has enhanced their own lives and strengthened the community. Independent photo/Steve James

Libraries

(Continued from Page 1A)

and empowered,” she told the *Independent*. “Libraries are vital resources that help people find reliable information, build community, and access educational opportunities that improve lives.”

Here’s what they are worried about. A March 14 executive order by President Trump will close down the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which will decimate federal funding to libraries across the country. The Vermont Department of Libraries gets \$1.2 million from IMLS — 30% of its annual spending.

According to a 2019 IMLS report, Vermont has the highest per-capita use of libraries in the nation.

In the executive order, Trump says he has determined that the agency that supports libraries and museums is “unnecessary.”

Mary Danko, director of the Fletcher Free Library in Burlington and president of the Vermont Library Association, says “libraries are where democracy lives,” noting that the books, magazines, movies and other resources there are repositories of “living information.”

“When you have an informed citizenry then you have a thriving democracy, and you have an informed citizenry when you have libraries filled with books and databases,” she said.

“Anybody is welcome into a library and you don’t even have to spend any money,” Danko observed. “You don’t even have to buy a coffee

to use the information at a library. And there are public computers with access to the internet.”

One person who knows the value of local libraries is Bristol resident Heather Rusch Zelonis, who says the Lawrence Memorial Library has been a pivotal part of her family life.

“When our children were young ... I brought them to storytime with a goal of getting them interested in books and reading, but it provided our family with a lot more,” Zelonis said. “It was a great way to get connected to other families in the community, foster a love of reading, learn about other programs that support families in the community, and build a network of support for parents and children.”

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

While the state library helps out in many ways, all the local librarians said that the funding it provides for the interlibrary loan system could be the first thing lost. Interlibrary loan, or ILL, allows patrons at their home library to have a book or other resource brought from another Vermont library to enjoy at home.

Bixby Library pays about \$200 a month for a courier service that drops off and picks up ILL

books twice a week at the Vergennes library, according to library Director Catharine Hays. About 100 books a month come to Bixby via ILL; it sends about half that many to other Vermont libraries.

“The services provided by the State Department of Libraries are not a redundancy, they are absolutely critical to a library ecosystem that keeps our communities informed, connected and empowered.”

— Platt Memorial Library Director Abby Adams

Noting that IMLS money pays for a lot of the ILL cost, Danko says that enabling libraries to share via ILL makes a lot of economic sense.

“We all can’t have every single book in our collection so we all rely on each other,” she said.

Why do Vermonters need books — either in their local library or borrowed through interlibrary loan — when so much information is available online these days?

Danko answers with the hypothetical of a citizen in a small town who needs information on living with high blood pressure who can borrow four or five different books or periodicals on the subject from libraires around the state. Those resources are curated — or vetted — so there is less risk that they are influenced by drug makers or others with a financial interest in the information they provide.

“The books are free of advertisements,” (See Interlibrary loan, Page 10A)

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LAWRENCE MEMORIAL LIBRARY children’s librarian Jen Lazar reads to children at the Bristol library on Monday. Like other Vermont libraries, Lawrence officials fear that an executive order will cut off funds to the insitution.

Independent photo/Steve James

Interlibrary loan

(Continued from Page 9A)
Danko says. “When you get something online you don’t know their background —what is the relationship between advertisers and the content.”
Ilsley Library Director Dana Hart calls the ILL system a wonderful example of how public libraries are strongest when they work together and share collections.
“But ILL only works in Vermont because the state department of libraries administers a grant — funded through IMLS — that offsets the cost of the courier that moves the books between libraries,” she said. “The loss of

programs like ILL would represent a serious reduction in library services for Vermonters, and a big step backwards in our ability to share resources across the state.”
You don’t have to convince Zelonis, the Bristol parent, of the value of ILL.
“I love when my daughter sees an email that her ILL book is in and wants to immediately go pick it up,” she said.
In 2024, the Lawrence Library, Zelonis’s home library, circulated 1,486 titles through the interlibrary loan system, most through a courier program that is provided by the state.

“These are anything from leisure reading materials, DVDs, university press texts, magazines, digital-access articles, and out-of-state lending that the Department of Libraries facilitates,” the Lawrence’s Male- Riordan said.
And the funding helps with more than the sharing of books. The Gale databases that many libraries have access to feature back issues of newspapers, magazines and peer-reviewed journals for local patrons to browse.
Lawrence Library also offers access to educational classes, workforce development resources, robust training for library staff and

trustees, and alternative reading materials that ensure all readers are supported,, Male-Riordan emphasized.
“Libraries are vital resources that help people find reliable information, build community and access educational opportunities that improve lives,” she said.
SMART BUSINESS
Looking at the big picture, librarians say that federal funding for libraries builds the economy, which helps everyone.
“The economic model of libraries is absolutely brilliant,” Hays said. “It’s not just about sharing books, it’s about sharing space. We have a designated warming center in cold weather, a cooling room on hot summer days, free WiFi, free access to computers to use during tax season, resources to help small businesses and farmers, and to allow people to apply for jobs.”
Like many others, Hays pointed out that cutting IMLS will have a negligible effect on federal spending, but an outsized impact on the well-being of small communities.
“If you are probusiness it doesn’t make any sense if this counts for something like 0.003 percent of the budget, when the money you spend has a multiplier effect,” she said.
Adams said that Platt Library may be able to make up services lost because of the IMLS defunding by tapping groups like the Green Mountain Library Consortium.
“But our local budget would have to increase dramatically,” she said. “That’s the trade-off — we would either lose services offered, or dramatically increase budgets. And there would be a lag, of course, to try and replace services.”

Independent staff contributing to this story were Marin Howell, Megan James, John Flowers and John S. McCright.

Cost-cutting also hurts the Sheldon Museum

By MEGAN JAMES
President Trump’s executive order killing the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) affects more than our local libraries.
It defunds other federally funded programs set up by Congress including the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, United States Agency for Global Media, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in the Smithsonian Institution, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, and Minority Business Development Agency.

But, of course, the cuts to IMLS and the National Endowment for Humanities will hurt local museums, in addition to libraries.
The cuts hit very close to home for the Henry Sheldon Museum. Middlebury’s local history museum learned last week that a preservation assistance grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities in 2024 has been terminated.
The \$10,000 grant was intended to support the Sheldon in updating its collections policies and procedures to better share the objects and archives with the public. The Sheldon uses the objects from its collection to shine a light on stories that might otherwise be lost to history, such as the story of Charity Bryant and Sylvia Drake, a same-sex couple

living in Weybridge in the early 19th century, as well as artwork created by prisoners at the stone jail in Middlebury, which will be on display this spring as part of the forthcoming “Finding Hope Within” exhibit.
“We are struggling to fully understand the immediate effects on the Henry Sheldon Museum,” said director Coco Moseley in a press release. “For a community-based organization, \$10,000 is a substantial amount of money. Long term, the loss of federal Institute for Museum and Library Services and National Endowment for Humanities funding will be devastating.”
Moseley said the former chair of the NEH, Shelly Lowe, visited the Sheldon last year to see and celebrate the Charity & Sylvia collection firsthand. Lowe was forced to resign at the direction of President Trump in March.
The Sheldon has been in communication with other cultural institutions across Vermont and is reviewing options for responding to the loss of funds. Fortunately, the Sheldon is also a recipient of private foundation grants, which have so far not been affected by the DOGE cuts. These funds are helping to revitalize the museum, including through the installation of a children’s makerspace, and a three-year grant to support the research and development of new permanent exhibits.



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Standing up for Democracy

VERMONTERS ACROSS THE state took to the streets on Saturday, April 5, undeterred by the cold and rain, as part of the “Hands Off” protests organized throughout the country. Local crowds ranged between 500 in Vergennes and almost 800 in Brandon, while many more Addison County residents made the trip to Montpelier, where the crowd was estimated at over 10,000. Among those in Montpelier were Sarah Stott and Alice Leeds of Indivisible Northeast Addison County, top, who stood with their banner for the duration of the Montpelier event.

Photos by Buzz Kuhns, Jim Mendel, Sean Dougherty, Jonathan Blake and John S. McCright



Bristol Beat

Bristol hears ideas for making town parks more accessible

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — The Bristol selectboard recently got a look at what improvements could be made to three of the town’s parks to make them more accessible and welcoming for all users. The selectboard at its March 24 meeting heard a presentation from Dan Mallach of DuBois & King on the “Accessible Designs for Town Parks” project, an effort aimed at increasing accessibility and enjoyment at Memorial, Sycamore and Eagle parks. A steering committee of seven Bristol officials and community members has worked with DuBois & King on the effort for about a year.

Mallach’s presentation provided an overview of the group’s work and potential improvements the town could pursue, such as more accessible signage, reconfigured parking and smoother path surfaces. “(Physical accessibility) was the real genesis of this process, but we recognize people engage with their environment in different ways, have different mental, emotional sensitivities if you will of engaging with spaces and we want to bring all residents and visitors to Bristol opportunities to enjoy these parks,” Mallach said. According to the presentation, the project’s goal is to “offer

enjoyable outdoor experiences in Bristol that are welcoming and easy to use for people of all abilities.” The project team was focused on the three town parks highlighted in the presentation — Memorial Park is off Route 17 toward South Starksboro, Sycamore Park is off Route 116 south of River Road, and Eagle Park is on Lincoln Road on the New Haven River east of Bartlett Falls. Mallach highlighted the previous work that the group’s efforts built off of, including management plans for the three parks prepared by the Bristol Conservation Commission and a community assessment conducted through Bristol’s work with the Vermont Health Equity and Community Design Technical Assistance Pilot program. Mallach also provided an overview of existing conditions at each of the three parks, topography of the sites and information on design development for the project. Another part of the presentation explored the meaning of accessibility, noting the team’s definition of accessibility “can be broadened to include opportunities for all people to interact more fully with the park environment.” “Also recognizing that accessibility often starts at home,” Mallach said. “A caregiver or someone with certain physical needs sometimes just getting in the car is an operation...We’d encourage Bristol, should any of these go forward or even based on current conditions, just telling people what they can expect in terms of parking and access and amenities once they show up, even what’s the busiest time of day for folks that would prefer things at a quieter time of day.” Mallach also highlighted some

of the community input the project team gathered throughout its work. The team engaged with the community through a flyer, a booth at Bristol’s Pocock Rocks Music Festival & Street Fair, and visits to the Bristol Farmers Market. Some of the feedback received included the importance of signage, making it easier to use strollers at each of the parks, and having parks be bicycle accessible. **EAGLE PARK** Mallach’s presentation included ideas for improvements at each of the three parks. The presentation noted that some designs initially explored with the community were less practical due to high cost or maintenance needs or being unsuited to flood-prone areas. Ideas for Eagle Park included accessible parking spaces, a bicycle rack, restoration of plantings, and an improved dirt path to the river and stabilized turf path. According to the presentation, the stabilized mown turf grass “includes an embedded anchored grid, through which turf grass is grown and can be mown. This can be installed over existing grass.” “During a washout situation there’s far less damage when you have these cells holding the material



Dulcet tones

MOUNT ABE’S A CAPPELLA group, Sweet Transition, and their teacher Megan LaRose attended a workshop at Middlebury College on Saturday with Deke Sharon, an eminent teacher, arranger and producer of the singing genre. Junior Lila Brightman, shown here singing a solo, was among the high schoolers who later sang at a performance in the campus chapel with three college a cappella groups. Independent photo/Steve James



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We appreciate all the Lodge’s generosity, and all the patrons’ donations. We hope everyone enjoyed the meal.

The lodge has an all-you-can-eat breakfast the second Sunday of each month, except April.

They also have a take out senior meal the second Thursday of each month.

— Robbie Blaise



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F&W planner to talk future of flora, fauna

LINCOLN — On Thursday, April 17, the library, planning commission and the conservation commission will welcome Jens Hilke, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife conservation planner for a presentation on forests and wildlife and their future in Lincoln at 7 p.m. at the library. Using his background in landscape ecology, Jens helps municipalities and regional commissions around Vermont as they plan for their future. The town is seeking to gather and share information about its forests and rivers, and how its members may live well with them. Jens is a fierce advocate for forests and wildlife and the

Lincoln

Have a news tip? Call Kathy Mikkelsen at 802-453-4014

NEWS

myriad life forms they support. Learn about what makes our landscape unique, and how other towns are addressing natural resources in their planning. All are welcome. The library will once again be holding a seed exchange for the month of April. There are some donated seeds available for patrons and seed packet templates that you can take home and fill with a few extra seeds from last year to share with the community. If you would like to donate seeds, please drop them off during open hours. Until next time ... Laugh Out Loud. Follow Your Heart. Enjoy The Little Things.



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College

(Continued from Page 1A)
Johnson told the *Independent*. “These are tough decisions to make, and I recognize that it is not easy to choose among difficult alternatives — certainly I’m glad not to be facing layoffs, and I hope that we don’t see layoffs at all.”

Middlebury College is the largest employer in Addison County. The institution has around 2,000 employees, including faculty and staff, as well as another 5,000 part-time, short-term student employees and adjunct, according to Associate Vice President for Public Affairs Julia Ferrante.

She told the *Independent* there are no layoffs at this time.

The April 2 letter outlined five measures the college will take as the start of its “plan for financial viability,” which were aimed at helping bring expenses in line with revenues and expected to achieve over \$10 million in savings.

Those measures are:

- **A retirement incentive for staff in Vermont.** College officials stated the incentive would be available to all Vermont staff at least 55 years old who have worked at least 10 years at Middlebury College.

- **Retirement match capped at 11%.** Like many employers, the college matches employee contributions into the retirement savings up to a certain level. Beginning next January the highest the college contribution will be an 11% match for retirement, down from a top lever of 15%, the letter states.

- **Fewer rental properties.** College officials said they’d reduce the number of leases by relocating a few Language Schools that have been hosted at Bennington College since 2022 to the Middlebury campus in summer 2027. Also, the Office

of Advancement next summer will move from leased space on Exchange Street to space the college owns in the Marble Works.

- **Growing undergraduate enrollment.** College officials noted that the institution four years ago enrolled “an exceptionally large class” with the Class of 2025, which brought total enrollment to over 2,800 students. “This presented challenges, but as we enrolled subsequent classes, we found we could support an undergraduate population of more than our historical 2,500,” college officials wrote. The letter states the college will grow back undergraduate enrollment to between 2,600 and 2,650 in the next few years. But the letter noted that it will not make a “parallel increase in faculty or staff.”

- **Evaluating health insurance.** College officials said they are assessing health insurance plans, employee contributions and deductibles and plan designs and comparing them to benefits at peer institutions. “If we make changes, we’ll announce them this fall and not implement them until Jan. 1, 2026,” they wrote.

Administrators provided some context on the deficit they’re trying to tackle. They noted the unexpected jump in the projected deficit for this fiscal year came from a few different sources.

“Enrollments at the Institute were lower than we planned for, amounting to \$8.7 million of the shortfall,” they wrote. “There were moderate decreases in tuition revenue at the Language Schools, Bread Loaf, and Schools Abroad, though the Schools as a whole remain revenue positive. And we had significantly higher outlays for healthcare, increased costs for some budgetary items unrelated to salaries or employee

benefits, as well as interest and depreciation. Together, these accounted for the other \$5.4 million of the projected deficit.”

The letter notes that a similar challenge is expected next year, though its anticipated the college will carry a larger portion of the deficit compared to the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS) and the institution’s other schools.

“We want to emphasize that the deficit we’re addressing in this message is at the College. At MIIS we continue to pursue the four-year plan to turn around enrollments,” college officials wrote.

The letter states that Middlebury officials have been intensely focused on balancing the budget since this past fall.

“We undertook this work with the board’s executive committee and the chairs and vice chairs of the Resources, Strategy, and Risk committees — and recognize now how our attention to the deficit is even more crucial as we see the financial impact of politics on colleges and universities nationwide,” they wrote.

PRESSURE FROM THE FEDS

The *Independent* asked faculty if there’s concern among the college community about new or growing financial challenges the college might face in light of action at the federal level. Several actions taken by President Donald Trump in recent months have targeted colleges and universities across the country, from the federal funding they receive to diversity initiatives on campuses.

“The prospect of punitive action from the Trump administration is something we’re thinking about on top of everything else — as are most colleges and universities across the country,” Professor Johnson said.

He said he’s also concerned about staying focused on the college’s mission and community.

“One of my major concerns is that continual focus on the bottom line makes it easy — and even necessary — for faculty, staff and students to think more about their own bottom lines, rather than about the broader mission of the college or about our shared interests as a community,” he said. “At a time when higher education is under severe pressure, focus on mission and community becomes even more important.”

The letter also highlighted progress Middlebury College has made with the budget gap, such as continuing to surpass industry benchmarks for its endowment

and sticking to drawing 5% from the endowment annually. The college endowment’s value stood at \$1.598 billion in June.

“This is the result of the attention we’ve paid to fiscal discipline, and it has improved Middlebury’s long-term financial health, fed our operating budgets, and enabled us to offer competitive aid packages for our students and families,” college officials wrote.

Middlebury College has also raised salaries in each of the past three years, translating to a \$22 million increase overall.

“We’ve brought staff salaries to market and also improved the wage differentials for evenings and weekends,” college officials wrote.

They also acknowledged what the college is up against.

“To say it as clearly as possible, our challenge is this: We haven’t been able to balance our books despite significant progress in how we do business. We simply must get ourselves to the balanced budget that has eluded us, year over year, to be able to support our mission today and into the future,” college officials wrote.

Continuing to carry a deficit at the end of each fiscal year is a burden that will eventually hamper Middlebury College’s ability to deliver on its mission, college officials stated.

“Our deficits are continually an outlier among our NESCAC peers, which all operate profitably, experiencing only occasional downturns,” they wrote. “And there are signs that financial pressures will only increase, as we hear of plans, for instance, to tax endowments at 14% or even 21%, up from 1.4% today.”

The letter states that the Middlebury College Board of Trustees has directed senior leadership to create a plan for balancing the budget in the coming fiscal years. While the start of that plan is outlined in the April 2 letter, college

officials noted that other steps require more research, which they’ll continue to conduct in the coming months and share with the college community.

Administrators acknowledged the information shared in the letter might be difficult to receive and process.

“We know, too, that we’re delivering this news at a time when issues outside Middlebury bring their own stresses and uncertainties. We’ll be talking a lot in the weeks and months ahead at in-person sessions and on zoom to address your concerns, answer your questions, and share the progress we’re making in this effort,” they wrote.



STEVE SNYDER

“One of my major concerns is that continual focus on the bottom line makes it easy — and even necessary — for faculty, staff and students to think more about their own bottom lines, rather than ... about our shared interests as a community.”
— Professor Bert Johnson

Legislature

(Continued from Page 1A)
Kimbell, D-Woodstock, provided an overview of H.454 in an op-ed in last week’s *Independent*.

Among H.454’s recommendations:

- A requirement of average class-size minimums, to be implemented by the 2026-27 school year, in all public schools and independent schools receiving public tuition. Those average minimums would be 12 students for Kindergarten classes; 15 for grades 1-4; and 18 for grades 5-12.

Multi-age classrooms for kindergarten through grade 8 will be limited to two grade levels. Exceptions for average class sizes would include Career and Technical Education classes, flexible pathways, AP courses, driver’s education, small groups for special education, English learner instruction and “specialized interventions,” according to a bill summary offered by Rep. Karen Dolan, D-Essex Junction.

- A move toward a 450-student minimum for schools serving grades 6-12. This will require “time and investment” and would entail reestablishing state aid for school construction, a funding program lawmakers abolished in 2007 amid budget constraints.

The House Ways & Means Committee has been working on funding details for H.454. VTDigger offers some details on the panel’s funding priorities (tinyurl.com/mwuy3az9).

It should be noted the House Education Committee’s priorities differ from the education revamp pitched by Gov. Phil Scott. That proposal calls for, among other things, consolidating Vermont’s current 52 supervisory unions and unified school districts into five regional districts, each governed by a single school board. Plans would call for Addison County to be blended with Chittenden and Franklin Counties in a “Champlain Valley Region” serving 34,105 students. It also calls for a new foundation formula, funded by a single statewide education property tax rate, with income-eligible homesteads able to exempt a portion of their home value from the education property tax.

Scott has already declared concerns about the House plan, including its proposed implementation timetable, which extends into 2029. Under H.454, the Legislature would charge a new subcommittee of the Commission on the Future of Public Education to develop up to three specific school district map proposals by the end of this year. After reviewing the new maps, the Legislature would create new districts in 2026 and begin the process of setting up electoral districts to vote on new school boards in November of 2028.

The Agency of Education would be tasked with putting a universal statewide school calendar to be in place by the 2028-29 academic year; and a “statewide financial data and student information systems” by fiscal year 2029.

“The House proposal embraces change and transformation but at a pace that can actually be achieved without crippling our public school system and leaving kids behind,” reads the Conlon/Kimbell op ed. “It is hard work that needs to be done carefully and methodically.”

H.454 was the hot button topic at Monday’s legislative breakfast in Salisbury.

Conlon was among the handful of local lawmakers at the gathering,

which drew a crowd of around 50 to the Salisbury Congregational Church. One attendee asked if lawmakers could assign costs of some the schools’ ancillary services — such as health insurance for educators and/or mental health counseling — to the state’s general fund.

“We could shift costs to the state’s general fund, but that would be just moving costs from one area to another,” Conlon said. “You would need to either find an offsetting expense in the general fund, or raise taxes ... We have a no-new-taxes, no-new-fees governor, and we don’t have a supermajority in the Legislature that could override a veto.”

He noted Vermont schools currently serve roughly 84,000 preK-12 students, a major decline from the 140,000 served 40 years ago.

“We simply don’t have the scale in many areas to provide students with the opportunities they need,” he added, noting some Vermont high schools are graduating classes of around 25.

Sen. Ruth Hardy, D-Middlebury, is a member of the Senate Finance Committee.

She echoed Conlon’s opposition to moving education expenses to the General Fund.

“A lot of (budgeting) is a balancing act,” Hardy stressed. “It’s not as easy as, ‘Move it to the general fund and all problems will be solved.’”

She praised some school districts for getting creative in providing some of the ancillary services public schools are increasingly being asked to provide. The specifically cited mental health services, noting the ACSD pays the Counseling Service of Addison County to provide counselors that would otherwise have to be fully bankrolled by the district.

Sen. Steve Heffernan, R-Bristol, is a member of the Senate Education Committee. He also voiced concerns about schools on the edge of viability due to declining enrollment. The Addison Central School District last week decided to close Ripton Elementary due to an anticipated 2025-2026 enrollment of fewer than 30 children.

“The schools have to be viable,” he said. “If you can’t afford it, you have to do something new.”

Hardy pointed to a wild card in the state’s education revamp process: Possible mandates and big cuts that might come down from the federal level. President Donald Trump has ordered a gutting of the U.S. Department of Education, with the notion of allowing states to oversee their own public school systems. His allies in Congress are proposing a budget resolution that, according to Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., includes a more than \$1 trillion tax cut to the richest Americans while making \$880 billion in cuts to Medicaid. Some students who receive special services are covered by Medicaid.

Some participants at Monday’s breakfast noted some of the state’s wealthiest residents have offered to pay more in taxes. Barring that, could these affluent make a donation to the general- or education fund.

The answer was no. “The state is not a charitable organization; it’s a public entity,” Hardy said.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

Town parks

(Continued from Page 12A)
two entrances/exits to the parking area off Route 17.

“In terms of sight distance, putting a single entrance right here seemed the safest and most logical answer to organizing the parking at this location,” Mallach explained.

Additionally, the group explored south side access to the park that could include additional parking and an accessible overlook along Baldwin Creek accessed off Guthrie Road.

SYCAMORE PARK

As for Sycamore Park, the team’s ideas included smoother access to the New Haven River, refined parking, and accessibility through the floodplain forest at the site.

The presentation provided design details for some of the recommendations, such as accessible parking and signage. An implementation section of the presentation offered guidance for the town when it comes to planning, budgeting and fundraising for the projects.

That section outlined next steps for moving the project toward construction, which included finding a champion for the effort, fundraising and grant writing, and

permitting.

The presentation also included cost estimates (calculated in 2024 dollars) for projects at each of the three parks, which totaled \$272,500 for Eagle Park, \$306,850 for Memorial Park and \$422,500 for Sycamore Park. Projects at the three parks were broken up into

“We recognize people engage with their environment in different ways ... of engaging with spaces and we want to bring all residents and visitors to Bristol opportunities to enjoy these parks.”
— Dan Mallach

three recommended phases for construction.


Also included in the presentation were a list of grant resources the town could explore to support projects and an overview of the different kinds of permits that could be involved in the effort.

“What we’re really trying to do here is provide the roadmap, so hopefully there aren’t any huge surprises moving forward,” Mallach said.

Selectboard member Ian Albinson thanked Mallach and others involved in the effort for their work.

“Thank you to you, as well as your team, as well as everyone who submitted ideas and work for this,” he said. “This is an incredible resource for us.”

Mallach’s presentation can be found on the town’s website included in the materials for the selectboard’s March 24 meeting.



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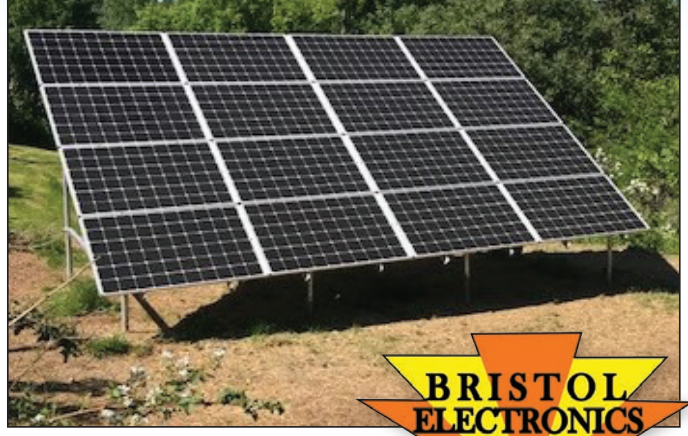
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Statewide NEWS

Vermonters will not escape tariff fallout

**By HABIB SABET
VTDigger.org**
President Donald Trump on Wednesday, April 2, declared sweeping tariffs on imports from most nations, escalating a trade war that state officials and business leaders have warned could have dire consequences for Vermont's economy.

At a glance, the Green Mountain State was spared the worst of what Trump has called "Liberation Day," owing to Canada's exemption from the president's comprehensive reciprocal tariff package. In the early weeks of his presidency, Trump declared — and then postponed — expansive 25% tariffs on most imports from Canada and Mexico, a decision that threatened to upend Vermont's economy, which relies heavily on Canada for many commodities, including electricity, gasoline timber and aluminum.

But on Wednesday, Trump announced that Canadian goods falling under the umbrella of the 2020 USMCA trade pact — which represent the bulk of Vermont's imports from Canada — are exempt from his comprehensive tariff package. (The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement is the successor to the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, negotiated during the first Trump administration.) Trump has also excluded USMCA-compliant energy products, including Canadian electricity, natural gas and fuel products like propane and kerosene, on which the president had briefly imposed a 10% levy.

Although the decision could mitigate the worst of the impacts that state officials anticipated from a trade war with Canada, Vermont consumers and businesses can hardly breathe a sigh of relief.

In what he called "a declaration of economic independence," Trump imposed blanket tariffs on virtually every other one of the U.S.'s major trading partners, a move that officials have warned could violently shake up the state's economy, as well as the U.S. economy more broadly.

"The bottom line is that consumers across the entire country are going to see their prices go up," said State Treasurer Mike Pieciak. "Businesses not just in Vermont, but around the country, are going to be feeling the effects of this broader trade war, and those effects are largely going to be passed down to consumers."

Although Canada is by far Vermont's largest trade partner, the state also imports hundreds of millions of dollars of goods collectively from countries like China, Taiwan and Germany — all of which are now subject to levies

ranging from 10% to over 50%. Like consumers across the country, moreover, Vermonters purchase goods from American companies that are manufactured overseas, whether that be food, cars, or clothing.

According to data from the Yale Budget Lab, price increases from the latest round of tariffs would cost the average American household about \$3,800 per year. The state treasurer's office estimates that the tariffs would collectively cost Vermont households approximately \$1 billion annually.

"President Trump needs to get real: this half-baked trade war will only raise prices for consumers," Sen. Peter Welch, D-Vt., said in a statement before Wednesday's tariff announcement. "Trump's so-called 'liberation day' will throw the global economy into turmoil and leave Americans holding the bag."

In Vermont's business community, specific anxieties about tariffs on Canadian goods have largely given way to fears over price shocks from a broader trade war. Matt Cota, a lobbyist representing car dealerships in Vermont, said dealerships across the state were bracing for the potential long-term impacts of the 25% tariff that Trump has imposed on imported vehicles.

"What happens when you get your first truckload of new vehicles, what does that look like?" Cota said. "I suspect you'll be hearing stories from across the country when those first new manufactured vehicles from overseas come in, and what that's going to do to the sticker price."

Tariffs on foreign building materials like tile imported from India and plastics imported from China could also threaten to raise homebuilding prices in a state already experiencing an acute housing crisis. Levies on Canadian steel and aluminum, meanwhile, have also gone into effect.

"This is a whole new approach and a whole new kind of domino effect that we're looking at, and that's very disconcerting," said Sarah Mearhoff, a spokesperson for the Associated General Contractors of Vermont, a trade group representing homebuilders in the state.

At their most extreme, disruptions to the U.S. economy more broadly could also threaten the state's general fiscal well-being.

On April 3, following Trump's announcement, the S&P 500 index and the Nasdaq composite index saw their largest single-day drop since 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic caused stock markets to plunge. According to Pieciak, that kind of market volatility could cause long-term harm to

(See Tariffs, Page 15A)

VT's healthcare system is at a breaking point

**By MICHAELA LEFRAK AND
DANIELA FIERO, Vermont Public**

Vermont's top health care regulator, Owen Foster, didn't hold back his words, or his emotions, when discussing the current state of Vermont's health care system.

"We're at a breaking point," he said on Vermont Edition Tuesday, his voice cracking, "and we have some pretty tough choices to make."

The complexity of the problem is well documented, if not well understood by the general public. Vermont has the highest health insurance costs in the country, and they continue to rise rapidly. The biggest players in the system are in financial disarray, including many of the state's hospitals and its largest insurer, BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont.

Then, there are the proposed cuts to federal health care spending, including funding for Medicaid, community health centers and addiction services. Foster estimates these reductions could cost Vermont's health care system hundreds of millions of dollars — money it doesn't have to lose.

INSURANCE RATES
Insurers will submit their rate requests to the Green Mountain Care Board around the first week of May, and it's close to certain that rates will jump yet again "Brace yourselves," as Vermont's chief health care advocate Mike Fisher put it on Vermont Edition

last month. "We haven't changed the way we're practicing, so why would we get a different result?" he said.

Foster expects the BlueCross rate request to be around 15-20%, if not higher. "It's simply devastating," he said. "It's not acceptable. It's not sustainable."

BlueCross insures more than 230,000 Vermonters — about a third of the state. It faces a significant deficit, far below the recommended range set by the Department of Financial Regulation.

Its CEO and President Don George points his finger in part at the Green Mountain Care Board. In a letter sent to key health care stakeholders earlier this year, George said the Care Board didn't allow BlueCross to raise its premiums as much as it should have for more than a decade.

While the Care Board did reduce some of Blue Cross's rate requests in an attempt to tamp down insurance premiums for Vermonters, Foster said that's far from the only reason for the insurer's budget woes. "Frankly, I think it's a little bit of an excuse," he said. "We actually need to look a little bit deeper and not blame others and look at our problems and tackle them."

SERVICE CUTS AND HOSPITAL CLOSURES

To avoid yet another significant rate increase this year, Foster said we would need to quickly reduce health care spending in the state

by several hundreds of millions of dollars. How to do that, when hospitals and health centers are already financially strained, is a question with an uncomfortable answer.

In a word: closures. Last fall, a state-mandated report by the consulting firm Oliver Wyman made headlines when it called out the dire financial state of some of Vermont's 14 hospitals. Without massive subsidies from commercial insurance increases or taxpayers, some hospitals are headed for bankruptcy.

"Last year we had six hospitals with less than 100 days cash on hand, and six hospitals with negative operating margins," Foster said. "It won't work."

Foster acknowledged that cutting services is almost an impossible pill to swallow. In February the UVM Health Network announced it would continue to run three dialysis clinics it had planned to cease operating. The initial cuts were made in response to budget orders from the Care Board, but when UVM said it couldn't find another organization to run the clinics, the Care Board raised the system's revenue cap.

Reversals like that won't be possible moving forward, Foster warned. "You can't have it both ways, where you have the status quo with 14 hospitals, with a full set of services they currently provide, and every other service around the hospitals, and not have large rate

increases," he said. "We are in a crisis situation."

FEDERAL CUTS
Vermont's health care leaders and legislators are also rushing to prepare for massive proposed cuts to federal health care spending.

"With some of the federal changes that are on the horizon, our timelines may have been pushed up pretty significantly, and that means you're making these decisions in a much more compressed time period," he said.

Health care subsidies could be drastically diminished, as could federal funding for Medicaid.

Despite the myriad challenges, Foster continued to push for creative thinking, collaboration and action in order to solve the health care crisis.

"In Vermont, sometimes we kick the can down the road a little too long," Foster said. "We've done that in health care and we've done it in education, and then the problem gets harder and more intractable when we have to deal with it. But when we have to deal with it, we often come together and find solutions, and that's where we are now. We need to make the best choices we can with the realities we have in front of us."

But just before that, during a break in the program, he allowed himself to be visibly despondent for a few moments.

"It's so bad," he said, a tear sliding down his cheek. "It's so bad."

Vermont Supreme Court takes a stance on rule of law

**By GRETA SOLSAA
VTDigger.org**

Vermont Supreme Court Chief Justice Paul Reiber stood before a gathering of the state's lawyers recently and detailed his concerns with the Trump administration's efforts to undermine the rule of law. He ended his remarks to a resounding standing ovation, according to several people in attendance.

"Currently, it appears there is an effort in Washington, D.C., to destroy the public's faith in the courts, in our system of justice, in this country," Reiber told the lawyers gathered for the Vermont Bar Association's midyear meeting, according to a copy of his remarks provided to VTDigger by the Office of the State Court Administrator.

"The president, through a series of executive orders, seeks to erect barriers to lawyers who represent clients who disagree with him," Reiber's remarks read. "No prior administration has taken such concerted action against the bar, an effort to erode an institutional pillar designed to check abuse of power."

Reiber spoke specifically to executive orders issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's investigation of law firms for existing diversity, equity and inclusion programs. He also noted the administration's targeting of law firms that represent clients who have challenged executive power. Reiber said the actions "have created a sense of retaliation and intimidation."

Reiber declined a VTDigger request for an interview following his appearance at the event in

Manchester.

Josh Diamond, president of the Vermont Bar Association's board of managers, said democracy can function only when there is respect for the rule of law and an independent judiciary that renders fair judgement without concerns of retaliatory threats. "I think everyone in the room was understanding the gravity of that," Diamond said. "It was really a historic moment to have a chief justice of the Supreme Court make those public comments to the Vermont Bar about his concerns about efforts to undermine the rule of law."

Diamond said he shares the concerns, adding that administration officials have recently questioned the power of the judicial branch after a federal district court ruled that Elon Musk should not have access to Americans' sensitive financial documents through the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

The Vermont Bar Association's board of managers, in concert with the national American Bar Association and several state and local bar associations, drafted a statement affirming their support for the rule of law, which was unanimously endorsed at the Vermont Bar Association's membership meeting, Diamond

said.

A group of more than a dozen lawyers in Vermont drafted another statement supporting the independence of the judiciary and outlining 15 instances of the current administration allegedly disregarding the rule of law, ranging from defying federal court orders to illegally dismantling government agencies.

The statement, made public last week, was signed by over 200 Vermont attorneys and elected officials, including Vermont Attorney General Charity Clark and State Treasurer Mike Pieciak.

"We, the undersigned Vermont lawyers, write to express our commitment to upholding the rule of law, and to protest and decry the current administration's disdain for the rule of law as revealed in its actions," the statement read.

Natalie Silver, a Burlington attorney and recent political operative who helped to draft the statement and organize a rally, said it is notable that Vermont's legal community is coming together to voice support for "non-partisan core values."

"It is an indicator of the moment we are in that this group of Vermont attorneys — many of whom have not spoken out publicly, who have been hesitant to do so in the past — feel compelled to not only

put out a statement as a group, but to organize a rally together to essentially say both with their voices and with their physical presence, this is not something that we support as members of the legal community," she said.

Silver said the Trump administration's deportations of individuals to a prison in El Salvador without due process, and calls for the impeachment of Judge James E. Boasberg after his judicial order to block the deportations, were among the many federal actions that have motivated her to protest. "Even if these people had committed a crime in our country, we have due process, and that is extended to everyone, and I believe it is the foundation of our democracy, and it is what separates us from authoritarian regimes," Silver said.

Her father, Bennington lawyer David Silver, encouraged Vermonters to participate in the planned demonstration of lawyers, which he also helped organize. He urged support for legislators and candidates who uphold the rule of law and for legal organizations taking the administration to court for unlawful actions. "The rule of law is the bedrock and foundation of our democracy, and we are seeing that foundation being eroded every day," he said. "What we also realize was that this foundation was a lot more vulnerable than we thought it was, and that it was going to crumble and we were going to lose our democracy unless we fought and supported the rule of law."

Scott McGee, a Norwich attorney who previously worked as an

(See Supreme Court Page 15A)



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Vorsteveld

(Continued from Page 1A)
about potential impacts on the surrounding environment. Some pointed to water quality issues in town and past instances of manure-soaked runoff from the Vorsteveld Farm flowing onto a neighbor's property and into Lake Champlain.

"We're not talking about a nostalgic, Vermont farm ... dotting the hillsides, we're talking about a big business," Panton resident Eileen Brennan said. "And I congratulate (the Vorstevels) on having built a successful business, but I think in the interest of the town we ought to consider this as a business, and potentially it could have negative effects for the environment."

Multiple residents raised concerns about water quality and legal battles regarding the farm's management of runoff. Last year the Vorstevels were found in contempt of court for not complying with a court order to address the water running onto a neighboring property and into the lake.

Other comments seemed to point toward broader concerns over how state agencies work together to tackle agricultural water quality issues (see related story on this page).

PROPOSED PROJECT

Agency of Agriculture officials noted the scope of the April

3 meeting was limited to the Vorsteveld Farm's application, which seeks to:

- expand existing barns at the Main Farm and Arnold Bay Farm.
- expand its herd from 1,500 mature dairy cows and 1,500 young stock, or heifers, to 2,000 adult cows and 1,580 youngstock.

"The (Vorstevels have) given us new ideas... They're basically on the cutting edge of new technology. They're as good a farmer as there is in this state, and we shouldn't be bashing them too bad."

— dairy farmer
Loren Wood

a need for us to get a new amendment. We've applied for another number of mature head and youngstock, and along with that we need to build some barns to put the animals in. This is not going to happen overnight, it's a multi-year project, and I don't know when we're going to get to the limit of our new animal numbers, but it will be at some point in the future."

The farm projects that each mature cow will produce 26,500 pounds of milk per year. According to the permit application, the proposal would increase annual liquid waste generated on the farm from 19.8 million gallons to around 26

million.

Brittany Cole is the Agency of Agriculture Water Quality Division's Permitting and Nutrient Management Specialist. She explained that a lot of large farms have a permitted maximum number of animals they're allowed to have based on their land base and waste storage.

"Most farms are opening up their operational permit right now to be able to max out whatever their limiting factor is, whether it's the land base or the storage," she said. "Doesn't mean they're going to operate on that level, but it gives them the flexibility to add animals, and they have to demonstrate on an annual basis that they have the land base and storage through their annual report."

The Gosliga Farm in nearby Addison has also applied to amend its Large Farm Operation permit in order to expand its herd and construct two calf barns. An informational meeting on the proposal was held online on April 2. About a dozen people attended that meeting, including three members of the farm family and agency employees, Agency of Agriculture spokesman Scott Waterman told the *Independent*.

"It was a respectful meeting with members of the public quizzing the farm family about what they were asking for," he said. "Most of the discussion centered around how many cows would be added and how they would manage the manure from those animals."

Laura DiPietro, director of the water quality division at the Agency of Agriculture, explained that when the agency reviews such permit applications, it needs to make sure farms have the land base and storage capacity to manage the amount of manure they would produce. Both Addison County farms have shown they'll have adequate land and storage in their applications,

according to Cole.

QUESTIONS FROM CROWD

Still, some residents had concerns about potential impacts of the proposed expansion, particularly on nearby waterways.

"We have an issue with our water supply, and I think about (the Vorstevels) every day when I have a glass of water, or I cook my food, or I brush my teeth, to understand what it is doing to my body in terms of it's absorbing

contaminants," Brennan said.

"Now, we don't know that your runoff has been the cause, but the runoff has been very proximate to the water (facility)."

Brennan added that she feels it would be beneficial to have more research done on what's causing the water pollution and requested that research be done before a decision on the application is made.

Another resident asked Agency of Agriculture officials how they

help farmers do the right thing and how they define what that is.

"My grandfather taught me the right thing was to take care of the land and our resources, and that's what we're concerned about," the resident said. "I would love to support my neighbors doing the right thing, but I'm curious what that is from your perspective, from the state and the agencies that support these guys and any other farmer in Vermont."

DiPietro explained that Agency of Agriculture officials visit large farms every year to check on things like implementation of the farm's Nutrient Management Plan.

"The legislature has created the (See Resources, Page 16A)

"We're not talking about a nostalgic, Vermont farm ... dotting the hillsides, we're talking about a big business."

— Panton
resident Eileen
Brennan

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Supreme Court

(Continued from Page 14A)
assistant United States attorney for Vermont, said he has held the Justice Department in high esteem, but is "frankly outraged" by the actions of the current administration. He noted the firing of career prosecutors to supplant the department with loyalists to the administration.

McGee, who also had a hand in organizing the efforts, said he hopes Vermonters and the legal community across the country take inspiration from the group's statement and planned

demonstration and engage in protest of federal abuses of power and disregard for the independence of the judicial branch.

"I felt we needed to start speaking out about this administration running roughshod over the rule of law," McGee said. "Our hope is that it will galvanize public opinion to take note of what's happening and realize it's serious and that everyone — from all walks of life, both parties, all political persuasions — need to get involved and to be outspoken and say this is not who we are."

Tariffs

(Continued from Page 14A)
Vermont's state-run pension funds, like the Vermont State Employee Retirement System.

And in the case of a nationwide recession, Pieciak said, a general decline in Vermont's revenue streams could also disrupt the state's ability to cover costs of operation. "When that happens, obviously that's not a good thing," he said. "But when that happens in conjunction with federal policy that may be putting pain on Vermonters and could also be eliminating federal funding to Vermont, it's just not a good position to be in."

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FINE FURNITURE



PANTON DAIRY FARMERS Hans and Gerard Vorsteveld, at the Panton Town Hall, on April 3 heard questions and concerns from residents regarding the Vorsteveld Farm’s request for permission from the Agency of Agriculture to grow their operation.

Independent photo/Marin Howell

Resources

(Continued from Page 15A)
laws that then led to the rules; the rules have all gone through the process of everything it needs to go through and then our job is to implement those rules,” she said. “They’re pretty prescriptive about what farms need to do and how they need to implement them and that’s what we look at.”
Another resident asked what state of compliance the Vorsteveld Farm is in, according to the Agency’s monitoring. DiPietro said the farm is in what

the agency calls “good standing.” Earlier in the meeting, DiPietro noted the Vorsteveld Farm is in compliance with the required ag practices and Large Farm Operation rules.
Other residents in attendance voiced support for the Vorsteveld Farm and their practices.
“I just want to say these guys have done a great job for a very, very long time,” Shoreham dairy farmer Loren Wood said. “They’ve given us new ideas ... They’re basically on the cutting

edge of new technology. They’re as good a farmer as there is in this state, and we shouldn’t be bashing them too bad.”
The public comment period for the application is set to close on Friday, April 11. Agency of Agriculture officials explained that after that, the agency will have 45 business days to make a decision on the permit. During that time, agency officials will consult with the Agency of Natural Resources, DiPietro said.

Panton farm meeting points to larger water quality concerns

By MARIN HOWELL

PANTON — At an April 3 meeting to inform the public about a Panton dairy farm’s request to expand its operation, conversation at times veered off from the proposal at hand and pointed to broader concerns over how state entities work together to tackle agricultural water quality issues.
The informational meeting was hosted by the Agency of Agriculture, which is considering an application from the Vorsteveld Farm to amend its Large Farm Operation permit so it can expand its herd and barns in the coming years.

More than 60 residents gathered in the Panton Town Hall for the April 3 meeting, many asking questions about the application and sharing concerns about potential impacts on the surrounding environment (see related story on Page 1A).

Other comments and questions shared at the meeting seemed to look beyond the Vorstevelds’ proposal and center around shortcomings in how the state regulates agricultural water pollution.

At the April 3 meeting, attendees raising water quality concerns and other questions were at times instructed by Agency of Agriculture officials to direct those inquiries to the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR). There weren’t any ANR officials at the meeting, though Agriculture officials noted they’d consult with ANR during the 45-business-day period they have to make a decision on the Vorsteveld Farm’s application.

The Agency of Ag and ANR each play a role in addressing agriculture water pollution in Vermont, and some residents appeared unsatisfied with how the entities are handling that work.

A couple people referenced a letter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this past September stating “the current division of responsibilities” between the two agencies is interfering with regulation of the state’s Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations and “preventing Vermont from adequately addressing agricultural water quality.”

“The concern is you (Agency of Agriculture officials) cite for us these wonderful regulations that you administer, going point by point through the book and let’s not talk about anything else, then you refer us to ANR because ANR will take care of the concerns that we’ve expressed to you,” Panton resident Skip Masback said at the meeting. “I think you want us to believe that this is a well-functioning relationship that you have with ANR and that together they’re protecting us. I think what you’re hearing in the room is many of us don’t feel protected.”

“This isn’t simply a question of this particular application, and it’s not their (the Vorstevelds’) fault, but the EPA has found that the relationship between the ANR and the Ag Department is dysfunctional, not resulting in the kind of regulations and protections that we’d like to have,” the resident continued.

Masback offered an example using the Vorsteveld Farm and referencing legal battles over runoff from the farm flowing onto a neighbor’s property and into Lake Champlain. Last year the Vorstevelds were found in contempt of court for not complying with a court order to address the issue.

“We don’t have to guess whether there’s runoff because it’s been adjudicated, the runoff has been

found by a state court,” Masback said. “So, we have runoff that’s impermissibly going into the state, and you’re being asked to approve a scaling up of the farm, which is not in compliance with the order.”

“You say it’s not your business because it’s not in the regs that you apply,” Masback continued. “I don’t understand how scaling up their operation when the operation is in violation of state judge order is not something you should take into consideration, nor why you shouldn’t take into consideration that our water isn’t healthy. It’s failed seven tests in the last 14 months. Scaling up the operation that will increase flow of runoff into the lake needs to be paused until we find out more about the violation.”

Another resident brought up similar concerns regarding the relationship between the Agency of Agriculture and ANR, referencing the letter sent by the EPA in September. The resident asked about what was being done to address the issues outlined in the letter.

Vermont Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts, who was at the Panton meeting, said the matter is being addressed and that state officials have made “tremendous progress.”

“I think we have a tentative agreement to work out some of those issues,” he said. “We’re working through that, and I would say that our relationships between the federal government and our sister agency ANR is going well.”

“We take that advice seriously,” Tebbetts continued. “We reflected on that, and we’re working on that, and we think we have an action plan that’s before EPA that will address many of (the) issues.”



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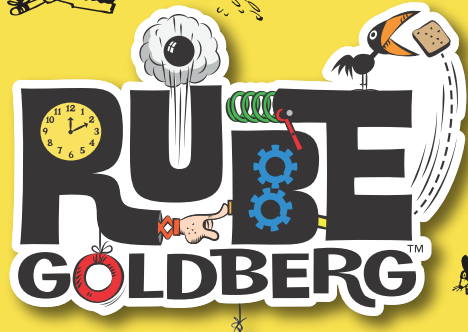
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Panther softball wins 3 out of 4

Middlebury moves to 17-5 with league wins

By ANDY KIRKALDY
BRUNSWICK, Maine — The Middlebury College softball team won three out of four NESCAC games this past weekend, to improve to 17-5, 4-2 in conference play. The Panthers’ league record is good enough for fourth place.

The Panthers were scheduled to play a non-league doubleheader at St. Lawrence on Wednesday after deadline for this issue. Next up is a pair of NESCAC doubleheaders this weekend. Middlebury will host first-place Tufts for two games beginning at noon on Saturday, and visit sixth-place Trinity for a Sunday doubleheader starting at 1 p.m.

On April 4 the Panthers swept host Bowdoin, 13-10 and 8-4, dropping the Polar Bears to 9-11.

In the opener, the Panthers scored six runs in the third inning to take a 10-3 lead, and then hung on for the victory. In the big inning Olivia Fleming drilled a two-run double, Cate Viola and Olivia Scholes singled in runs, and Jennifer Westphal hit a sacrifice fly.

Overall, the Panthers pounded out 16 hits. Kristyn Carroll (three hits, three runs, two RBI), Viola (three hits, four RBI), Scholes (four hits, two RBI), Olivia Schulz (two hits, run, RBI) and Fleming (two hits, three runs, two RBI) did the most damage. McKenna Lont (4-2) went the distance for the pitching win, allowing nine earned runs on 15 hits.

In the 8-4 win in the second game, another big inning proved decisive for the Panthers: They

(See Softball, Page 2B)



MIT COMMUNITY TEAM Member Dan Ober lines up a serve against MUHS No. 3 singles player Nate Cook-Yoder on Saturday at Middlebury Indoor Tennis.

Independent photo/Steve James

MIT adult tennis team edges MUHS boys

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Indoor Tennis Community Team (MITC) on Saturday edged the Middlebury Union High School boys’ tennis team in the third annual dual between the community and Tiger squads.

The Tiger boys’ top three singles players all prevailed, but MITC won the inaugural match in 2023.

The Community team regained the Ignat Cup — named after

Middlebury Indoor Tennis founders David and Eleanor Ignat — after the defending Division I Vermont champion Tigers defeated MITC in 2024, 4-3. MITC won the inaugural match in 2023.

The Tiger boys’ top three singles players all prevailed, but MITC players won the No. 4 and 5

singles matches and both doubles matches.

The scores were:

- 1st Singles: Jackson Murray (MUHS) defeated Luis Camacho (MITC), 6-3, 6-1.
- 2nd Singles: Charles Young (MUHS) defeated Ben Marshall (MITC), 6-0, 6-0.
- 3rd Singles: Nate Cook-Yoder (MUHS) defeated Dan Ober (MITC), 6-1, 3-6, 1-0 (10-7).
- 4th Singles: Chris Eberly (MITC) defeated Kaden Hammond (MUHS) 2-6, 6-1, 1-0 (10-5).
- 5th Singles: Greg McCallan (MITC) defeated Baker Nelson (MUHS), 6-3, 6-2.

(See Tennis, Page 3B)

Score BOARD

| HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Softball | |
| 4/8 Mt. Anthony at OV | Ppd. to 4/15 |
| Girls' Lacrosse | |
| 4/9 MUHS at Harwood | Cancelled |
| Girls' Tennis | |
| 4/9 MUHS at U-32 | Late |
| Ultimate | |
| 4/9 MUHS Boys at Montpelier | Late |
| COLLEGE SPORTS | |
| Women's Lacrosse | |
| 4/5 Midd vs Colby | 12-11 |
| 4/9 St. Lawrence at Midd | Late |
| Men's Lacrosse | |
| 4/2 Midd vs Hamilton | 14-8 |
| 4/5 Midd vs Colby | 15-7 |
| 4/8 St. Lawrence vs Midd | 7-6 |
| Baseball | |
| 4/4 Midd vs Wesleyan | 10-4 |
| 4/4 Midd vs Wesleyan | 7-3 |
| 4/6 Midd vs Wesleyan | 11-4 |
| 4/8 RPI at Midd | Postponed |
| Softball | |
| 4/4 Midd vs Bowdoin | 13-10 |
| 4/4 Midd vs Bowdoin | 8-4 |
| 4/5 Midd vs Bates | 4-3 |
| 4/5 Bates vs Midd | 5-3 |
| 4/9 St. Lawrence at Midd (2) | Late |

Schedule

| HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Baseball | |
| 4/10 Fair Haven at OV | 4:30 PM |
| 4/12 OV at Windsor | 11 AM |
| 4/15 Mt. Abe at CVU | 4:30 PM |
| 4/19 Thefford at VUHS | 11 AM |
| Softball | |
| 4/10 Fair Haven at OV | 4:30 PM |
| 4/15 Mt. Abe at CVU | 4:30 PM |
| 4/15 Mt. Anthony at OV | 4:30 PM |
| 4/17 Missisquoi at Mt. Abe | 4:30 PM |
| 4/17 OV at Burr & Burton | 4:30 PM |
| 4/17 U-32 at MUHS | 4:30 PM |
| 4/19 Thefford at VUHS | 11 AM |
| Girls' Lacrosse | |
| 4/10 MAV at Stowe | 4:30 PM |
| 4/12 MAV at Essex | 11 AM |
| 4/12 MUHS at St. Albans | 11 AM |
| 4/14 MUHS at Stowe | 4:30 PM |
| 4/15 Hartford at MAV | 4:30 PM |
| 4/16 MUHS at CVU | 4:30 PM |
| 4/19 St. J at MAV | 11 AM |
| Boys' Lacrosse | |

(See Schedule, Page 4B)

Men’s lax takes two out of three

Middlebury on upswing after slow start to season

By ANDY KIRKALDY
MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury College men’s lacrosse team showed encouraging signs in winning two out of three recent games and improving to 7-5.

Those two wins were against NESCAC foes: 14-8 at Hamilton on April 2, and 15-7 at home over Colby on Saturday. The Panthers, ranked No. 14 in this week’s NCAA Division III coaches’ poll, moved to 5-2 in league play, good for third place. The down note was a 7-6 road loss on Tuesday at St. Lawrence, a game played in wintry conditions.

Speaking after Saturday’s solid performance against Colby and before Tuesday’s hiccup at St. Lawrence, Coach Dave Campbell said he liked his team’s progress after its 0-3 start.

“I’ve always believed we could be a really good lacrosse team this year, and we’re starting to play like it,” Campbell said. “We haven’t arrived yet, but the goal at the beginning of the year is always to play our best in May, and I think we’re still on target for that.”

The win over Colby was the program’s fifth straight, all against NESCAC foes, and it showcased the Panthers’ balanced and selfless offense. All of their 15 goals were assisted, and dating back three games to the team’s March 29 win over of No. 7 Wesleyan, 31 of the Panthers’ most recent 39 goals were set up by assists.

“Coach (Evan) Lombardo does a great job with our offense,” Campbell said. “And it’s a really unselfish group. They share the ball really well, and they’re all willing to make the extra pass, and that’s contagious.”

It took a few minutes for the Panthers on Saturday to solve Colby’s zone defense, and the Mules took a 1-0 lead in the third minute on a Bennett Goller strike following a Middlebury turnover.

But by the end of the quarter the Panthers led, 4-1. At 11:06 John McCarthy curled from behind and converted a Patrick Jamin feed to tie the score.

Colby then held Middlebury

off for almost seven minutes, but the Panthers closed the quarter strong. At 4:45 Finn McCarthy scored in transition from Billy Curtis after Logan White forced a Colby turnover. At 2:58 Curtis scored cutting to net with an assist from Will Ford, and at 0:37 White netted a long cross-crease pass from Jamin.

By halftime the lead was 7-2. Colby made it 4-2 early on in the second period, but the Panthers strung together three goals in the final 6:19 to break the game open. Russell Thorndike found the lower right corner on a feed from Cooper DeMallie, Finn McCarthy tucked a clever White feed from the right post inside the left post, and Nick Marvin whipped home a Finn McCarthy pass from the right side into the net’s far side.

Campbell said it was understandable it took a while to solve the Colby defense.

“They played a funky zone that you don’t see very often. And I think even though we had addressed how we wanted to handle it, I don’t think our guys came out ready to do what we wanted. But then we got into a rhythm and started to get some great looks,” he said. “And then they changed how they were playing. They played three different defenses today, so we were spinning what we were doing on offense.”

Colby, likewise, got a little traction in the third period, in which the Panthers outscored the Mules by just 4-3. Three Mules tossed in a goal apiece, while Finn McCarthy, Will Spehr, DeMallie and Curtis added one each for Middlebury.

The Panthers then pulled away in the final quarter with a 4-2 margin, with White scoring twice and DeMallie and Ford adding a goal apiece.

Overall, Goller and Gavin Rothenberg led Colby with two goals apiece, while Mule goalie Will Heisler made 14 saves.

White (three goals, three assists), Finn McCarthy (three goals, assist), Curtis (two goals, five assists), and Jamin (four assists) racked up the most points

for the Panthers. William Munroe won 14 of 24 faceoffs.

The veteran Panther defense — seniors Henry Tarr, Teddy Curran, and Nate Ruoss started in the back, and senior Dylan Fagan came in as the fourth defender — limited the Mules to 15 shots on target. Starting goalie Hayden Kern made seven saves and allowed the seven goals, and backup Al Noyes made one save in 2:05 of action.

“We’ve got a great group on defense, a lot of experience, and our goalie is excellent,” Campbell said. “We always feel like they’re going to put us in a position to win a game, and today’s no different. They played man, and some zone as well, and it’s nice to be able to bounce between those two.”

He summed up.

“I thought our guys played hard. For the most part they executed the things we went over. Their focus level was pretty good — that’s the biggest thing we’ve struggled

(See Men’s lacrosse, Page 3B)



PANTHER MIDDIE JOHN McCarthy shrugs off a Colby defender on Saturday during the Middlebury College men’s lacrosse team’s 15-7 win over visiting Colby.

Independent photo/Steve James



PANTHER LOGAN WHITE, left, leans into his shot and scores as teammate Billy Curtis (No. 13) celebrates on Saturday during the Middlebury College men’s lacrosse team’s 15-7 win over visiting Colby.

Independent photo/Steve James

Women’s lax gets past Colby

Close win sets stage for showdown with Tufts

By ANDY KIRKALDY
WATERVILLE, Maine — The Middlebury College women’s lacrosse team on Saturday protected its No. 1 ranking in NCAA Division III by rallying in the fourth quarter to defeat No. 4 Colby, 12-11. The 11-0 Panthers trailed the 8-2 Mules by 10-9 entering the final quarter before outscoring their hosts by 3-1 the rest of the way.

Middlebury was also set to host St. Lawrence on Wednesday after deadline for this issue. But the real news is the Panthers’ highly anticipated showdown on this coming Saturday with undefeated and second-ranked Tufts. That game is scheduled for noon on the Panthers’ Kohn Field.

By defeating the Mules this past Saturday the Panthers pushed their road winning streak to 50 games, a mark that dates back to 2019.

The game against Colby went back and forth. The Panthers took a 2-0 lead in the first two minutes on a pair of goals by Kecey Dion, but four Mules scored in the next six minutes as Colby took a 4-2 lead.

In the final four minutes of the first period, Hope Shue scored a goal and set up Skylar Lach for another, and the teams were tied at 4-4 after one quarter.

The Panthers appeared to take control by outscoring the Mules, 4-2, in the second period, with two goals from Shue and one apiece from Caroline Adams and Britt Nawrocki, who was seeing her first lacrosse action after the conclusion of the ice hockey season. But four Mules netted a goal apiece in the

(See Womens’ lax, Page 2B)

Softball

(Continued from Page 1B)

scored five times in the fifth to take a 6-1 lead. Bowdoin closed the game with two in the bottom of the inning, but came no closer.

The Panthers batted around in the fifth. Consecutive singles by Fleming, Carroll and Viola loaded the bases, and Scholes cleared them with a triple. Westphal singled home Scholes, and singles by Uma Corcoran and Schultz produced the final run.

Carroll (two hits, two runs, RBI, Viola (two hits, run), Westphal (three hits, two runs, RBI), and Fleming (two hits, two runs) all had big games for Middlebury. Sam Hausman (6-2) got the pitching win, allowing four earned runs over five innings, and Emily Ye tossed two scoreless relief innings.

On April 5 the Panthers split two games vs. Bates (12-7, 4-3 NESCAC). Middlebury won the opener, 4-3, but lost the second game, 5-3. The games were played at Bowdoin due to field conditions at Bates.

In the opener Middlebury scored single runs in four innings and survived a Bobcat ninth-inning rally for the one-run win.

In the first, Scholes launched a solo homer. Middlebury made it 2-0 in the third, when Carroll tripled and Viola doubled her home. Bates answered with a run in the fifth.

Middlebury added to its lead in the sixth. Lont reached on an error, advanced to third on a Corcoran double, and raced home when Schulz struck out, but the ball bounced and the catcher had to throw down to first to get the out. The Panthers added a key insurance run in the seventh on doubles by Fleming and Scholes. Ye went the distance for the pitching win, allowing one earned run on seven hits and seven walks, while striking out eight.

In game two, Bates scored four runs in the fifth to erase a 3-1 Panther lead. The Panthers scored their three runs, all unearned, in the top of the fifth. Fleming tripled home one run, and Westphal singled home the other two. Scholes had three hits for Middlebury. Hausman started and gave up three runs, two earned, in four-plus innings. Abigail Jankowski (2-1) relieved and gave up two earned runs in an inning in taking the loss.

Women’s lax

(Continued from Page 1B)

third period, with only Shue finding the net for Middlebury, and Colby took its one-goal lead into the final quarter.

The Panthers slowly fought back over the final 15 minutes. Adams tied the game with 9:26 to go, racing towards the crease and firing a shot into the left side of the net.

Dion gave the Panthers an 11-10 lead by converting a free position five minutes later. Panther Lucy Bishop controlled the draw that followed, and at 3:47 Maggie Coughlin deposited a feed from Shue to make it 12-10.

Julia Jardina netted a free position at 3:09 for Colby, and it was a one-goal game again. Shortly afterward, Shue was carded and sent off for two minutes. But the Panther defense forced a series of

off-target shots and then a shot clock violation. The Panthers then ran all but about 30 seconds off the clock before Colby forced a turnover, but Shue quickly intercepted a clearing pass to clinch the victory.

Jardina led Colby with four goals, and Tate Ban and Ainsley Dion each scored twice. Colby goalie Jillian Kane made 11 saves.

Shue finished with four goals and two assists to pace the Panthers. Kelcey Dion scored three times, and Adams scored twice and controlled six draws, as did Bishop. Adams’s two goals gave her 302 for her career. Gina Driscoll started in goal for Middlebury, but played only 5:36, allowing three goals and making one save. Elizabeth Savage played the rest of the game and made three saves.

LOCAL
SPORTS



Steve James
Andy Kirkaldy
Matthew Dickerson
Karl Lindholm

WE’VE GOT IT COVERED!



THE COLUMNIST RECENTLY found himself enjoying the serene quiet along the Middle Prong of Little River in Great Smokey Mountains National Park; he and his companion let the tumbling waterfall refresh their souls.

Photo by Matthew Dickerson

Walking by waterfalls provides an unhurried perspective

“My mind is never empty or idle at the joinings of streams.” These words come from Wendell Berry, in his beautiful essay “A Native Hill.” But the sentiment is mine, also. Berry’s essay is in my mind as I stand next to my wife by the trailhead to Old Settler’s Trail in the Greenbrier area of Tennessee’s Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Three stream confluences are within sight, where the Middle Prong of Little Pigeon River and Porters Creek, along with two unnamed creeks, flow together to form Little Pigeon River.

On the final two miles of our drive upriver along a dirt road to get to the trailhead, we passed at least half a dozen more joinings as Bird Branch, Little Bird Branch, two branches of Rhodendron Creek (aptly named, as it turned out, for the woods were full of rhododendrons), and Ted’s Branch all found their way into Little Pigeon. The map shows another confluence just upriver over the rise to our east, and we will pass yet another on our walk up Porters Creek.

As one of the bloggers had

suggested in recommending Greenbrier Cove as a good place to experience the park, it is a quiet place, and a little out of the way: not one of the park’s famous locations. There was an empty ranger station a couple miles down the road where we bought our \$5 parking pass at an outdoor kiosk, but no visitor center. (The park has no entry fee, but parking passes are required if you stop for more than 15 minutes.) We saw only two other cars at the trailhead. One belonged to a family with two young kids, who were there for a picnic dinner by the stream.

Nonetheless, as Berry’s essay goes on to say in describing the joinings of streams, “Here is the work of the world going on. The creation is felt, alive and intent on its materials.” Though he then describes the confluence of a particular pair of streams on a hill in his own native state of Kentucky, about 300 miles north of where we now stand, I feel he could be describing Little Pigeon River. “The fork of the stream lies at the foot of the slope like hammer and chisel laid down at the foot of a

finished sculpture. But the stream is no dead tool; it is alive, it is still at its work. Put your hand to it to learn the health of this part of the world.”

.....

It is about 90 minutes before dusk. With no particular destination in mind, Deborah and I pull on our hiking shoes, randomly pick one of three trails heading away from our car, and start up the hill with a flashlight and our hiking poles, heading south between Porters Creek and one of the unnamed streams. Ten minutes later, we find ourselves standing in an old cemetery in the middle of the forest, with gravestones dating mostly from the 1890s. A few are a little older. Some are more recent, but I see none dating later than 1910. I will later find it on two maps, labeled on one as Whaley-Plemmons Cemetery and on another with a different spelling as just Plemons Cemetery. We walk quietly and with a certain solemnity among the worn monuments, reading names and dates, and imagining the families that had lived around there and the individuals who had died and been buried in such a beautiful and quiet place at ages today we would consider very young.

And then we find our way back to Porter Creek and continue our hike, pausing to admire tree bark, little insects, and spring ephemerals, some of which are familiar from the hills of Vermont. We have a flashlight, but we don’t really want to have to use it. Knowing we have the whole next day to explore, we turn around before it gets too dark and make our way downstream back to the car, and head back into the tourist town of Gatlinburg for dinner and the night.

.....

Our experience on the next day proves somewhat different, at least at first. Though no less beautiful. Leaving Gatlinburg with some picnic lunch food, we drive a few miles up the road and into the national park again, this time for a stop at the Sugarlands Visitor Center. There we find every parking lot packed with cars, and hordes of

people making their way onto the short walking trails that surround the center. At the RV parking lot, I find no RVs, but lots of cars in doubly-long spots. This leaves a big gap in the middle between cars. I’m able to squeeze my way between two cars and find some real estate. The effort proves worthwhile as the exhibits in the visitor center are beautifully done. We spend quite some time admiring the art and learning about the native wildlife before we take our first walk of the day along a crowded path to see a small waterfall and an old settlers’ cabin.

The rest of the day is spent meandering eastward along the winding Fighting Creek Gap Road. We climb up to about 2,000 feet elevation over the gap, and then slowly descend to the steep valley of Little River. Though the mountain peaks are much higher than Vermont, with several over 5,000 feet and some topping 6,000 — the highest peaks east of the Mississippi River, in fact — much of the terrain feels like Vermont. It is a steep landscape of narrow valleys and canyons. It is easy to see why eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina suffered such catastrophic flooding last summer. The steep terrain means the roads all follow rivers, and also the high gradient rivers have numerous falls and cascades. It proves to be a day of waterfall viewing, and a few hikes of one to three miles.

The last of these, which we made our way to at the recommendation of a ranger at the visitor center, starts at the end of the long, winding, dead-end Tremont Road. It follows a river labeled on the map as Middle Prong — which is short for the Middle Prong of Little River. The faded old green sign at the trailhead captures our mood and our goals. “A short walk on this easy trail offers close-up views, subtle aromas, and the serene quiet of a protected woodland. You will be walking in one of the last great wildland areas of the East, but you won’t need a backpack or hiking boots. Take your time. Have a seat on a rock or a log bench. The trail has no particular destination, so walk as far as you like and then return.”

Which is what we do. Including the rock. The log bench. The serene quiet. We are in no hurry. We enjoy a long tumbling waterfall that is given no name on the map. We let it refresh our souls, and then continue on. Another quarter mile up the trail we come to another series of smaller falls called the Lynn Camp Prong Cascades. We spend a longer time there. I spot a cluster of six little blue-gray butterflies called Spring Azures. Amazingly, they hold still for me to take some closeup photos. We share a bench with other hikers. We share a bench with just the two of us. Although I don’t get into the water, I can feel the cascades washing over me like the forest air I am breathing.



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Don’t forget to include your pet’s photo, name(s), approximate age(s), and a brief description of why they’re the best at what they do. Entries are welcome until **Sunday, May 4th at 11:59 PM.** Late entries will not be accepted.

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Questions?
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MUHS NO. 1 TENNIS player Jackson Murray backhands a return to his MIT Community Team opponent Luis Camacho on Saturday at Middlebury Indoor Tennis.

Independent photo/Steve James

Tennis

(Continued from Page 1B)
• 1st Doubles: Kurt Suchomel and Justin Smith (MITC) defeated Kirin Biancosino and Alex Andersson, (MUHS), 6-0, 6-1.
• 2nd Doubles: Chris Eberly and Hillary Andersson (MITC) defeated Paras Biancosino and Nate Cook-

Yoder, (MUHS), 6-3, 6-2.
In an exhibition match, Joe Kiel and Burge Ayers (MITC) defeated Jonathan Carpenter and Charles Young (MUHS), 6-2, 6-2.
MUHS Coach Ken Schoen called the event “a wonderful and close match.”

Schoen also said the match honored the Ignats, because they “generously allowed the boys’ and girls’ high school tennis teams to hold early season practices and sometimes matches, which otherwise might be rained out at the facility free of charge.”



MUHS NO. 2 SINGLES player Charles Young gets ready to rip a forehand at MIT Community Team opponent Ben Marshall on Saturday at Middlebury Indoor Tennis.

Independent photo/Steve James

Instructors wanted for state fishing program

MONTPELIER —Vermont Fish and Wildlife is seeking volunteers to become instructors for the Let’s Go Fishing program. The department will be hosting a one-day training workshop for new instructors on Saturday, April 26, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the Fish and Wildlife office, 111 West Street in Essex Junction.

Instructors in the Let’s Go Fishing program organize and teach clinics in their communities for Vermonters of all ages. Participants

in the training workshop will learn how to teach a basic fishing clinic, as well as learn about regulations and ethics, aquatic ecology, fisheries management, and habitat conservation. They will also learn to conduct specialized fishing clinics, including clinics on ice fishing and species-specific fishing.

Once completed, pending a background check, attendees will become certified instructors and have access to program equipment

and resources for their programs. The class is informal, and it is not necessary to have a high level of fishing expertise to become an instructor. There is no charge for the training, and all curriculum materials will be provided. Pre-registration is required, and you must be 18 years of age to participate. Those interested can register on Fish and Wildlife’s website April Events calendar or by emailing letsgofishing@vermont.gov.

Men’s lacrosse

(Continued from Page 1B)
with this year,” Campbell said. “And Colby is a well-coached, disciplined team and threw some good stuff at us. And our guys handled that well and played through some ups and downs. So we’re learning every time out here, and I thought today was another good learning experience.”

MIDD TOPS HAMILTON

At Hamilton on the previous Wednesday, in a 14-8 victory, the Panthers controlled most of the action, amassing a 45-27 advantage in shots at goal, winning 21 of 26 faceoffs, and outlasting the Continentals for ground balls, 39-16. Still, the Continentals hung tough until the Panthers pulled away by outscoring them in the fourth quarter, 5-2. Hamilton dropped to 3-6, 1-5 NESCAC.

Hamilton goalie Jack Fried had a

lot to do with it, making 15 saves. Kern also played well for the Panthers, with nine saves. White led the Panthers with three goals and an assist, Jamin scored three times, Curtis scored twice and set up three goals, and Brendan Hickey scored twice, both to open the fourth quarter with assists from Curtis. Four Panthers added a goal apiece. Munroe won 18 of 22 faceoffs, and Will Crispino led with five ground balls.

PANTHERS VS. SAINTS

On Tuesday the Panthers suffered a 7-6 loss at St. Lawrence in tough conditions: a snow-covered field with temperatures in the 20s in northern New York. St. Lawrence improved to 7-4 by overcoming an early Middlebury lead and holding off a late Panther surge.

The Panthers took a 3-1 first-

period lead on goals by Jamin, Thorndike and Finn McCarthy, and they still led at the half, 5-3, after the teams traded scores in the second period. Curtis and Demallie found the net in the second quarter for Middlebury.

But the Panthers went scoreless for the opening 22:46 of the second half, until Jamin finally found the net again in transition with a feed from Will Spehr.

The Panthers controlled the final few minutes of the game, but shot wide several times. And Saints goalie Michael Marinello made two key saves, including a point-blank stop on Curtis as the clock wound down. Both goalies played well: Marinello made 10 saves, and Kern blocked nine shots for the Panthers in what was a statistically even game.



PANTHER MIDFIELDER WILL Crispino carries the ball up the field on Saturday during the Middlebury College men’s lacrosse team’s 15-7 win over visiting Colby.

Independent photo/Steve James



PANTHER COOPER DEMALLIE swerves away from a Mule defender on Saturday during the Middlebury College men’s lacrosse team’s 15-7 win over visiting Colby.

Independent photo/Steve James

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Schedule

(Continued from Page 1B)

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 4/10 MUHS at Harwood | Cancelled |
| 4/11 OV at Fairfax | 4:30 PM |
| 4/11 Stowe at MAV | 4:30 PM |
| 4/12 St. Albans at MUHS | 11 AM |
| 4/15 MUHS at Woodstock | 4:30 PM |
| 4/15 MAV at Hartford | 4:30 PM |
| 4/17 CVU at MUHS | 4:30 PM |
| 4/18 MAV at St. J | 4:30 PM |
| 4/18 OV at Randolph | 6 PM |
| 4/19 Rice at MUHS | 11 AM |
| Boys' Tennis | |
| 4/10 MUHS at CVU | 4:30 PM |
| 4/14 MUHS at Stowe | 3:30 PM |
| 4/16 Colchester at MUHS | 4 PM |
| 4/18 S. Burlington at MUHS | 4 PM |
| Girls' Tennis | |
| 4/9 MUHS at U-32 | 3:30 PM |
| 4/12 Harwood at MUHS | 11 AM |
| 4/18 MUHS at St. Albans | 3:30 PM |
| Track & Field | |
| 4/15 VUHS/MUHS at CVU | 3:30 PM |
| 4/17 Mt. Abe at Burlington | 3:15 PM |
| Girls' Ultimate | |
| 4/14 MUHS at Burr & Burton | 4 PM |
| 4/17 Mt Mansfield at MUHS | 4 PM |
| Boys' Ultimate | |
| 4/11 MUHS at St. J | 4 PM |
| 4/16 MUHS at Rice | 4 PM |
| COLLEGE SPORTS | |
| Women's Lacrosse | |
| 4/12 Tufts at Midd | Noon |
| 4/19 Midd at Trinity | Noon |
| 4/23 Williams at Midd | 6 PM |
| Men's Lacrosse | |
| 4/12 Midd at Tufts | 1 PM |
| 4/19 Trinity at Midd | 1 PM |
| 4/23 Midd at Williams | 5 PM |
| Baseball | |
| 4/11 Hamilton at Midd | 4 PM |
| 4/12 Hamilton at Midd (2) | Noon |
| 4/18 Midd at Williams | 4 PM |
| 4/19 Midd at Williams (2) | Noon |
| Softball | |
| 4/12 Tufts at Midd (2) | Noon |
| 4/13 Midd at Trinity (2) | Noon |
| 4/19 Midd at Hamilton (2) | Noon |
| 4/20 Williams at Midd (2) | 1 PM |

ADDY WEBSITE
www.addisonindependent.com

Panther nine sweeps Cardinals
Middlebury moves into second place in NESCAC West

By ANDY KIRKALDY
MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury College baseball team swept three games from visiting Wesleyan this past weekend to improve to 13-9 overall, 4-1 in NESCAC West.

The Panthers’ league record is good for second place behind Williams (3-0) heading into this weekend’s NESCAC West play. Middlebury is scheduled to host Hamilton (9-11, 1-5 NESCAC West) for three games, one game on Friday at 4 p.m. and a Saturday doubleheader starting at noon.

This past weekend, the Panthers defeated Wesleyan on Friday, 10-4 in seven innings and 7-3, and then finished the sweep of the Cardinals on Sunday, 11-4. The teams were originally scheduled to play a Saturday doubleheader, but due to bad weather one of those games was moved to Friday and the other to Sunday. A poor forecast also led to the postponement of a Tuesday home non-league game vs RPI.

PANTHERS, 10-4

On this past Friday two four-run innings were key as the Panthers defeated the Cardinals, 10-4, as the series opened with a seven-inning outing. Two Kyle McCausland homers, one a grand slam, sparked the attack.

Wesleyan took a 1-0 lead on a Jack Carpenter solo shot in the top of the third, but the Panthers immediately answered with their first four-run inning. After Brayden Matthews tripled and Nathan Samii was hit by a pitch, Owen Fox singled Matthews home. Then Kyle McCausland capped the rally by launching a three-run homer.

Middlebury added a run in the fourth on a Will Ashley triple followed by a Carter Chi sacrifice fly. Wesleyan tightened the game

when Jake Acker stroked a two-run double in the fifth to make it 5-3. Middlebury got one run back in the bottom of the inning, when Fox reached on an error, advanced on a McCausland single and scored on an Anthony Pellagrini sacrifice fly.

A single, stolen base and another Carpenter single sliced the lead to 6-4 in the sixth, but the Panthers put the game away in the bottom of the inning when McCausland cleared the fence again, this time with his grand slam that following an error, a Samii single and a walk to Fox. Christian Zebrowski got the pitching win, going 4.2 innings and allowing three earned runs on four hits and four walks, striking out five. Stefano Yozzo tossed 1.1 hitless innings and earned a save.

PANTHERS, 7-3

In Friday’s second game three Panther pitchers held the Cardinals to three earned runs on seven hits and two walks. Emmet George started and earned his first win of the season, allowing four hits and two earned runs while striking out seven in five innings. Charlie Kutz tossed two scoreless innings of relief to earn his third save of the spring.

Samii homered for Middlebury in the first, and Evan Diaz slugged a solo shot for Wesleyan in the second before the Panthers plated three runs in the bottom of the second to take the lead for good.

Pablo Spielman-Rodriguez and Carter Chi both walked to start the rally. Spielman-Rodriguez advanced to second on a failed pickoff attempt and stole third, and Chi stole second after he walked. The two then worked a double steal, with Spielman-Rodriguez bolting home. Singles by Ben Slaughter and Samii and a Pellagrini ground ball scored two

more runs.

Wesleyan made it a one-run game with one run in each of the fourth and sixth innings, but the Panthers scored two in the sixth and added an insurance run in the eighth.

In the sixth, hits by Gus Parker and Spielman-Rodriguez and a hit batter loaded the bases, and an error and a walk to Samii plated the two runs. Slaughter homered in the eighth to account for the final Panther run.

PANTHERS, 11-4

On Sunday the Panthers took a 6-2 lead with four runs in the second inning and never trailed. Six Panther pitchers combined to hold the Cardinals to four runs on six hits and three walks over nine innings. Kunal Handa (3-0), the fourth pitcher, threw two perfect innings and was credited with the win.

Middlebury scored twice in the first on an error, a Spielman-Rodriguez hit, a Fox double, and a Pellagrini RBI grounder. Then the Panthers brought out the heavy lumber with two outs in the second. With Chi on base after walking, Samii and Spielman-Rodriguez doubled in runs, and McCausland cracked a two-run homer to make it 6-2.

Middlebury added a run in the fourth, when Slaughter singled, stole second and scored on a Samii single. The Cardinals got a run back in the sixth on two hit batsmen and a Carpenter single, but Slaughter homered in the bottom of the inning to make it 8-3.

The Panthers added their final three runs in the seventh. Fox singled, Pellagrini walked, and Parker sacrificed them to second and third. Ashley scored Fox with a sac fly, moving Pellagrini to third, and Chi walked. The Panthers then worked another double steal, with Pellagrini scoring. Slaughter doubled to plate Chi with the final run.

GOP misrepresents
suit by Democrats

By VT Digger.org

If you’re tuned in to rightwing social media posts or rightwing media, you’ve probably heard claims that Democrats are trying to stop Trump’s recent executive order to change how elections are run to “rig elections” in their favor. It’s part of the years-old campaign by Trump and MAGA Republicans to discredit the validity of the nation’s election system since Trump overwhelmingly lost the presidency to Joe Biden in 2020.

The erroneous claims today suggest Democrats have filed suit against Trump’s executive order to allow noncitizens to vote in U.S. elections.

On the contrary, the lawsuit — brought by the Democratic National Committee, the Democratic Governors Association, and Senate and House Democratic leaders — argues that the order is unconstitutional because the president doesn’t have the unilateral power to dictate election rules. That’s the purview of Congress.

In a story by the Associated Press, their reporter corrects the deliberate misinformation campaign by the GOP. “The lawsuit asks that President Donald Trump’s executive order to overhaul elections in the U.S. be blocked on the grounds that a president does not have the authority to dictate election rules. It also asserts that the order could disenfranchise legal voters.

Democrats reinforce the fact that casting a ballot as a noncitizen in federal elections is already illegal.

The March 25 executive order, “Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections,” includes

a requirement for documentary proof of citizenship to register to vote in federal elections and calls for states to work with federal agencies to determine voter eligibility and prosecute election crimes. Democrats have noted that an estimated 9% of U.S. citizens of voting age, or 21.3 million people, do not have proof of citizenship readily available, according to a 2023 report by the Brennan Center for Justice and other groups. They argue those 21.3 million people would have their right to vote denied through such a technical barrier, not because they are not eligible citizens.

MISINFORMATION

Republican legislators like Sen. Mike Lee of Ohio, nonetheless, purposely misrepresent what Democrats are suggesting by saying on social media that Democrats are suing to allow “non-citizens to vote in American elections.”

Republicans do not admit that the executive order contradicts existing “laws and guarantees” already enshrined in law and in the constitution. Multiple studies and investigations in individual states, according to the AP, have shown that noncitizens casting ballots in federal elections is exceedingly rare. A 1996 U.S. law makes it illegal for noncitizens to vote in elections for president or members of Congress. Violators can be fined and imprisoned for up to a year and can also be deported.

The Campaign Legal Center and the State Democracy Defenders Fund filed a separate lawsuit shortly before the DNC’s that also called the order unconstitutional. Both are filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

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Feds slash LIHEAP staff

VT officials assessing damage

By ERIN PETENKO
VtDigger.org

MONTPELIER — Vermont officials are assessing how residents may be affected after the mass firing of federal workers who administer the LIHEAP program, which provides millions of dollars in heating assistance to low-income households in the state. The cuts, reported by national news outlets April 2, won't immediately affect Vermonters receiving the federal assistance, according to the state Agency of Human Services.

But the agency is still evaluating potential impacts to the program in the long term, Economic Services Division Deputy Commissioner Miranda Gray said via email Thursday.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program provided \$23 million in funding to Vermont in 2025 for the winter season, which runs from November to April. That money has already been allocated to the state, according to Tom Donohue, CEO of BROC Community Action.

Officials from community action agencies, which help provide fuel oil or other heating assistance directly to Vermonters in need, expressed concern about

the possibility of losing these funds in the future, given the critical nature of the program.

Donohue estimated that BROC, a community action agency in Rutland and Bennington counties, has provided heating assistance to more than 600 households across its domain in this especially cold winter. "Our staff has appointments all day long, pretty much every day, Monday through Friday, and then there's an after-hours emergency number too," he said.

Capstone Community Action in Washington, Lamoille and Orange counties has provided more than 700 assists this season, according to Alison Calderara, the organization's interim co-executive director. "These funds can be about survival for people," she said.

Vermont does not receive funds for cooling assistance like warmer states do, Donohue said. But Calderara said she was sympathetic to states like Arizona that could be losing immediate funds as they approach the summer months.

"They could have 120-degree (weather), and yet they may be looking at not getting their funding," she said.

community calendar

THURSDAY

Book sale donations in Vergennes. Thursday, April 10, 3-6 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Finished with your winter cabin fever reading? Donate your used books to the Bixby Library book sale. Donations accepted in the back parking lot. Fiction should be published after 2014 or written by a popular author, and non-fiction should be current and saleable. Donated books will be featured at the book sale on Saturday, April 12. Bixby Library is located at 258 Main St., Vergennes.

Dam management meeting in Middlebury. Thursday, April 10, 6:30 p.m., Middlebury Union High School, 73 Charles Ave. Come to this public information meetings held by the Agency of Natural Resources to discuss how upcoming dam safety rules may affect the management of state-owned, manmade dams that have been impacted by beavers. This is particularly relevant to Bristol Pond.

FRIDAY

Volunteer day on the TAM in Middlebury. Friday, April 11, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Wright Park, Seymour St. Ext. Celebrate National Volunteer Week with MALT. Meet MALT's Trails and Volunteer Manager, Liam, at the Seymour St Ext entrance of Wright Park. Liam will provide tools and instructions for volunteer groups. Bring work gloves, water and snacks. More info and registration at www.maltvt.org/events.

Lenten Fish Fry in Bristol. Friday, April 11, 5-7 p.m., St. Ambrose Parish, 11 School St. Menu includes all you can eat fried or baked haddock, French fries, coleslaw dinner roll, beverage and dessert. Adults \$17; children age 9 and younger \$9; immediate family of 5 for \$50. More info call 802-453-2488.

North Branch School annual play in Ripton. Friday, April 11, 7:30 p.m., Ripton Community House, Route 125. Exploring the themes of Utopia and Dystopia, the play concerns a thriving city called Cityopolis. The story hinges on one question: under a new mayor, will Cityopolis continue to thrive, or will it collapse into a dystopian nightmare. Tickets \$10. Four dollars from each admission goes to support schools in Ukraine, the Addison County Food Shelf, and the Vermont Afghan Alliance. The play is open to the public. Coffee, tea, baked goods (sweet and savory) for sale, and free cupcakes.

SATURDAY

Spring breakfast in Shoreham. Saturday, April 12, 8:30-10 a.m., Shoreham Congregational Church, School Rd. Celebrate the arrival of spring with plain or blueberry pancakes or French toast with Vermont maple syrup, sausages, home fries, quiche, and beverages. Tickets \$12 adults/\$6 children/\$30 families. Please bring a non-perishable food item or paper product for the Food Shelf to help those in need.

Push to the Pavilion craft fair in Vergennes. Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Vergennes Union Elementary School, 47 East St. Raffle prizes, bake sale, crafts, and a variety of vendors, all on hand to help raise funds for the Veterans Memorial Park Pavilion Project. For more information, to be a vendor, volunteer, or make a donation email progress8773761@gmail.com.

Clean Out the Closet sale in Vergennes. Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 So. Maple St. St. Peter's Resale Closet shop is cleaning out for new inventory and will hold a take what you want, pay what you can sale in the Parish Hall. Gently used clothing for men, women and children, household goods, books and more. The Closet Shop, behind Parish Hall, will also be open at that time with items for sale at regular prices. Proceeds from all sales go to St. Peter's charity programs.

Used book sale in Vergennes. Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., downstairs, Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. April showers bring back the Bixby used book sale. Enter from the back parking lot and peruse the updated selection of donated books people have read over the winter.

Peaceful protest supporting libraries in Vergennes. Saturday, April 12, noon-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Come join us to protest against Trump and his defunding libraries and museums.

Prize Bingo in Leicester. Saturday, April 12, 1 p.m., Senior Center, Four Corners. Sponsored by the Leicester Historical Society. Refreshments served and all are welcome. Plan to spend an afternoon with friends and neighbors and possibly win a special prize.

Turkey and all the fixin's supper in Vergennes. Saturday, April 12, 5-6 p.m., Vergennes United Methodist Church, Main St., across from the Opera House. Menu includes roast turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, vegetable, roll and dessert. \$12. Takeout Only Preorder only by 7 p.m. Thursday, April 10 at 802-877-3150.

North Branch School annual play in Ripton. Saturday, April 12, 7:30 p.m., Ripton Community House, Route 125. See April 11 listing.

SUNDAY

All-you-can-eat pancake breakfast in Addison. Sunday, April 13, 7-11 a.m., Addison Fire Station, Jct. Routes 17 & 22A. Menu includes: plain and blueberry pancakes, locally made real Vermont maple syrup, sausage, bacon, home fries, coffee, hot chocolate and orange juice. \$10 adults/\$7 kids under 12. Funds will be used to purchase equipment for the Addison Volunteer Fire Department. More info at 802-759-2237. Last Breakfast until autumn.

Breakfast buffet in Vergennes. Sunday, April 13, 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.

Mural unveiling and open house in Vergennes. Sunday, April 13, 3-6 p.m., The Strong House Inn, 94 Main St. Celebrate the unveiling of a stunning new mural that pays tribute to the vibrant history of Vergennes. The mural spans all four walls of the newly renovated dining room and captures key moments and scenes from Vergennes's past. The open house will give visitors the unique opportunity to meet the artist and hear about her inspiration and creative process. Free and open to the public. Appetizers and cash bar available.

MONDAY

Cribbage night in Bristol. Monday, April 14, 7-8:15 p.m., Libanus Lodge, corner of North and Elm Streets.

TUESDAY

Green Mountain Boys and the Capture of Fort Ticonderoga in Orwell. Tuesday, April 15, 7p.m., Orwell Free

Library, 473 Main St. Join Fort Ticonderoga Vice President of Public History Stuart Lillie to examine the broader expedition to capture the fort on May 10, 1775. Discover the planning for the capture of Fort Ticonderoga and how Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys came to be at the center of this military triumph. Part of Orwell Shoreham Libraries Keynote Speakers Series.

"The Uses of Simulation in Healthcare" in Middlebury. Tuesday, April 15, 7 p.m., Anderson Studio, Town Hall Theater, 42-46 Merchants Row. This final talk in the AAUW / Ilsley Library 2024-25 speaker series features Clinical Professor and Director of Curriculum at Northern Arizona University Dr. Kelly Macauley, who will explore the history and evolution of simulation in healthcare, highlighting its role in training and skill development.

100+ Women Addison County meeting. Tuesday, April 15, 7 p.m. 100+ Women organizers are looking forward to seeing members again for a fun meeting and fund-dispersing voting. Cash bar and snacks available. New members always welcome. For more information go to 100WACVT.org.

WEDNESDAY

How to Love a Forest presentation in New Haven. Wednesday, April 16, 7 p.m., Town Offices, 78 North St. The New Haven Conservation Commission's Armchair Naturalist Series, in partnership with Friends of the Library, host forester Ethan Tapper as he discusses his debut book, "How to Love a Forest." To prepare for this discussion, the community is invited to read his eloquently articulated insights on how to create a more holistic and responsible relationship with forest ecosystems. Pick up a copy at the library or visit your local bookshop.

THURSDAY

Middlebury Union Middle School talent show in Middlebury. Thursday, April 17, 6-8 p.m., Main Stage, Town Hall Theater, 42-46 Merchants Row. This May Middlebury Union Middle School 8th Graders will travel to Boston for a day packed full of fun and educational opportunities. Help MUMS 8th graders reach their fundraising goal while enjoying a night of entertainment Tickets \$5-\$25. Thanks to fundraisers such as this, the annual trip is available to all 8th grade MUMS students at no charge to caregivers. To contribute without purchasing a ticket go to gofund.me/848af78b.

SATURDAY

River Watch field training in Bristol. Saturday, April 19, 10 a.m.-noon., Town Green gazebo. If you have an interest in the health and wellbeing of our local streams and rivers, and would like to assist in collecting water quality samples, please join us for this training session in which we review monitoring protocols and tips for successful field work. Please bring tick protection as we will be visiting the river. More info contact acrwcvt@gmail.com, 802-434-3236, or visit www.acrwc.org.

Community Forum on Federal actions in Middlebury. Saturday, April 19, 10 a.m., Town Hall Theater, 42-26 Merchants Row. Join State Sen. Ruth Hardy, Vermont Attorney General Charity Clark and Treasurer Mike Pieciak to discuss the federal situation and its impact on Vermont. Panelists will provide information about the potential impact of federal actions and what Vermont officials are doing to prepare and fight back.

River Watch field training in Middlebury. Saturday, April 19, 1-3 p.m., Rec Park picnic pavilion, Mary Hogan Dr. If you have an interest in the health and wellbeing of our local streams and rivers, and would like to assist in collecting water quality samples, please join us for this training session in which we review monitoring protocols and tips for successful

field work. Please bring tick protection as we will be visiting the river. More info contact acrwcvt@gmail.com, 802-434-3236, or visit www.acrwc.org.

SUNDAY

Free community Easter dinner in Middlebury. Sunday, April 20, noon-2 p.m., VFW 530 Exchange St. 802 Cares will be treating the Middlebury Community to a free Easter dinner. Menu includes ham, mashed potatoes, vegetables, drinks and dessert. Donations welcome. Please message Casandra Hayes to make a reservation for sit-down or take-out meals. 802-345-1451 or 802cares@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY

Learn about insurance in Middlebury. Wednesday, April 23, 5:30 p.m., 30 Main St., downstairs. National Bank of Middlebury will host Gretchen Kellogg from The Richards Group in the second of a three-part series to better understand your insurance coverage. Today Kellogg will talk about auto insurance. Nothing for sale, just a free educational opportunity.

FRIDAY

Vermont Freedom to Marry silver anniversary at Middlebury College. Friday, April 25, 2-5 p.m., Davis Family Library, 110 Storrs Ave. Celebrate 25 years of marriage equality with the folks who made it happen. Join Middlebury Special Collections for a panel discussion with speakers involved in the Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force and the landmark Baker v. Vermont case, one of the first judicial affirmations of the right of same-sex couples. Also hear remarks from Processing Archivist Anna Hurd on their experience arranging, describing and creating the finding aid for the Vermont Freedom to Marry records, with an open house in Special Collections featuring highlights from the collection before and after the presentation.

SATURDAY

First Annual Silver Heist 5K and Little Bandits Bolt in Orwell. Saturday, April 26, 10 a.m. A unique 5K race that combines local history, community spirit, and fitness. Runners go on a historic journey through the town of Orwell, retracing the footsteps of early settlers and outlaws, inspired by two infamous bank robberies that took place in the 1800s and early 1900s. Along the way, they will have the chance to win \$30 worth of silver, a nod to the silver stolen in the 1800s robbery at the Orwell Bank. Registration open now at runsignup.com/Race/VT/Orwell/silverheist5k.

Bingo in Vergennes. Saturday, April 26, 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.

Ag Appreciation dinner and dance in Middlebury. Saturday, April 26, 5-10 p.m., VFW, 530 Exchange St. in Middlebury. Program includes a panel on Vermont and national important legislation, an Italian dinner prepared by the Addison County Farm Bureau board, and dancing to music by the Hitmen. A family event and a fun evening open to farmers, ag businesses, and anyone with an interest in agriculture. More info and registration at wjscottjr@comcast.net or 802-881-8836. Bring a dessert to share and some non-perishable food items for the food shelf.



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Reader Comments

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

A subscriber from Bristol writes:

"I look forward to seeing the Addy Indy in my mail basket every Friday - great little paper! Thank you!"

Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.



ADDISON COUNTY
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PUBLIC NOTICE?

Email us at: legals@addisonindependent.com



Love your trees

FORESTER ETHAN TAPPER will be at the New Haven Town Offices, 8 North St., on Wednesday, April 16, at 7 p.m. to discuss his debut book, "How to Love a Forest." The book explores the fragile and resilient community that is a forest, introducing us to wolf trees and spring ephemerals, to the cryptic creatures of the rhizosphere and the necrosphere. It helps us reimagine what forests are and what it means to care for them.

Photo courtesy of Ethan Tapper



Breaking out the raw bar

WILLIAM CURTIS, WHOSE son Billy (#13) scored in Saturday's Middlebury College lacrosse win over Colby on Saturday, shucks Cape Cod oysters for parents and boosters before the game.

Independent photos/Steve James

Vergennes church to host 'Clean Out the Closet' sale

VERGENNES — If you like used stuff, there's an opportunity for you coming up.

St. Peter's Catholic Church in Vergennes will hold its Clean Out the Closet sale on Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. The event will be held at St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 South Maple St.

St. Peter's Resale Closet shop is cleaning out for new inventory and will hold a take-what-you-want, pay-what-you-can sale in the Parish Hall. There will be gently used clothing for men, women and children, household goods, books and more.

The Closet Shop, behind Parish Hall, will also be open at that time with items for sale at regular prices. Proceeds from all sales go to St. Peter's charity projects.

Benefit craft fair to aid city's pavilion project

VERGENNES — The time is coming to help build Vergennes's fun infrastructure.

Mark your calendar for the Push to the Pavilion craft fair on Saturday, April 12. The fair is slated for 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., at Vergennes Union Elementary School on East Street.

Look for raffle prizes, a bake sale, crafts, and a variety of vendors, all on hand to help raise funds for the Veterans Memorial Park Pavilion Project.

For more information, to be a vendor, volunteer, or make a donation email progress8773761@gmail.com.

April 15 talk to explore simulation in healthcare

MIDDLEBURY — Healthcare simulation has transformed the way medical professionals learn and practice. In the final talk in the AAUW/Ilsley Library 2024-25 speaker series, Clinical Professor and Director of Curriculum at Northern Arizona University Dr. Kelly Macauley, will explore the history and evolution of simulation in healthcare, highlighting its role in training and skill development. The talk will be held on Tuesday evening, April 15, 7 p.m. in the new Anderson Studio in Town Hall Theater.

Dr. Macauley will examine how simulation enhances healthcare education, improves patient outcomes, and prepares providers for real-world clinical challenges, and she will cover the concept of fidelity — how closely a simulation replicates real-life scenarios.

The talks is co-sponsored by Middlebury AAUW (American Association of University Women) and the Ilsley Library.



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BIRTHS

Henry and Clair Harper of New Canaan, Conn., March 22, a boy, **Walker Edward Harper**, half-brother to Hunter, Grace and Tata Mia Harper of Julius Kingdom Farm in Shoreham, Vt.

SHARE YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT.

Email news@addisonindependent.com

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

Middlebury Union High School

Angus Blackwell

Middlebury Union High School introduces Angus Blackwell, the son of Jennifer Blackwell and Spencer Blackwell, as our Student of the Week. He resides in East Middlebury and is the oldest of three children; his sister Mabel is a sixth grader at the Red Cedar School in Bristol and Ida is a sophomore at MUHS.

Angus is well known in the MUHS community for his positive attitude. Our teachers respect his contributions in the classroom as a diligent and thoughtful student. He is a good student who has pursued a challenging curriculum, and his teachers comment that he is a joy to have in class. They note that he is "intellectually curious and is committed to his studies." Angus loves mathematics and science and says Ms. Manley's Environmental Systems and Societies class has been a favorite and a signature lesson was a field trip to the Otter Creek to take water samples.

Our coaches share that he is a thoughtful and natural leader, both on and off the athletic field. His peers chose him to captain two varsity sports — lacrosse and football. He leads with kindness and compassion and sets an example for his teammates as to what it means to be a student athlete. Last fall he served as a peer leader and helped guide newly enrolling 9th graders as their transitioned from MUMS to MUHS. Angus says that he is especially proud to have played on the Tigers football team that went to the state championship game his sophomore year. He represented our school on the "North-South" football team, a statewide competition, and will play this summer in the Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl at Vermont State University in Castleton. He and several other Tigers, along with other Vermont high school students, participated in a student athletic leadership conference sponsored by the Vermont Principals' Association last fall.

As Angus reflects on his time at MUHS he says, "It's been a great four years and I will miss waving the MUHS flag at sporting events!"

He is ready for what's next and will soon decide between a range of colleges and universities within a reasonable distance of home where he can continue to be involved in athletics and focus on his interest in environmental science. We're certain a bright future awaits Angus and wish him the best.



Angus Blackwell
MUHS

Vergennes Union High School

Torrey Hanna

Torrey Hanna of Addison is Vergennes Union High School's Student of the Week. Torrey has excelled at VUHS, achieving honors or high honors each semester. As a junior she was awarded the Saint Michael's College Book Award for Community Engagement, and she is a member of the National Honor Society. Torrey's favorite class is the Addison Repertory Theatre program at the Patricia A. Hannaford Career Center. She has enjoyed learning about performance and playwriting and the strong sense of community in the program. She found ART's recent production, "I'll Tell You a Secret," highly rewarding. She credits ART teacher Eric Reid St. John for making it such an excellent experience. Back at VUHS, Torrey also appreciates Frau Kepes for making class engaging and fun, and caring very genuinely about all students, not just those who have taken a class with her.

Torrey is a runner, and has been on the varsity cross country, indoor track, and track and field teams for all four years of high school, captaining all three teams since her sophomore year. This winter she competed at New England Championship Meet for indoor track as part of the VUHS girls' 4x800 meter relay team. She has participated in musicals at VUHS and with Very Merry Theatre in Burlington. She is also an accomplished 4-H dairy competitor, showing locally, at the Eastern States Exposition in Springfield, Mass., and at 2024 National 4-H Dairy Conference in Madison, Wis. She captained the 2023 Vermont Dairy Quiz Bowl Team, which earned first place at the 2023 Eastern States competition, and third place at the 2023 national competition in Louisville, Ky. Torrey plays clarinet in the VUHS symphonic and jazz bands, as well as the Vergennes City Band during the summer. She is also a reporter for the VUHS newspaper. If that's not enough, she also manages to compete in fencing tournaments with the Vermont Fencing Alliance.

Torrey works at Very Merry Theatre camp during the summer or spends time reading, writing, singing, working with her cows, spending time with friends and family, researching her genealogy project, and eating ice cream.

She says taking advantage of different opportunities, even if they're unconventional, is really important, because you never know what you'll gain from them. "I'm so glad that I did everything that I did in high school, and even opportunities that I was initially uncertain about turned out to be some of my favorite experiences," she says.

After graduation, Torrey plans on studying public health at a small liberal arts school. All of us at VUHS wish her all the best.



Torrey Hanna
VUHS

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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

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

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Immediate positions available working Monday – Friday and some Saturdays. Paid Holidays, partial uniforms new bonuses available, & competitive pay.

To apply, call 802-352-9088
307 Kelly Cross Road
Salisbury, VT

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Volunteer Drivers Needed

RSVP of Addison County is searching for volunteer drivers to help Tri-Valley Transit. Flexible schedule to fit a busy life. There are both local and long-distance trips.

TRI VALLEY TRANSIT

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer driver give us a call today at 802-468-7056

AmeriCorps Seniors

AGWAY

Cashier - Customer Service

Part-time and Full-time Positions available

Immediate Openings available.

Must be able to work until 6pm. Days and Weekends a MUST. Up to 40 hours per week.

Wage commensurate with experience.

Please send Resumes to info@middleburyagway.com or Fill out Application at **Middlebury Agway, 338 Exchange St., Middlebury VT.**

Please no phone calls.

All of our positions offer generous, twice a year bonuses and employee discount on all products.

Middlebury Agway 338 Exchange St. – Middlebury, VT.

Addison Independent

CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM

Cash in on our 4-for-3 rates! Pay for 3 issues, get 4th issue free! An ad placed for consecutive issues runs the 4th time for free!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Or, submit your classified ad on our website: addisonindependent.com

DEADLINE: Monday at 5 p.m.

- 25¢ per word • minimum \$2.50 per ad
- 50¢ internet listing for up to 4 issues • minimum 2 insertions

• Special 4 for 3 rates not valid for the following categories: Services, Opportunities, Real Estate, Wood heat, Attn. Farmers, For Rent & Help Wanted

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notices | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Wanted | <input type="checkbox"/> Att. Farmers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Card of Thanks | <input type="checkbox"/> Help Wanted | <input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personals | <input type="checkbox"/> For Sale | <input type="checkbox"/> Cars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Meetings** | <input type="checkbox"/> Trucks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free** | <input type="checkbox"/> For Rent | <input type="checkbox"/> SUVs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lost 'N Found** | <input type="checkbox"/> Want to Rent | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobiles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garage Sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Heat | <input type="checkbox"/> Boats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lawn & Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate | <input type="checkbox"/> Wanted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Animals | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Wanted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption | | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Rentals |

** no charge for these ads Spotlight with large ✓ \$1

PLEASE PRINT YOUR AD...

Number of words: _____

Cost: _____

of runs: _____

Spotlight Charge: _____

Internet Listing: \$ _____

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

For Sale

For Rent

For Rent

1952 FARMALL CUB TRACTOR with side mount mower. starts and runs, has wheel weights, & tire chains. Does not charge, needs minor work on battery box and brakes. \$2200. cabesette@juno.com or 802-598-2476

2011 38' CAMPER needs little work. \$6500, must sell. Call 802-349-2918.

ENCORE WOOD STOVE porcelain green with glass door. \$1200 or best offer, must sell. Call 802-349-2918.

FIREWOOD STOVE in excellent shape. \$1800 or best offer, must sell. Call 802-349-2918

TWO GOODYEAR TIRES 255/65R17, less than 30k miles. \$100 for both, call 802-352-4338.

FOR SALE!

Caterpillar D4C Dozer



Great shape! \$32,000

Call Steve Messenger at 802-238-8934



Lawn and Garden

CUB CADET GT 2544 lawn tractor with mower deck, tire chains, wheel weights, and small cart. \$975. cabesette@juno.com or 802-598-2476

For Rent

1000 SQUARE FEET OF RETAIL available with parking on Bakery Lane in downtown Middlebury. 802-349-8544.

3 BEDROOM APARTMENT in Brandon Village. All inclusive, no pets, no smoking. Security required. \$1,000 monthly. 802-247-6829.

5,000 SQUARE FEET available. Exchange Street, Middlebury, VT. 802-349-8544.

✓
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.

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

FERRISBURGH: Friendly senior woman seeks homeshare guest for her cozy home close to Basin Harbor. Enjoys watching TV, knitting. \$200/month in exchange for companionship, assistance with household maintenance, light cleaning. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

GOSHEN: Housesitting opportunity, periodically shared with the home owners, in a scenic rural spot, 14 miles to Middlebury. \$650/month plus utilities, light snow removal. Large space for gardening! AWD or winter tires needed. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

MIDDLEBURY SUGARWOOD APARTMENTS is currently taking waitlist applications for 2, 3, 4 bedroom apartments. Minimum occupancy requirements. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply- Rent based on income. Equal Housing Opportunity 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www.SummitPMG.com.

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

ORWELL: Outdoorsy retiree who enjoys landscaping, hiking, swimming seeking companionable dog-friendly housemate to share her rural home. \$350/month. Shared bath. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

UPSTAIRS 2 BEDROOM APARTMENT Kitchen, living room combo with office. Pets negotiable. \$1800 /month, all utilities included. Call 802-349-8344

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

Wood Heat

DRY OR GREEN firewood for sale. Delivery available. 802-349-4212.

Real Estate

✓
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.

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.

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

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Elderly Services Office Administrator

**Do you have great organizing skills?
Enjoy working with numbers?
Comfortable with technology?
Work well with others in a team setting?
Join our administrative support team!**


Elderly Services is looking for a half-time office administrator, with opportunities to make a full-time position if desired. Enjoy rewarding work, great coworkers, delicious meals, and an uplifting environment in a beautiful setting.



Applicants should be patient, flexible, cheerful, tolerant, fun-loving, and thrive in a team setting. They should enjoy supporting a large part-time staff, following through on projects, tracking many details to completion, and helping the organization continue to improve

administrative systems in our growing agency. A bachelor's degree is required; experience in office administration and skills in Microsoft Office and Google Suites strongly desired; experience with databases, Quick Books and social media/web pages a plus.

**For more information or to apply, go to
<https://elderlyservices.org/job-opportunities/>**



Addison County
Parent/Child Center

Join the Parent/Child Center Team
EARLY INTERVENTIONIST

We are seeking an **Early Interventionist** to work with young families as an outreach worker on our highly skilled, creative and energetic team.

You will work in coordination with parents in the home, community, and in our program in Middlebury in order to ensure that children are growing healthy and strong.

Candidates must have a solid understanding of child development, early intervention Part C , family systems, communication skills and flexibility. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in a related field is required.

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

TOWN OF STARKSBORO
WARNING

The legal voters of the Town of Starksboro, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Starksboro Town Offices at 2849 VT Route 116, in the Town of Starksboro on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, between the hours of seven o'clock (7:00) 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

Shall general obligation bonds or notes or other evidences of indebtedness of the Town of Starksboro in an amount not to exceed One Million One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,100,000.00), subject to reduction by available grants-in-aid or other funding sources, be issued to finance the cost of removing and rebuilding Fire Station #2 and renovating and improving the School House (the "Jerusalem Community Center Project"), the estimated cost of such improvements being One Million Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,300,000.00)?

The legal voters of the Town of Starksboro 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 Town of Starksboro are further notified that an informational meeting will be held on Monday, April 28, 2025, at the Robinson Elementary School, 41 Parsonage Rd., in the Town of Starksboro at half past six o'clock (6:30 p.m.) in the evening, for the purpose of explaining the proposed improvements and the financing thereof.

Adopted and approved at a regular meeting of the Selectboard of the Town of Starksboro duly called, noticed and held on April 4, 2025. Received for record and recorded in the records of the Town of Starksboro on April 7, 2025.

ATTEST:
Amy McCormick
Town Clerk
Selectboard

ACT 250 NOTICE
MINOR APPLICATION #9A0325-4
10 V.S.A. §§ 6000 - 6111

The Keewaydin Foundation, Songadeewin of Keewaydin, has filed application #9A0325-4 for a project generally described as construction of a new gravel parking area adjacent to the existing equipment cabin to accommodate vans and canoe trailers. The project is located at 500 Rustic Lane in Salisbury, 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 "9A0325-4."

No hearing will be held, and a permit may be issued unless, on or before Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 4:30 PM, 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. Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law may not be prepared unless the Commission holds a public hearing.

For more information contact the District 9 Coordinator listed below.

Josh Donabedian
District 9 Coordinator
111 West Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Joshua.Donabedian@vermont.gov

PROPOSED STATE RULES

By law, public notice of proposed rules must be given by publication in newspapers of record. The purpose of these notices is to give the public a chance to respond to the proposals. The public notices for administrative rules are now also available online at <https://secure.vermont.gov/SOS/rules/>. The law requires an agency to hold a public hearing on a proposed rule, if requested to do so in writing by 25 persons or an association having at least 25 members.

To make special arrangements for individuals with disabilities or special needs please call or write the contact person listed below as soon as possible.

To obtain further information concerning any scheduled hearing(s), obtain copies of proposed rule(s) or submit comments regarding proposed rule(s), please call or write the contact person listed below. You may also submit comments in writing to the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, State House, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 (802-828-2231).

Supervised Billing.
Vermont Proposed Rule: 25P016
AGENCY: Agency of Human Services
CONCISE SUMMARY: This Health Care Administrative rule sets forth the criteria for Medicaid coverage and reimbursement of mental health services provided under supervised billing in Vermont. The amendment of this rule updates the language to remove non-eligible provider types, updates the supervised billing structure, aligns the program with best practice, and clarifies policy and program requirements.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Ashley Berliner, Agency of Human Services, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671-1000 Tel: 802-578-9305 Fax: 802-241-0450 Email: ahs.medicaidpolicy@vermont.gov. URL: <https://humanservices.vermont.gov/rules-policies/health-care-rules/health-care-administrative-rules-hcar>.
FOR COPIES: Grace Johnson, Agency of Human Services 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671-1000 Tel: 802-760-8128 Fax: 802-241-0450 Email: grace.e.johnson@vermont.gov.

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT
Addison Unit

CIVIL DIVISION
DOCKET NO: 23-CV-01699

MORTGAGE ASSETS MANAGEMENT, LLC
PLAINTIFF

VS.

ANDREW H. MONTROLL, ESQ., ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF ARTHUR DANYOW, JR.; SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND OCCUPANTS RESIDING AT 56 DANYOW DRIVE, ADDISON, VT 05491
DEFENDANT(S)

NOTICE OF SALE

In accordance with the Judgment and Decree of Foreclosure by Judicial Sale filed on January 7, 2025, in the above captioned action brought to foreclose that certain mortgage given by Arthur E. Danyow, Jr. and Patricia R. Danyow to Financial Freedom Senior Funding Corporation, a subsidiary of Indymac Bank, F.S.B., dated February 23, 2006, and recorded in Book 88, at Page 437, of the Town of Addison Land Records, of which mortgage Plaintiff is the present holder by virtue of the following Assignments of Mortgage: (1) Assignment of Mortgage from Financial Freedom Senior Funding Corporation to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Financial Freedom Acquisition LLC recorded in Book 95, at Page 163 (2) Assignment of Mortgage from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as mortgagee as nominee for Financial Freedom Acquisition LLC to Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. as Trustee for Mortgage Assets Management Series I Trust recorded in Book 115, at Page 21 and (3) Assignment of Mortgage from Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. as Trustee for Mortgage Assets Management Series I Trust to Mortgage Assets Management, LLC f/k/a Reverse Mortgage Solutions, Inc. recorded in Book 116, at Page 645, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction on May 7, 2025 at 11:00 AM at 56 Danyow Drive, Addison, VT 05491 all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

To Wit:

Being a portion of the same lands and premises conveyed to Arthur E. Danyow, Jr. and Patricia D. Danyow by Warranty Deed of Philip R. Dubois and Evelyn M. Dubois dated October 26, 1970 and recorded October 28, 1970 in Book 34, at Page 328 of the Town of Addison Land Records and further described therein.

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

The public sale may be adjourned one or more times for a total time not exceeding 30 days, without further court order, and without publication or service of a new notice of sale, by announcement of the new sale date to those present at each adjournment or by posting notice of the adjournment in a conspicuous place at the location of the sale.

Terms of Sale: \$10,000.00 to be paid in cash or by certified check by the purchaser at the time of sale, with the balance due at closing. The sale is subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

The Mortgagor is entitled to redeem the premises at any time prior to the sale by paying the full amount due under the mortgage, including the costs and expenses of the sale.

Other terms to be announced at sale.

Mortgage Assets Management, LLC
Bozena Wysocki, Esq.
BROCK & SCOTT, PLLC
23 Messenger Street
2nd Floor
Plainville, MA 02762
VT_Noticesofhearing@brockandscott.com

ACT 250 NOTICE
MINOR APPLICATION #9A0324-1
10 V.S.A. §§ 6000 - 6111

Thomas North Street, LLC, has filed application #9A0324-1 for a project generally described as construction of a 6-unit residential Planned Unit Development upon a ±9.06-acre undeveloped parcel. The project includes: (a) construction of two duplex buildings (Units #1 - #4) with access from North Street via an existing shared drive to be improved to a private road and (b) construction of two single-family dwellings (Units #5 & #6) with access from North Meadow Drive and a proposed shared drive. All six units will be served by on-site wastewater disposal systems and connections to the Town of Bristol municipal water system. The project is located off North Meadow Drive in Bristol, Vermont (SPAN: 093-029-11844). The application may be viewed on the Act 250 Database (<https://anrweb.vt.gov/ANR/Act250/default.aspx>) by entering project number "9A0324-1."

No hearing will be held, and a permit may be issued unless, on or before Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 4:30 PM, 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. Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law may not be prepared unless the Commission holds a public hearing.

For more information contact the District 9 Coordinator listed below.

Josh Donabedian
District 6 Coordinator
111 West Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Joshua.Donabedian@vermont.gov

In print or online, find your
dream job with help
from the Addy Indy.



addisonindependent.com/help-wanted

ADDISON COUNTY
INDEPENDENT

Balanced backhand

MUHS NO. 3 SINGLES player Nate Cook-Yoder stretches for a backhand in his match against MIT Community Team opponent Dan Ober on Saturday at Middlebury Indoor Tennis.

Independent photo
Steve James



City police arrest Waltham man again

VERGENNES — Vergennes police on April 1 again arrested Jacob Burmania, 30 of Waltham, this time for an outstanding warrant for failing to appear in Addison County Court’s criminal division on March 24. On that date Burmania had been scheduled to answer to multiple earlier citations for burglary, unlawful mischief and violating conditions of release.

After his April 1 arrest, Burmania was lodged at the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility in Rutland and held overnight on \$5,200 bail, according to the Vergennes Police Department’s weekly activity log.

Burmania was arraigned in the court’s criminal division on April 2, when according to a court official, he pled innocent to the charges. He was returned to the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility for lack of bail, according to the official. His next court date is a May 12 status conference.

The April 1 arrest marked the fifth time in recent weeks Vergennes police had arrested Burmania, with the most recent interactions on

March 20, 21 and 24.

In other activity between March 31 and April 6, Vergennes police conducted seven cruiser patrols, two foot patrols and six traffic stops; processed two fingerprint

requests; responded to two false alarms; and also:

On March 31:

- Provided a case number to two motorists involved in a minor Panton Road parking lot accident.

- Spoke to a Walker Avenue resident who was letting her dog run loose.

On April 1:

- Were told someone had tried to enter an unlocked vehicle on Main Street. Police said nothing was taken, and there was not enough information to identify the suspect.

- Looked into a report that a key lockbox on a First Street home had been tampered with. Police said the key had not been taken, nor were there witnesses or video.

On April 2:

- Arrested Alfred Goodermote,

55, of Panton on a warrant issued by Addison County Court for failure to appear. Police said they released Goodermote after he posted bail, and cited him to appear in Addison County Court’s Criminal Division on April 3.

- Dealt with a juvenile issue.
- Served an abuse-prevention order on a city resident.

- Assisted Bristol police while they dealt with an individual who allegedly committed multiple traffic violations.

- Began investigating an online cryptocurrency scam that allegedly cost a city resident \$3,500.

On April 3:

- Cited Christal Ramos, 42, of Vergennes into court for allegedly driving while under the combined influence of alcohol and drugs. Ramos was transported to the Vergennes Police Department for

processing and later released with a citation to appear in Addison County Superior Court, Criminal Division at a later date.

- Helped Richmond Police by obtaining video footage from Aubuchon Hardware relevant to an ongoing burglary investigation.

On April 4:

- Conducted a background investigation.
- Assisted another agency on Main Street.

On April 5:

- Heard a complaint of pickup trucks driving around the Main Street protests while emitting black exhaust smoke into the crowd.

- Talked with the organizer of the downtown anti-Trump protest about the possibility of a permit not being issued to use the downtown green. Police reported the conversation resolved the issue.

On April 6 helped Vermont State police by evaluating a driver suspected of being under the influence of drugs.

STATE OF VERMONT, SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION, ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO.: 25-PR-01189 IN RE ESTATE OF: JOHN JEWELL NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: John Jewell, late of Vergennes.

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: 03/25/25

George Jewell
54 Black Brook Road, Meredith, NH 03253
603-524-6586
GKJewell@metrocast.net

Publication: Addison Independent
Publication Date: 04/03/25 & 04/10/25
Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, Probate Division
Address of Court: 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753

LEMON FAIR INSECT CONTROL DISTRICT PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY MOSQUITO LARVICIDES

Local mosquito control districts may be making ground and aerial applications of *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (BTI), *Bacillus sphaericus* (BS), spinosad and (S)-Methoprene to surface waters where mosquito larvae are present. These applications will occur in the towns of Cornwall, Bridport, and Weybridge. Pesticide applications will begin on or after April 15, 2025.

Further information or comments about the larviciding activities or application exclusion requests can be obtained from:

Lemon Fair Insect Control District
Email: info@LFICD.org
or phone our hotline: 802-349-5407

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture oversees the permitting of these mosquito larvicides and can be reached at 802-828-3473.

For more information, see the following websites:

- <http://www.lficd.org/>
- <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/public-health-agricultural-resource-management-division/plant-health-and-pest-management/mosquitoes>

STATE OF VERMONT, SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION, ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO.: 25-PR-02004

IN RE ESTATE OF: WAYNE D. SMITH NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Wayne D. Smith, late of Salisbury, 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: 04/04/25

Diane D. Smith
44 North Pond Rd., Salisbury, VT 05769
(802) 352-4543

Publication: Addison Independent
Publication Date: 04/10/25
Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, Probate Division
Address of Court: 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753

TOWN OF NEW HAVEN INVITATION TO BID SEALED BIDS FOR:

Furnishing and placing asphalt on South St. and River Rd. will be received at the New Haven Town Offices at 78 North Street, New Haven, Vermont 05472 until 4:00 pm on May 6, 2025, and will be publicly opened at the Selectboard meeting on May 6, 2025 on or after 7:00 pm.

Specifications for bidders and bid forms may be obtained without charge at the New Haven Town Offices, 78 North Street, New Haven, VT 05472, or on our website www.newhavenvt.com.

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

STATE OF VERMONT, SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION, ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO.: 25-PR-01622 IN RE ESTATE OF: HANS L. RAUM NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Hans L. Raum, late of Cornwall, 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: 03/05/25

Linda Louise Moore
91 Garland Lane, West Gardiner, ME 04345
(301) 710-3621
lrmtayac@gmail.com

Publication: Addison Independent
Publication Date: 04/10/25
Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, Probate Division
Address of Court: 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Middlebury Development Review Board will hold a public hearing(s) at the Middlebury Municipal Offices, Large Conference Room, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, VT on Monday, April 28th, 2025, beginning at 7:00 p.m. to consider the following application(s). The hearing will be available to participants via a Zoom video link. The Zoom link will be provided on the meeting agenda posted on the Town's website.

- Application (file #2025-004:045.006-ZP) is a request by Knappmiller LLC seeking DRB approval for an office use in the Industrial Zoning District at 50 Industrial Avenue under the provisions of Section 697. The property is identified as parcel #004045.006 in the Industrial Zoning district.

The applications will be heard in the order listed. Plans and additional information may be viewed at the Planning and Zoning Office in the Town Offices or by calling 388-8100, Ext 226. Participation in this public hearing is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal as an "interested person(s)". Interested persons wishing to participate in this hearing may do so by contacting J.R. Christ at 388-8100, Ext 226 or email to jrchrist@townofmiddlebury.org.

J.R. Christ
DRB Coordinator, AZA

FULL PASSPORT SERVICE

The Addison County Clerk located in the Frank Mahady Courthouse in Middlebury is available to accept passport applications and provide passport photos.

REGULAR HOURS

Monday - 8:30am to 4:00pm
Tuesday - 9:00am to 12:30pm
Wednesday - **Closed**
Thursday - 12:30pm to 4:00pm
Friday - 9:00am to 12:30pm

APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED

For appointment, go to www.addisoncountyclerkvt.com or call 802-388-1966.

Auctions



MARKET REPORT ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT

Sales for 4/3/25 & 4/7/25

| BEEF | LBS. | /LB | \$ |
|-------------|------|------|-----------|
| Robert Mack | 2020 | 1.60 | \$3232.00 |
| Deer Valley | 1995 | 1.55 | \$3092.25 |
| Blue Spruce | 1505 | 1.54 | \$2317.00 |
| Westminster | 1580 | 1.50 | \$2370.00 |
| M. Parker | 1375 | 1.40 | \$1925.00 |

| CALVES | LBS. | /LB | \$ |
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TOWN OF ADDISON DRB PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town of Addison Development Review Board will convene a public hearing on Monday, April 28, 2025 at 6:00PM at the former Addison Central School located at VT RTE 22A and VT RTE 17 West, Addison, VT.

1. Application DRB (#24-25) Charlene Goodell requesting approval for a 2- lot subdivision of 5. +/- acres from 19.2 acres located on the front South side of lot to be zoned as residential. The property is located on VT RTE 22A and meets the setback requirements. Pending to proceed.

2. Application DRB (#25-02) Raymond Dykema requesting a Subdivision permit to separate the shop and house he no longer owns. The property is located on Norton Town Road, Addison, VT. Parcel ID# NT 0973. Needs to meet road frontage requirements and a Class 3 Road, which also needs to be surveyed.

3. Application DRB (#25-05) John Spencer requesting to subdivide 6.14 acres from the previous lot proposal as Lot 2. Parcel ID# VA3580 and parcel address will be on Old Stonehouse Road, Addison.

4. Application DRB #25-13) Victor Cousino—Waitsfield/CV Telecom requesting to tear down a current 16' by 40' garage & build a 40' by 40' garage with two overhead doors facing South.

5. Application DRB (#25-16) Dave Cooper & Judy Nelson requesting to build a 24' by 24' garage /storage building.

6. Application DRB (25-17) Bill Duane, VT Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Dept. requesting to do a 2 – lot subdivision at 815 Gage Road, Addison, ahead of the acquisition of 176 acres of VDFG.

The applications are available for inspection at the Town Clerk's Office during normal office hours. Interested parties who wish to appeal or to be heard must attend the hearing or may be represented by an agent or an attorney. Communications relating to the application may be filed in writing with the Board either before or during the hearings.

N.B.: Participation in a hearing is necessary to establish status as an "interested party" and the right to appeal a decision rendered in that hearing, according to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. 117 S.S.4464 (a) (1) (C), 4465(b) and 4471 (a). Participation consists of offering through oral or written testimony, evidence or a statement of concern directly related to the subject of the hearing.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alden Harwood, Chair
Starr Phillips, Board Secretary
Daniel Rossignol, Zoning Administrator

STATE OF VERMONT, SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION, ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO.: 24-PR-02843

IN RE ESTATE OF: ELLWYN L. POQUETTE, JR. NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Ellwyn L. Poquette, Jr., late of Hancock.

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: 04/02/25

Katherine W. Hope, Special Administrator
111 South Pleasant Street, Middlebury, VT 05753
(802) 388-6356
khope@langrock.com

Publication: Addison Independent
Publication Date: 04/10/25
Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, Probate Division
Address of Court: 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753



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SHARD VILLA’S OUTGOING director Lee Ann Goodrich sits on the aging stair chair that will be replaced thanks in part to a \$10,000 donation from the Middlebury Lions Club.
Photo courtesy of Bill Cunningham

Shard Villa gets funding for new stair chair lift

SALISBURY — The Middlebury Lions Club was able to step forward with a \$10,000 donation to help kick start the critical stair chair replacement at Shard Villa.

Nestled in a picturesque setting, Shard Villa is a non-profit residential care home housed in a stunning 1870s Second Empire mansion. It has served as a beloved care facility for over 100 years, offering residents a home-like atmosphere surrounded by breathtaking views of the Adirondacks and beautifully maintained grounds.

For years, a stair chair has been an essential feature for residents living on the second floor, providing access to common areas such as the dining room, living room, sunroom, and deck. However, after decades of use, the stair chair has reached the end of its

lifespan and needs to be replaced after numerous repairs.

The cost of removing the old stair chair and installing a new one came to \$23,535—a significant but necessary expense for Shard Villa. The Middlebury Lions Club donation will go a long way toward covering the cost of the replacement. With the support of organizations like the Middlebury Lions Club, the facility can continue its mission of offering residents a dignified and comfortable home.

For more information about Shard Villa or to learn how you can support its mission go to shardvilla.org. The Middlebury Lions Club is a local chapter of Lions Clubs International, a global service organization dedicated to improving communities through volunteerism and charitable efforts.

K-9 unit sniffs out contraband during traffic stop

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police deployed the department’s K-9 team on a vehicle during a traffic stop at the intersection of Route 7 and Willow Drive on April 1. Police said the department’s dog alerted on the vehicle, leading to a preliminary search that yielded undisclosed amounts of crack cocaine.

Police said they’re seeking a court warrant to more closely scrutinize the vehicle.

In other action last week, Middlebury police:

- Checked on the welfare of a man who was seen wandering in and out of traffic on Main Street on March 31.
- Helped a man who alleged on April 1 he’d been harassed in the Pond Lane area.
- Responded on April 1 to a report of a truck striking power lines on Buttolph Drive, causing damage, a power outage and road closures.
- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS with an emergency call on North Pleasant Street on April 1.
- Investigated a reported theft from the TJ Maxx store on April 2.
- Launched an investigation on April 2 into what police said have been a “series of larcenies” from Plouffe’s Boiler & Mechanical Service on Route 7 South. Police said the stolen items include a couple of generators, miscellaneous tools and scrap materials. Anyone with information on this case is asked to call Middlebury police at 802-388-3191.
- Were informed that someone had stolen tools from an unlocked garage off Route 7 South on April 2.
- Cited Richard Murray, 58, of Middlebury for driving with a criminally suspended license on Cross Street on April 2.

- Took, to Porter Hospital, a woman found walking barefoot in the Greg’s Meat Market parking lot on April 2.
- Spoke with the local victim of an out-of-state fraud case on April 3.
- Responded to a trespassing complaint at a vacant residence off Route 7 South on April 4.
- Assisted a woman on Washington Street who was feeling ill but who declined an ambulance to Porter Hospital on April 4.
- Responded to a report of a group of people jumping in front of cars on Main Street shortly after midnight on April 4.
- Participated in the search for a man who had allegedly stabbed the chef/owner of Café Provence in Brandon during the late afternoon of April 5. Vermont State Police arrested a suspect, and the chef is recovering from his injuries (see

Addison man charged with domestic assault

ADDISON COUNTY — On April 8 at 1 a.m. Vermont State Police responded to a home on Route 125 in Addison for a reported family fight.

After investigating, police said Gary L. Norris, 66, of Addison had injured a household member after an argument. Troopers took Norris into custody, transported to the New Haven barracks and cited for domestic assault.

In other recent activity, Vermont State Police:

- On April 4 at a few minutes after 6 p.m. conducted a traffic stop after seeing a motor vehicle violation on Route 7 near its intersection with Little Chicago Road in Ferrisburgh. Police identified the driver as Keagan R. Bothwell, 21, of Charlotte. They cited him for driving with a criminally suspended license, driving without the required ignition interlock device installed, and three counts of violating conditions of release.
- On April 5 just before midnight stopped a vehicle stop for a moving violation near Route 2A and Hurricane Lane in Williston. Police said the driver, identified as Ryan Lamothe, 45, of Bristol, had a warrant out for his arrest due to not showing up for a court date.

They arrested him, cited Lamothe for refusing to take a driving under the influence test and driving with a criminally suspended license. Lamothe was released with a promise to appear for his court date in Middlebury on April 7.

- On April 6 at around 12:30 p.m. responded to a one-car crash on Route 7 south of Dakin Road in Ferrisburgh. Police report that Shawn Sartelle, 38, of Waterbury was driving a 2015 BMW 328 northbound on the highway when he left the road and struck a culvert. No injuries were reported. Police cited Sartelle for driving a car without the court-ordered ignition interlock device. They also issued him a \$220 traffic ticket. Troopers were assisted by Vergennes police.
- On April 7 shortly after 6 p.m. stopped a car on Route 7 near Little Chicago Road in Ferrisburgh and cited Trevor B. Matton, 39, of Vergennes for driving with a criminally suspended license and without an ignition interlock device.
- On April 7, just before 7:30 p.m., observed a motor vehicle violation and stopped the vehicle on Route 100 near Recreation Drive in Hancock. They ended up citing Linus Biederman, 30, of Hancock for driving under the influence,

Middlebury Police Log

complete report in this edition).

- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS on medical calls to Buttolph Drive and Court Street locations on April 5.
- Responded to a domestic dispute at an East Main Street location on April 6.
- Investigated reports of a “noisy disturbance” at a John Graham Court home on April 6.
- Responded to a report of a vehicle passing unsafely on Court Street on April 6.
- Gave a courtesy ride to a stranded patient who had been discharged from Porter Hospital on April 6.
- Responded to complaints about a loud party at a Middle Road South home at 1:20 a.m. on April 6. Police said the hosts shut down the party.

Vt. State Police Log

focused on people who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Vermonters are urged to use a designated driver when necessary.



Resist, baby
A FEW OF the youngest set were present at the Hands Off protest in Vergennes on April 5, including this youngster.
Photo by Buzz Kuhns

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ARTS+LEISURE

The Addison Independent

April 10, 2025



RUPERT SUHR



INNIS HOHENSHAU



ELINOR SIMMONS



SIMON DONNELLY



WILLA MCCLAIN




GEORGIA GONG

CORRUPTION VERSUS CUPCAKES

LITTLE RIPTON SCHOOL STAGES "BIG CITY DREAMS"



CARINA BRIGHTMAN



Rewind 22 years, when North Branch School was just a toddler...

"That's when we started," said Tal Birdsey director and founder of the independent school for grades 7-9 in Ripton. "Started" their first school-wide play, that is.

BY **ELSIE LYNN PARINI**

"I had zero idea what I was doing," Birdsey said, during an intermission from rehearsal with the students at the Ripton Community House on Monday. "I've been learning for 20 years."

This year's production, titled "Big City Dreams," will be staged Friday and Saturday, April 11 and 12, at the Ripton Community House right

SEE DREAMS ON PAGES 2-3



GUNNAR HANF



OLIVER WETZEL



TAYLOR MANDIGO



SCOUT LAWSON



TEAGAN FLINNER



YAZ STILLMAN-UTTERBACK



EDDIE ROCHE



ASHER SMITH



MAGGIE HOYLER

DREAMS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

there in the village. Both shows begin at 7:30 p.m. Run time (hold on to your hats.... and bring your knitting) is 3 hours.

And it's worth every minute.

Upgraded from chicken lights and cardboard sets, the crew this year has professional (though perhaps dated) lighting equipment and technical help from Bristol's "sound guy" Mark Mulqueen. The wooden sets are made by math teacher Steve Holmes, and painted to perfection by science teacher Rose McVay.

Like every year, North Branch School students conceived and wrote the entire play over the course of three months.

"It's born from all of our discussions, experiences together, topics we studied, ideas from literature and poetry, and funny jokes or moments from the school year," said Birdsey, a Middlebury College alum who also directs the play. "It comes from them, it's a reflection of who they are, with characters and a storyline they invent."

This year's school-wide theme of study is "Utopia and Dystopia." The play concerns a thriving city, a veritable utopia, named "Cityopolis." It's mayor has just retired, and it is thus beginning a new era with new Mayor Milton Means. Employment is high, the city is prosperous, and crime is low. Mayor Means promises to continue this great era with his new administration.

The story hinges on one question: Under his leadership, will Cityopolis continue to thrive, or will it collapse into a dystopian nightmare?

Into the city flow tourists from Wallingford, Vt.; a gang of criminals from Tennessee; a shady crime syndicate; and an elderly, hard-of-hearing entrepreneur named Granny Gertrude. She and her baking team have arrived in the city in a red double-decker bus, which also serves as her cupcake restaurant. Her business plan is to give away her cupcakes to make people happy. But darker, misguided forces may interfere with her beautiful dreams.

"Cupcakes are the embodiment of pure goodness," said Georgia Gong, an eighth grader from Middlebury playing Granny Gertrude.

"It's corruption versus cupcakes," Birdsey said darkly. "The powerful versus the weak. The play asks us: Can cupcakes become powerful?"

The characters must tangle with the dominant



"The Matriarchy" gang pictured left to right: Molly Wagner, Taylor Mandigo, Alex Golper, and Maura Northrop work on ways to overthrow the Gambino Patriarchy.

COURTESY PHOTOS BY STEVE HOLMES AND NORTH BRANCH SCHOOL



Elinor Simmons (left) and Georgia Gong (right) attempt to figure out a new cupcake recipe.

city gang, the Gambinos, the new and corrupt mayor, and an angry gang known as the Matriarchs, who are sick of the toxic male patriarchy. Inspired by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the Matriarchs go on strike for better working conditions, higher pay and dental benefits. Meanwhile the city's former leader, Mayor Court, resorts to becoming the city's sole sanitation service, and thereby witnesses the decay of his city into a chaos of corruption, extortion and threats of violence.

"Without being fully aware of it, the story sometimes reflects what they see or feel in the outside 'real' world," Birdsey said. "What's interesting is how they resolve the dramatic situation, how they find light in the darkness."

According to science teacher McVay, the play



Willa McClain and Eddie Roche are falling in love as they form their own gang.

really presents the students' solutions to real world problems.

"Joseph Campbell (the comparative mythologist) believed we don't have a common, guiding mythology that serves us today," she explained. "We lack a common story to explain our collective experience. Every year, as the students go through a year with each other, and also out in the bigger world, they create their own mythology that helps describe and understand those experiences."

In addition to writing the words in the play itself, the students collect and assemble their props and costumes, help make sets and signs, and, notably, program, organize and

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Scout Heyns (left) and Carina Brightman (right), leaders of the Gambino crime organization, plot how to get the magical book at the Cityopolis art auction.



Eddie Roche (center), playing the role of "Wild Joe", certifies that the rare book is indeed a magical device found in the ziggurats of Machu Picchu and touched by the hand of Zeus.



Baritone saxophone player Innis Hohenshau and pianist Sammy Gibson practice for a musical performance between scenes.

perform all the music themselves.

"It's almost another show inside the main show," Birdsey said, explaining that during each set change, one or more students will perform a song or piece of music. "Anything from Simon and Garfunkel to the White Stripes to Scott Joplin to Mozart. It's one of the best parts of the show."

Like any theater production, there is a lot of stress, nerves and excitement.

"Every year it feels like a crisis," said McVay, who's been teaching at North Branch School since 2004. "And every year we come through that crisis together — it's so valuable for everyone and really brings the school together."

"EVERY YEAR (STAGING THE PLAY) FEELS LIKE A CRISIS. AND EVERY YEAR WE COME THROUGH THAT CRISIS TOGETHER — IT'S SO VALUABLE FOR EVERYONE AND REALLY BRINGS THE SCHOOL TOGETHER."

— Rose McVay

"All of those feelings fuel them and energize them," Birdsey added. "They have to pull together, to figure out how to solve a thousand problems, figure out how to support and trust each other, while laughing and having a ridiculous amount of fun."

"It's just a great environment," said Gunnar Hanf, a ninth grader from Lincoln who plays a tourist from Vermont along with fellow Lincoln resident Asher Smith. "They're not very smart — they're suckers... But they're really funny."

"Yeah, you two are like Dumb and Dumber," Birdsey joked.

"The play really brings everybody together, and it's great to be in a different space," Hanf said, looking around the community house.

One of the things Hanf said he likes the best is

developing the characters and story with their own minds.

This was a theme recognized by all three teachers, Birdsey, McVay and Holmes.

"Each kid comes up with their own character," Holmes said. "Some of the alter egos we see are really interesting."

"Creating our own characters makes it real," said Taylor Mandigo, a seventh grader from Middlebury playing one of the four Matriarchs. "We get to act super bad-ass."

Seventh graders Molly Wagner of Middlebury, Alex Golper of Salisbury and Maura Northrup of Weybridge — the three other Matriarchs — began chattering around Mandigo.

"You're right," Mandigo said, "Sorry, we're NOT acting; we ARE bad-ass! We have a lot of attitude."

So what do you think? Can a few cupcakes sweeten this sour?

Come find out Friday and Saturday in Ripton.

Tickets are \$10, with four dollars from each admission going to support schools in Ukraine, the Addison County Food Shelf, and the Vermont Afghan Alliance. The play is open to the public, and will appeal to ages 8-80 and beyond. There will be coffee, tea, baked goods (sweet and savory) for sale, and free cupcakes. For more information, call 802-388-3269.

ART ON EXHIBIT

Collective Perspectives: A vibrant fusion of art and community on view April 18

Sparrow Art Supply in downtown Middlebury will host the debut exhibition for Sparrow Artist Collective, "Collective Perspectives." This member show brings together 11 diverse voices from our collective, showcasing a wide range of mediums including cyanotype on textile, photography, acrylic paintings on skate decks and more. The exhibition reflects the breadth and imagination of our membership and will be on display from April 18 through June 15.

Exhibiting artists include Elise Bouffard, Andrew Clingenpeel, Caitlin Gildrien, Charon Henning, Michael Hollis, Jaqueline Lore, Catherine Raishart, Bart Robbett, Elizabeth Sylvia, Courtney Vengrin, and Heather Rusch Zelonis.

All are welcome to an opening party on April 25, to meet the artists and celebrate the power of creative camaraderie. The reception will be an opportunity to connect with the artists and hear the stories behind their work.

This exhibition promises to inspire



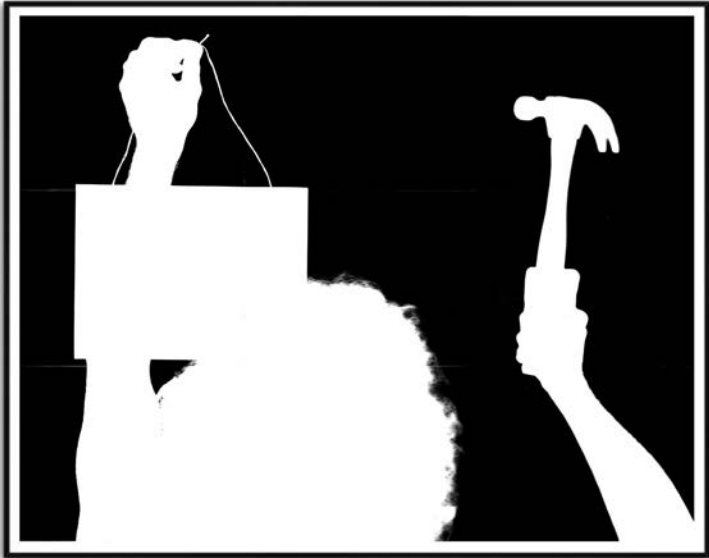
MICHAEL HOLLIS

and highlight the creative spirit of this welcoming group. As the Sparrow Artist Collective continues to grow and evolve, the group is excited to share the talent and vision of its members through this debut show. Admission is free, and all works on display will be available for purchase in the gallery and online at sparrowartsupply.com/gallery.

For more info visit sparrowartsupply.com/gallery, or contact Beth Bluestein directly at 914-907-9658 or beth@sparrowartsupply.com.



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ART ON EXHIBIT

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EDGEWATER AT THE FALLS

1 Mill Street, Middlebury

For more info visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-458-0098 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com.

"Translations" presents a collection from painter Dale Najarian and encaustic mixed media artist Dietlind Vander Schaaf. Using photography as a guide to her oil paintings, Najarian depicts the patterns of shadow and light. These highly contrasted images depict the rhythm in quiet moments, much like the encaustic wax paintings of Vander Schaaf. On view March 21-April 26.

EDGEWATER ON THE GREEN

6 Merchants Row, Middlebury

For more info visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-989-7419 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com.

"Flight Patterns," a group exhibition featuring Susan Raber Bray, Ellen Granter, Holly Harrison, Liz Hoag, Eric Tardif, and Molly Doe Wensberg. This exhibit reminds us to look to the skies in appreciation of birdlife and nature. Experience a "lift off" and the sense of hope that the coming season brings. On view April 11-May 11.

JOHNSON EXHIBITION GALLERY

78 Chateau Road, Middlebury

For hours and info visit middlebury.edu/events

"Beyond Walls" featuring works made by artist, image maker, and photographer Hannah Smith Allen, reimagining the U.S./Mexico border. This collection was created during Donald Trump's first presidency, including still photographs, unique screen prints, and Borderlands, an accordion book/sculptural object originally published by the VSW Press in 2021. Also included in this exhibition is "Target Practice," a series of military targets fabricated out of acrylic mirror. The work holds a mirror up to current politics and invites viewers to imagine new possibilities in interpreting, interrupting, and engaging with the American landscape and its political systems. Free and open to all during gallery hours: Sun. 1-7 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs. 9 a.m.-7 p.m.; Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Saturdays.

K. GRANT FINE ART

37 Green St, Vergennes

For more info visit 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,

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 15

Cosmic Forecast

ARIES: March 21/April 20. Expect some valuable insight regarding your future to emerge in the next few days, Aries. It won't be difficult to set plans in motion when you have the right people on your side.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Taurus, take a breather and give some careful thought to your recent experiences and your expectations going forward. You will benefit from this in the long run.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. You are focused on your work, Gemini. However, distractions are beyond your control right now and will pull your attention away from what matters to higher-ups.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Romantic endeavors are a little hard to plan and consider right now, Cancer. Just stick to what your intuition is telling you and you will come out just fine in the end.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. Leo, you might be called upon to be a mediator for friends or loved ones who need a fresh set of eyes. Keep a cool demeanor and a level head and you can lead them to a resolution.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, you are drawn to creative projects, but avoid using them to put off other endeavors. These distractions will only delay the inevitable and then you'll be pressed for time.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Libra, carefully schedule your time this week, as you cannot afford to get behind on your assignments at work or in school. You also have many important appointments on the calendar.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Scorpio, someone comes to you for advice this week and wants you to keep their situation private. You need to help them without betraying their request for confidentiality.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. It is possible your mind will wander this week, Sagittarius. You might not be able to focus on the tasks at hand, and will need to focus extra hard to limit distractions.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Capricorn, pay attention to detail in all things that you do. Be mindful of this when tending to professional and personal matters.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Aquarius, the simplest resolution is often the best one. Keep this in mind when tackling a perplexing problem in the days ahead.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. Pisces, you

are eager to sail through your to-do list, and certain tasks need to be postponed to address those that are high-priority. Rearrange things accordingly.

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FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

APRIL 11 — Mary White Ovington, journalist, co-founder of the NAACP (d)
APRIL 12 — Herbie Hancock, musician (84)

APRIL 13 — Seamus Heaney, poet (d)
APRIL 14 — Adrien Brody, actor (52)
APRIL 15 — Emma Thompson, actor (66)
APRIL 16 — Alek Wek, model (47)
APRIL 17 — Nick Hornby, author & editor (68)

CALENDAR

APRIL 10-20
2025



THURSDAY, APRIL 10

"GREASE" IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, April 10, 7:30 p.m., Main Stage, Town Hall Theater, 42-46 Merchants Row. Wholesome Sandy Dumbroski and rebel Danny Zuko have an unlikely summer romance, neither expecting to see each other again. Back from summer break, Danny (the coolest guy in the school) is shocked when he discovers Sandy has transferred to Rydell High. Set in 1959, with its muscle cars, greasers and poodle skirts, don't miss this lively, funny musical performed by Middlebury College Music Theatre, the college's entirely student-run musical theater group. Tickets student \$5/adult \$10, available at addisonarts.org/event/grease.

FRIDAY, APRIL 11

VOLUNTEER DAY ON THE TAM IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 11, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Wright Park, Seymour St. Ext. Celebrate National Volunteer Week with MALT. Meet MALT's Trails and Volunteer Manager, Liam, at the Seymour St Ext entrance of Wright Park. Liam will provide tools and instructions for volunteer groups. Bring work gloves, water and snacks. More info and registration at www.maltvt.org/events.

ART OPENING IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 11, 5-6:30 p.m., Edgewater on the Falls, Mill St. An opening reception for "Translations," works by Dale Najarian and Dietlind Vander Schaaf.

ART OPENING IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday,

April 11, 5-7 p.m., Jackson Gallery, Town Hall Theater, 42-46 Merchants Row. Addison County printmaker Courtney Allenson creates hand-carved prints, particularly focusing on trout. Her block prints celebrate her love for fishing, the beauty of Vermont's waterways, and the importance of conservation and sustainable fishing practices. Free and open to the public.

2025 FLY FISHING FILM TOUR IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 11, 6 p.m., Dana Auditorium, 356 College St. This exciting short form film festival offers stunning cinematography and engaging stories from around the world. If you like to fish or just love being outside, this is sure to be an evening not to miss. All proceeds from this event are donated to the New Haven River Anglers for local watershed conservation and educational programs. Tickets \$20, available at Green Mountain Adventures, mmvt.com or at the door.

NORTH BRANCH SCHOOL ANNUAL PLAY IN RIPTON. Friday, April 11, 7:30 p.m., Ripton Community House, Route 125. Exploring the themes of Utopia and Dystopia, the play concerns a thriving city called Cityopolis, a veritable Utopia whose mayor has just retired and is thus beginning a new era with the new mayor, Milton Means. Employment is high, the city is prosperous, and crime is low. Mayor Means promises to continue this great era with his new administration. However, the story hinges on one question: under his leadership, will Cityopolis continue to thrive, or will it

collapse into a dystopian nightmare. Tickets \$10. Four dollars from each admission goes to support schools in Ukraine, the Addison County Food Shelf, and the Vermont Afghan Alliance. The play is open to the public. Coffee, tea, baked goods (sweet and savory) for sale, and free cupcakes.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE COMMUNITY CHORUS IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 11, from 7:30-9:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. Middlebury College Community Chorus will present a world premiere for choir and piano called "So We Try," composed by Peter Buffett and arranged for chorus by Peter Kiesewalter. This will be an evening chock-full of new music that will challenge the way you think about choral singing, our relationship to the earth, and our shared humanity. Free and open to the public.

"GREASE" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 11, 7:30 p.m., Main Stage, Town Hall Theater, 42-46 Merchants Row. See April 10 listing.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12

MONTHLY WILDLIFE WALK IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, April 12, 7-9 a.m., 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. More information: 802-388-6019.

AUTHOR TIM HAYES IN STARKSBORO. Saturday, April 12, 1 p.m., Starksboro Library, Route 116. Author and horse whisperer Tim Hayes will join us to discuss his new book, "Horses, Humans, and Love."

"GREASE" IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, April 12, 2 and 7:30 p.m., Main Stage, Town Hall Theater, 42-46 Merchants Row. See April 10 listing.

PUPPET WORKSHOP IN FERRISBURGH. Saturday, April 12, 2-3:30 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall, Route 7. Pull some strings and join the fun at a free Puppeteer Workshop with the No Strings Marionette Company. Professional puppeteer Barbara leads this hands-on workshop that will take you behind the scenes of the puppetry world. Advance registration required — no drop-offs, please — online at unionmeetinghall.org/programming-and-events.

KING PEDE CARD PARTY IN FERRISBURGH. Saturday, April 12, 6:30 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall, Route 7. The night begins with a sandwich supper, then on to an evening of fun and games. King Pedé is a game that involves "trick-taking" such as in Hearts, Spades or Pitch. This is a game of fun and skill so come prepared to use your strategic thinking!

YOUNG TRADITION TOURING GROUP CONCERT IN CORNWALL. Saturday, April 12, 6:30 p.m., Cornwall Congregational Church, Route 30. The Young Tradition Touring Group

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

| MCTV SCHEDULE Channels 1071 & 1091 | | MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY TELEVISION: P.O. Box 785, Middlebury, Vt. 05753 | | Please see the MCTV website, www.middleburycommunitytv.org , for changes in the schedule; MCTV events, classes and news; and to view many programs online. Submit listings to the above address, or call 802-388-3062. | |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| Channel 1071 Through the Night: State House, Public Affairs Friday, April 11 5 a.m. Public Affairs 7:30 a.m. Congregational Church Service 10 a.m. Selectboard, Press Conferences 2:30 p.m. Legislative Breakfast 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Church Service 5:30 p.m. Energy Week Saturday, April 12 5:30 a.m. Vote For Vermont 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 1 p.m. Restorative Justice 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 5:30 p.m. Eckankar 6 p.m. Vote For Vermont 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Legislative Breakfast 11 p.m. Energy Week Sunday, April 13 5:00 a.m. Legislative Breakfast 6:30 a.m. Energy Week | 7:30 a.m. Vote for Vermont 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 1 p.m. Restorative Justice 4 p.m. Congregational Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass Monday, April 14 4:30 a.m. Energy Week 5:30 a.m. Eckankar 6 a.m. Press Conferences 10 a.m. Selectboard 4 p.m. Legislative Breakfast 8 p.m. Restorative Justice Tuesday, April 15 5 a.m. Press Conferences 8 a.m. Legislative Breakfast 9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard 2:30 p.m. Legislative Breakfast 4 p.m. Congregational Service 5:30 p.m. Energy Week 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs Wednesday, April 16 6 a.m. Legislative Breakfast 7:30 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service | 9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Energy Week 7 p.m. Selectboard 10 p.m. Energy Week 11 p.m. Legislative Breakfast Thursday, April 17 5 a.m. Press Conferences 8 a.m. Congregational Service 12 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 8 p.m. Energy Week 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 12 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs Channel 1091 Through the Night: Culture & Nature Friday, April 11 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Yoga 7 a.m. Yestermorrow 8:16 a.m. All Brains Belong 9:05 a.m. Sharpe Takes 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 5:30 p.m. All Star Hockey Boys 7:30 p.m. All Star Hockey Girls 9:35 p.m. Yestermorrow | Saturday, April 12 5 a.m. Foltz Studio 6:05 a.m. A Celtic Concert 7:15 a.m. Yestermorrow 10 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 3 p.m. Sharpe Takes 3:40 p.m. Yestermorrow 5:00 p.m. All Star Hockey Boys 7:00 p.m. All Star Hockey Girls 9:00 p.m. An Evening of Comedy Sunday, April 13 4:15 a.m. A Celtic Concert 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Yoga 7 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 2:00 p.m. All Star Hockey Boys 4:00 p.m. All Star Hockey Girls 6 p.m. Sharpe Takes 7 p.m. State Board of Education 9:30 p.m. All Things LGBTQ Monday, April 14 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 a.m. Sharpe Takes 6:45 a.m. Tai Chi 7:10 a.m. Chair Yoga 8:15 a.m. All Brains Belong | 9 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 4:00 p.m. Foltz Studio 6:30 p.m. ACSB Board Meeting (LIVE) Tuesday, April 15 5:37 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. State Board of Education 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 4:30 p.m. Tai Chi 5 p.m. Sharpe Takes 5:35 p.m. An Evening of Comedy 7:30 p.m. Yestermorrow Wednesday, April 16 6:30 a.m. Tai Chi 7 a.m. Chair Yoga 8 a.m. State Board of Education 4 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 5 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 10 p.m. Sharpe Takes Thursday, April 17 5:30 a.m. Foltz Studio 6:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6:55 a.m. Yoga 8 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 12 p.m. State Board of Education | |

is an ensemble of talented teenage musicians and singers from Vermont and Maine. This year's Touring Group performances feature an exciting and diverse program showcasing the traditional musical influences of New England, including music rooted in Québec, Vermont and Maine as well as popular current influences from Scandinavia and Old Time playing. Enjoy energetic reels that will have folks dancing in their seats and many-layered arrangements of lovely fiddle harmonies. Pay what you can admission, a family friendly event! More information at www.vtfolklife.org/touring-group.

CONTRA DANCE IN CORNWALL.

Saturday, April 12, 7-9:30 p.m., Cornwall Town Hall, Route 30. Grace Henrickson-Jones will be calling with live music by Red Dog Riley. Beginners welcome. All dances will be taught. \$5 to \$10 or pay what you can.

NORTH BRANCH SCHOOL ANNUAL PLAY IN RIPTON. Saturday, April 12, 7:30 p.m., Ripton Community House, Route 125. See April 11 listing.

SUNDAY, APRIL 13

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, April 13, Chipman Hill. How many times can you climb Chipman Hill? Strenuous circuits of Chipman Hill along the Chipman Hill, TAM and other trails. Distance of 5-6 miles at a moderate to fast pace. Contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926 to sign up and for further information. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

"DEAR DIARY — AN ORIGINAL OPERA" WITH MUSIC BY MOZART IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, April 13, 2 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. The Youth Opera Company of Opera Company of Middlebury will perform an original opera featuring scenes from five of Mozart's operas. Eight high school singers from five schools, including Mt. Abe and MUHS, will perform arias and duets to tell a story of typical high school seniors in 1950s America. Pay-what-you-wish admission.

"WALDEN" STAGED READING IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, April 13, 4 p.m., Anderson Studio, Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. Middlebury Acting Company's Cutting-Edge Staged Reading Series returns with "Walden," by Amy Berryman. Sometime in the near future NASA botanist Cassie returns from a Moon mission to a cabin in the woods with her estranged twin sister Stella, a former NASA architect, and Stella's fiancé Bryan, a climate activist. When the twins reunite, old conflicts reignite, forcing the sisters to choose between staying on Earth or pursuing a future in space, as humanity's fate hangs in the balance. A talk-back with light refreshments will follow. Tickets \$15, available at townhalltheater.org.

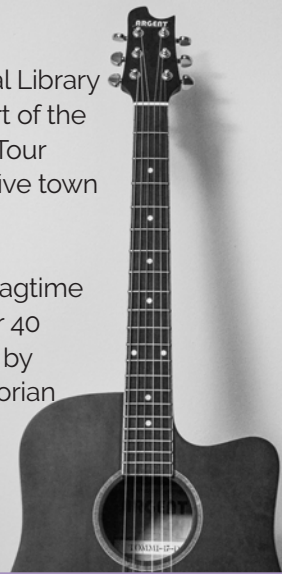
TOP PICK

A FREE EVENING OF MUSIC AT THE BRISTOL LIBRARY, APRIL 17

Ted Wesley will perform at the Lawrence Memorial Library in Bristol on April 17, at 7:30 p.m. This concert is part of the second annual Winter Into Spring Musical Library Tour hosted by the 5-Town Friends of the Arts and the five town libraries. Admission is free; donations are optional.

Wesley has been singing and playing folk music, ragtime and country blues in the Champlain Valley for over 40 years. He has been, lately, adding to his repertoire by setting some favorite poems from the Classic Victorian Nonsense era to tunes of his own devising.

Questions? Call the Bristol library at 802-453-2366.



MONDAY, APRIL 14

"UNDERDOG" ON SCREEN IN STARKSBORO. Monday, April 14, 6 p.m., Starksboro Library, Route 116. Mark your calendars. Join us for a free film screening of the curiously optimistic tale of Doug Butler — a hardscrabble Vermont dairy farmer who risks losing the only home he's ever known to chase his dreams of Dog Mushing in Alaska. Fun for the whole family.

CRIBBAGE NIGHT IN BRISTOL. Monday, April 14, 7 p.m., Libanus Lodge corner of North and Elm streets. Come see what all the fun is about.

TUESDAY, APRIL 15

GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS AND THE CAPTURE OF FORT TICONDEROGA IN ORWELL. Tuesday, April 15, 7 p.m., Orwell Free Library, 473 Main St. Join Fort Ticonderoga Vice President of Public History Stuart Lilie to examine the broader expedition to capture the fort on May 10, 1775. Discover the planning for the capture of Fort Ticonderoga and how Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys came to be at the center of this military triumph. Part of Orwell Shoreham Libraries Keynote Speakers Series.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16

"VISUAL ACOUSTICS" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, April 16, 11 a.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Narrated by Dustin Hoffman, this film celebrates the life and career of Julius Shulman, acclaimed by many as "the world's most influential architectural photographer." Tickets \$15, available at townhalltheater.org. Part of the Great Art Wednesdays series.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB OVERNIGHT BACKPACK IN UNDERHILL. Thursday-Friday, April 17-18, Butler Lodge, Mt. Mansfield. Hike the Butler Lodge trail of Mt. Mansfield. The hike will be at an

easy to moderate pace of 1.9 miles and about 1,500 feet of elevation change. Group limit is 6. Contact Helena Nicolay at sqrlma@gmail.com or 802-236-3541 for details and to sign up. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

"ANUNNAKI TALES: THE GODS, GODDESSES, AND KINGS OF ANCIENT SUMER" IN VERGENNES. Thursday, April 17, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Step into the ancient world of Sumer with Josh Brooks, who will read from his new, self-published book. Brooks will share myths from the world's first urban civilization about the creation of the world, the first people, and legendary god-king Gilgamesh, along with helpful historical context. Illustrator and CVU art teacher Jason Fearon will join the conversation to discuss his artistic process. More info at www.bixbylibrary.org.

MIDDLEBURY UNION MIDDLE SCHOOL TALENT SHOW IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, April 17, 6-8 p.m., Main Stage, Town Hall Theater, 42-46 Merchants Row. This May Middlebury Union Middle School 8th Graders will travel to Boston for a day packed full of fun and educational opportunities. Help MUMS 8th graders reach their fundraising goal while enjoying a night of entertainment. Tickets \$5-\$25. Thanks to fundraisers such as this, the annual trip is available to all 8th grade MUMS students at no charge to caregivers. To contribute without purchasing a ticket go to gofund.me/848af78b.

NER ULYSSES READING SERIES - NATIONAL POETRY MONTH EDITION IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, April 17, 7 p.m., 115 Franklin St. Come to the second installment of New England Review's Ulysses Reading Series with acclaimed poets Noah Warren, Rage Hezekiah, Trish Dougherty and Middlebury student writer Regan Olusegan in celebration of National Poetry Month. Light fare and specialty mocktails served. Free and open to the public.

TED WESLEY IN BRISTOL. Thursday, April 17, 7:30 p.m., Lawrence Memorial Library, 40 North St. Ted Wesley has been singing and playing folk music, ragtime and country blues in the Champlain Valley for over 40 years. Lately, he has been adding to his repertoire by setting some favorite poems from the Classic Victorian Nonsense era to tunes of his own devising. Admission is free with donations welcome. Part of the 5 Town Winter Into Spring Musical Library Tour.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19

SPRING CLEANING SATURDAY ON THE TAM IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, April 19, 8:30 a.m., location TBD. MALT's Trails & Volunteer Manager, Liam, will be awaiting volunteers at the trailhead in the mornings with donuts, coffee, and tea for about an hour or so. Enjoy a warm drink and chat, then head out to work, either hiking the section of trail yourself as a group with Liam. Work includes clearing dead branches and small fallen trees, pruning new growth, and picking up trash. More info and registration at www.maltvt.org/events.

ATLANTIC CROSSING IN VERGENNES. Saturday, April 19, 12:30-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. For over two decades, Atlantic Crossing has been stirring up the dance floors of New England with their Celtic-infused compositions. From foot-stomping reels to soulful ballads, Atlantic Crossing brings Vermont's rich musical traditions to life. Free.

LITTLE LIES: A FLEETWOOD MAC TRIBUTE IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, April 19, 7:30-10 p.m., Town Hall Theater Main Stage, 42-26 Merchants Row. Join THT for a night of romance, drama and, of course, Rumours! Performing will be Little Lies, an 8-piece tribute band featuring two female vocalists, two male vocalists, and an ensemble of professional musicians. The Boston-based band captures the essence of one of the world's most successful bands. Town Hall Theater dance floor and seating available. Cash bar. Tickets \$25 advance/\$30 at the door, available at addisonarts.org/event/little-lies-a-fleetwood-mac-tribute.

SUNDAY, APRIL 20

"WINTER'S BONE" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, April 20, 3 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Faced with an unresponsive mother and a criminal father, Ozark teenager Ree Dolly (Jennifer Lawrence) does what she can to manage the household and take care of her two younger siblings. Informed by the sheriff (Garret Dillahunt) that their father put their home up for bond and then disappeared, Ree sets out on a dangerous quest to find him. Her entire family's fate now in her hands. Part MNFF Selects' neo-noir series. Tickets \$17 individual film or \$60 series pass, available at townhalltheater.org.

Artwork represented at Statehouse in Montpelier

WORKS FROM GERMAN AMERICAN ARTIST WOLF KAHN AVAILABLE FOR AMBASSADORS AROUND THE WORLD

The U.S. Department of State's Office of Art in Embassies announced a new gift and long-term loan this past January from the Wolf Kahn Foundation. The Wolf Kahn Foundation is proud to give the German American artist's 2001 painting "Free Verticals" to Art in Embassies' permanent collection, alongside 19 works made available on longterm loan to be used for U.S. diplomacy around the world. Kahn, who died in 2020 at age 92, lived in West Brattleboro for 50 years.

"These incredible paintings will not only be beautiful in American Embassies, they will also be vital tools in advancing the American story," said Megan Beyer, Director of Art in Embassies. "We are so pleased to welcome the Wolf Kahn Collection into the office's Democracy Collection as part of the nation's upcoming 250th anniversary, helping us to tell the important and powerful stories of all Americans, such as Wolf Kahn."

Born in Stuttgart in 1927, Kahn fled Nazi Germany for the United Kingdom in the Kindertransport at age 12 and immigrated to the United States during the Blitzkrieg in 1940. After attending the High School of Music and Art in New York City, he continued his studies at the Hans Hofmann School, eventually becoming Hofmann's studio assistant. After a stint in the U.S. Navy, Kahn received a bachelor's degree from the University of Chicago. Kahn spent his adulthood making art, inspired by the scenic landscapes of his summer home in Vermont and other rural locations across the U.S., Italy, and Namibia. Throughout his seven-decade career, Kahn blended aspects of representational and abstract painting to create luminous, dynamic compositions.

U.S. Senator for Vermont Peter Welch has



"Free Verticals" by Wolf Kahn, oil on canvas was given to the Art Embassies' permanent collection.

COURTESY OF THE WOLF KAHN FOUNDATION; U.S.

hosted a Wolf Kahn painting in his office, highlighting the importance of Kahn's impact and oeuvre particularly on the people of Vermont. Senator Welch's experience is a testament to the power of Kahn's art as a Vermonter.

"The Wolf Kahn painting in my office helps me tell the story of America being a refuge for so many Jews who had to flee Germany in World War II," Welch reported. "The Wolf Kahn work on loan to my office has sparked so many conversations about our values as Vermonters and Americans and celebrates the state's vibrant cultural history. I am thrilled for U.S. Ambassadors to have access to these same opportunities and conversations through this powerful gift."

Mara Williams, Chair of the Wolf Kahn Foundation and Curator Emeritus of the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center in Vermont describes "Free Verticals" as "a superb example of Wolf Kahn embracing change and continuing to find means of creative



Vt. Senator Peter Welch pictured with a Wolf Kahn painting in his office. Kahn lived in West Brattleboro for 50 years. Kahn passed in 2020, at the age of 92.

COURTESY IMAGE

expression. Perceptual phenomena were a central concern of Kahn's work, and this painting is no exception. It captures brilliantly the way in which light interacts with form, alternately substantiating or dissolving it. The juxtaposition of a nuanced range of purples set against light-struck yellows and orange is evidence, too, of his unflagging mastery of color. Wolf Kahn's chromatic combinations continue to speak to viewers in tones ranging from sibilant whispers to soaring oratory."

Over the last two decades of his life, Kahn's vision was affected by macular degeneration, an incurable eye disease, which led him to experiment with new methods and materials. He still began each painting by scrubbing in the basic composition and colors, but his approach to the top layers changed. In place of his old, scratchy brush, Kahn used various types of oil sticks to produce bold forms and fields of densely saturated color.

"I scrub, scrub, scrub," he said, describing the way in which he built his compositions with multiple layers of thinned paint applied in quick, scratchy strokes. Kahn's preferred applicator was a cheap, stiff-bristled brush. Until the early 2000s, the top layers of Kahn's paintings were often a thicket of spindly, dry strokes, resulting in a delicate tracery of lines atop bold swaths of color. This approach generated surface tension and created the shimmering quality of light characteristic of Kahn's paintings.

This gift will be a part of Art in Embassies's Democracy Collection, established in celebration of the office's 60th anniversary in 2023 and aimed at utilizing the soft power of art to strengthen democracy.

Hooked on hope

One of the late Suzanne Douglas's rugs has made its way to the Statehouse in Montpelier, and now hangs on the wall in the Senate Committee on Natural Resources. East Middlebury resident Ruth Hardy (who represents the Addison District – Addison County, Buels Gore, Huntington, and Rochester – in the Vermont State Senate) chairs Natural Resources committee and won this rug in Sheldon Museum's auction of Douglas' rugs this past summer.

"I love that Suzanne's beautiful hooked rug is proudly on display in the people's house!" exclaimed Coco Moseley, executive director of the Henry Sheldon Museum in downtown Middlebury. "Perhaps in these times of fragile and failing democracies, we can find a little hope in our state."



PUZZLES

sponsored by SPARROW ART SUPPLY

ACROSS

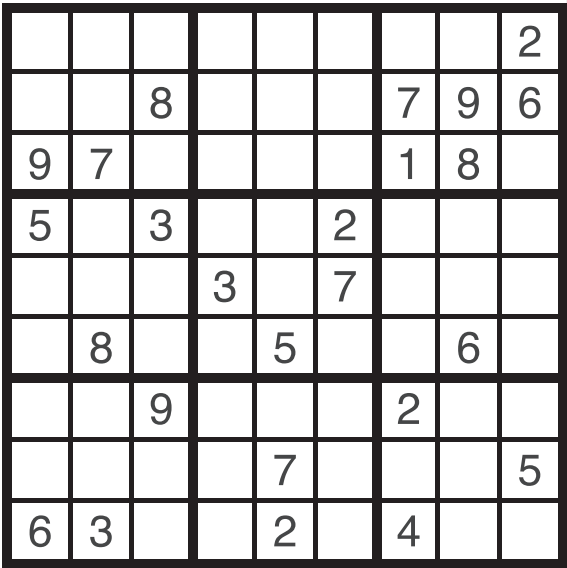
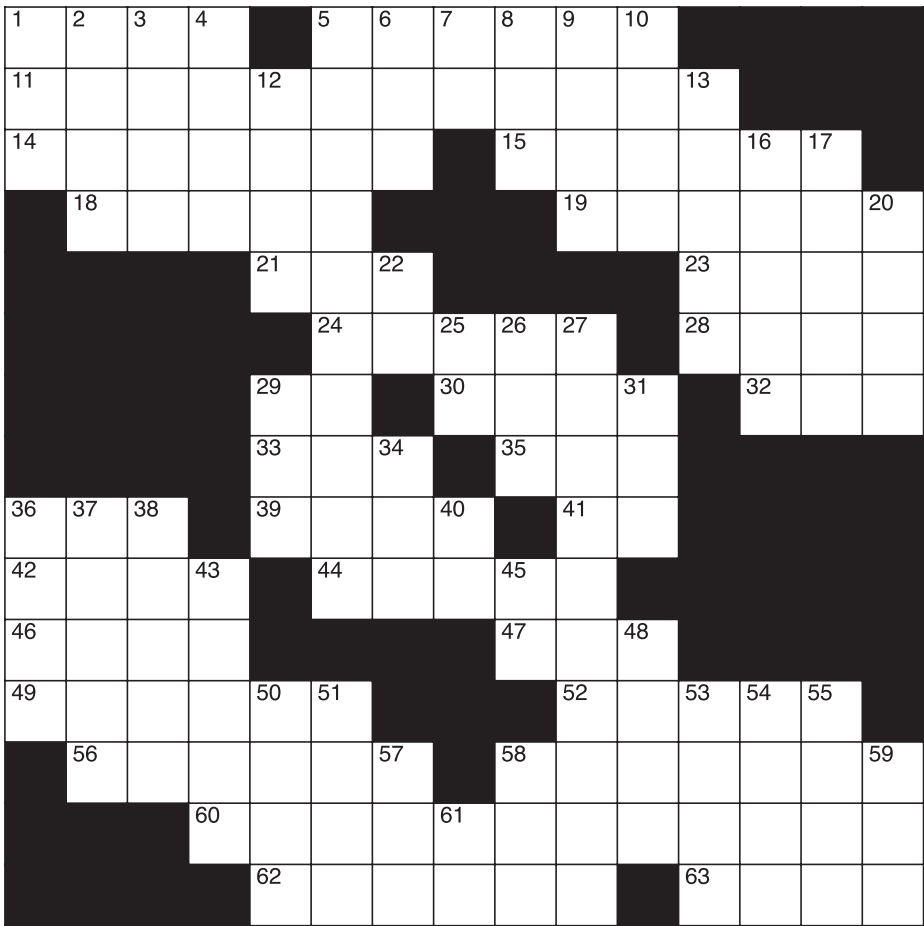
- 1. Garden tool
- 5. A way to preserve
- 11. Gratitude
- 14. Domestic sheep
- 15. Simpler
- 18. Cavities containing liquid
- 19. Large fish-eating bird
- 21. Ocular protection index
- 23. Phil __, former CIA
- 24. Icelandic poems
- 28. Pop
- 29. Device
- 30. Actor Rudd
- 32. A pituitary hormone
- 33. Focus on an object

- 35. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
- 36. Young women's association
- 39. Not shallow
- 41. Doctor
- 42. Furniture
- 44. Hindu male religious teacher
- 46. Highly spiced stew
- 47. A way to communicate
- 49. Almost last
- 52. Astronomer Carl
- 56. Small horses
- 58. A slender tower with balconies
- 60. A disrespectful quality

- 62. Fully shaded inner regions
- 63. Short convulsive intake of breath

DOWN

- 1. Popular Sunday dinner option
- 2. Oil cartel
- 3. Agile
- 4. Greek goddess of discord
- 5. Genetically distinct variety
- 6. Indicates badly
- 7. Popular Mr. T character
- 8. Consumed
- 9. Chinese dynasty



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

- 10. NFL great Randy
- 12. Within
- 13. Palm trees
- 16. Fungal disease
- 17. Tall, slender-leaved plants
- 20. Affirmative! (slang)
- 22. A passport is one
- 25. Two outs in baseball (abbr.)
- 26. Swiss river
- 27. Deferential
- 29. Where a bachelor lives
- 31. Portable computer screen material
- 34. A crying noise of a bird
- 36. Sticky, amorphous substance
- 37. Starchy dish of dried tubers
- 38. Type of acid
- 40. Partner to "Ma"
- 43. 16 ounces
- 45. The Bay State
- 48. A well-defined track or path
- 50. Substitution
- 51. Defined period
- 53. Group of toughs
- 54. Region
- 55. Famed Scottish Loch
- 57. Blood relation
- 58. Not around
- 59. Recipe measurement
- 61. Father to Junior

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 12.



44 Main St
Middlebury, VT 05753
(802) 989-7225

Tuesday - Saturday
10:30AM - 5:30PM

info@sparrowartsupply.com
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Pictured artwork by Catherine Raishart



ASK A MASTER GARDENER

HOW TO USE HEUCHERA IN YOUR GARDEN

If you're looking for a plant for your garden that will come back year after year, is easy to care for and suitable for a variety of growing conditions, coral bells (*Heuchera*) just might be the plant for you. It's also known by the common names alum root and rock geranium.

BY **DEBORAH J.**

BENOIT

Heuchera are semi-evergreen perennials that are native to eastern and central North America. They can be grown in United States Department of Agriculture Plant Hardiness Zones 4 to 9, with some varieties hardy to Zone 3.

They grow in a well-behaved, mounding shape. Depending on the variety, they can grow from 12 to 36 inches in diameter and 6 to 24 inches high.

Heuchera leaves are by far this plant's star feature. Foliage comes in a variety of shapes and textures. It can be solid colored or variegated, smooth, bumpy or ruffled. Colors

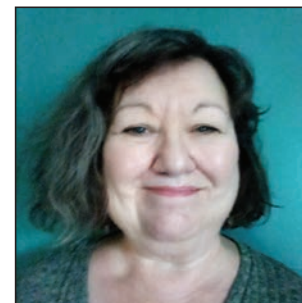
range from shades of red, pink and burgundy, to neon green, caramel, silver and nearly black.

Tiny, bell-shaped flowers in shades of white, red and pink appear during the summer months on thin stems that grow above the foliage. They attract pollinators such as bees and hummingbirds.

For the best foliage color and flowers, plant heuchera in part sun/part shade (4 to 6 hours of direct sun a day). Most varieties do fine in conditions from full shade (less than 4 hours of direct sun) to full sun (at least 6 to 8 hours direct sun). Check the plant's tag for a particular variety's needs.

If you notice foliage showing signs of sun scald, consider moving the plant to a more compatible location in your garden and remove any damaged leaves.

Heuchera can be used as a ground cover or to add interest to garden beds, borders and containers all season long. Those grown in



Deborah J. Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from North Adams, Mass., who is part of the Bennington County Chapter.

containers may need added insulation to protect against winter temperatures. As an alternative, they can be planted in-ground and repotted the following spring.

They can add a burst of color to a shade garden and make good companions for hostas (*Hosta*), bleeding hearts (*Dicentra spectabilis*) or ferns-like ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*). They're equally at home in a part-sun or full sun garden, along with lady's mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*) and day lilies (*Heemerocallis*). Check the care tag for the variety you select.

Plant one variety of heuchera in a group for a bold statement of color, or mix varieties to highlight the contrast in foliage color and leaf texture.

Heuchera can be planted in spring or fall. They prefer rich, well-drained soil but will adapt well to all but heavy clay soil. Amend heavy clay soil to improve drainage.

Heuchera should be planted with the crown at the same soil level as in the pot. Water well when planting, and water as needed until established, particularly if conditions are hot or dry.

Because of the plant's shallow root system, the crown may lift from the ground during freeze-and-thaw cycles in winter. Applying a generous layer of mulch around plants in the fall can help reduce the chance of this happening. If you notice plants have heaved out of the ground over the winter, replant in spring as soon as the soil is workable.

Divide mature plants every 3 to 4 years by separating clumps in springtime, being sure each piece has a good amount of roots and foliage.

Heuchera are considered deer and rabbit resistant, but keep in mind that during lean times, these garden visitors will feed on almost any plant.

For answers to your home gardening questions, contact the UVM Extension Master Gardener Helpline at go.uvm.edu/gardenquestion.



Choosing varieties of heuchera with different foliage color and leaf textures to plant in the garden will add interest to flowerbeds and borders throughout the season.

PHOTO / DEBORAH J. BENOIT

“WE’RE **THRILLED TO OFFER THIS VALUABLE SERVICE** TO VERMONTERS.”

— Deb Heleba, program coordinator

Master gardener helpline now open to assist gardeners

Gardening enthusiasts and homeowners can now receive gardening and backyard composting information and guidance with the spring re-opening of the University of Vermont (UVM) Extension Master Gardener Helpline.

Operated by trained and knowledgeable Extension Master Gardener volunteers, the helpline provides free, reliable, research-based answers to questions about home gardening, lawn care, composting, integrated pest management and more.

“We’re thrilled to offer this valuable service to Vermonters,” said Deb Heleba, program coordinator from Lincoln. “Our trained volunteers are passionate about home and community horticulture and eager to help gardeners at all experience levels.”


Interested Vermonters can contact the helpline in two ways. They can submit questions with photos of plants, insects and diseases or upload soil test reports to the online portal at go.uvm.edu/gardenhelpline.

Helpline volunteers also are available to answer calls at 802-656-5421 on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon, through Oct. 30. Questions about plant identification, insect and

SEE GARDEN ON PAGE 14

Paws To Consider

with Dr. Bri Letaw, Medical Director,
Bristol Animal Hospital



Q: What are some common older cat issues?

A: There is a long list of diagnoses that can cause issues with older cats. This includes chronic kidney disease, heart disease, hyperthyroidism, diabetes, hypertension and cancer. Typical age to see these is usually starting 8-10 years of age. Even with some of these diagnoses, older cats can live years with proper treatment, medical regimen and consistent monitoring.

Bristol Animal Hospital, 167 Monkton Rd., Bristol
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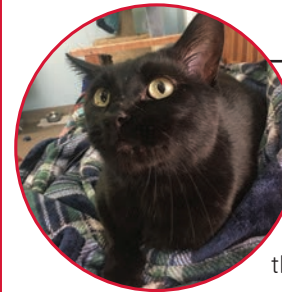
Anna & Elsa

Anna and Elsa are a pair of 4-year-old sisters who have been together for their whole lives. They are both very affectionate, playful, and love catnip! Anna and Elsa are a bonded pair and would like to be adopted together. They have no experience with dogs.



Big Cat

Big Cat is aptly named and is a gentle giant! He can take a little time to warm up but once he does, he is super affectionate. He is very sweet and has lived with both cats and dogs. Big Cat was previously an indoor/outdoor cat and may enjoy the same lifestyle in his new home.



Carr

Carr came to Homeward Bound as a beaten-up stray. He has clearly had a rough life outside but is super friendly and good with people. His favorite thing to do is eat and get pets. Carr will need to be an inside cat for the near future and wear a cone to keep him from touching the healing wound on his face. We are unsure if he gets along with other animals at this time.



Daisy

Hi! I'm Daisy! A super sweet, goofy Pit Bull mix. I absolutely love people and will wiggle my body out of excitement to say hello. Toys are my favorite, and I will gladly play fetch and tug. I'm housebroken and walk well on a leash. In my previous home, I didn't get along with the other female dog. I'm fine with male dogs but will need proper introduction. I've been around cats before and enjoy chasing them. I'm looking for an active family that can give me endless cuddles!



Trixie

Hi there! My name is Trixie. I'm a 5-year-old German Shepherd/Shiba Inu mix. I'm a shy girl, looking for a calm home setting and would prefer to live with other dogs! I get along fine with cats too, but small children make me nervous. I create a strong bond with my person and love to be near them. I'm housebroken and I know some basic commands.



Homeward Bound
Addison County's Humane Society



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802-388-1100 | HomewardBoundAnimals.org
236 Boardman Street | Middlebury, VT

CHAOS IN THE VALLEY

D&D THEMED SHOW WELCOMES SPONTANEOUS AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The Valley Players will host “Chaos in the Valley” on Saturday, April 12, at 7 p.m., at the Valley Players Theater, 4254 Main Street (Rt. 100), in Waitsfield. This Dungeons & Dragons-themed show will feature four improv comedians/table top role players and a Dungeon Master. Admission for the audience is a small donation to the Valley Players Theater. This show is “rated” PG-13 for some language and figurative violence and will last approximately two hours.

Dungeons and Dragons is essentially a collective storytelling experience. The players create characters they control and the Dungeon Master creates the world in which the characters interact with each other, other peoples, monsters, landscapes, and of course dungeons. Players are free to interact with the world as they wish. However, no matter what they want to do or how good they are at something, there is always a chance of failure. The 20-sided die, or D20, determines the success or failure of the characters' actions.

When the game of Dungeons & Dragons is played in front of an audience it adds an extra amount of spontaneity. Audience members can make additional donations (to the Valley Players) to participate in the show by altering game events at set times, such as making a player re-roll; adding or subtracting monsters in a fight; and adding bonuses to a player's roll. Audience members are encouraged to bring cash for these transactions; the Valley Players Venmo code will also be available to scan for purchases.

No reservations are required, seats will be available on a first come, first served basis starting at 6:30 p.m. The audience may bring snacks and beverages to enjoy during the game. Questions may be emailed to valleyplayers@madriver.com or call 802-583-1674.

Anunnaki Tales: Stories and discussion with Vergennes alumni

Despite having origins deep in the past, myths from the Ancient Egyptians, Israelites, Greeks, and other cultures continue to resonate. On Thursday, April 17, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., author Josh Brooks will share stories from his self-published collection "Anunnaki Tales: The Gods, Goddesses, and Kings of Ancient Sumer."

Brooks relied on scholarly translations of often fragmentary early Mesopotamian texts to craft a chronological narrative presented over several myths. From the creation of the world by the cosmic mother *Nammu*, to the earliest preserved tales of the epic hero, *Gilgamesh*, Brooks will guide the audience through the central themes and hidden details in Sumerian mythology.

Listeners will recognize familiar mythical tropes, while also learning about this singular ancient culture. Illustrator Jason Fearon will be on hand to provide historical and creative context for *Anunnaki Tales*' striking artwork.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Brooks is a fifth-grade humanities teacher at Vergennes Union Elementary School. His passion for mythology was sparked at a young age by an illustrated children's Bible and the school librarian, Mrs. Rogers, who first introduced Brooks to "D'Aulaires Book of Greek Myths."

Fearon is a visual arts teacher at Champlain Valley Union High School, and has a background in studio arts and film.

Both Brooks and Fearon are graduates of the Vergennes Union High School class of 1993.

Copies of Anunnaki Tales will be available for purchase at the event. For more info visit bixbylibrary.org.



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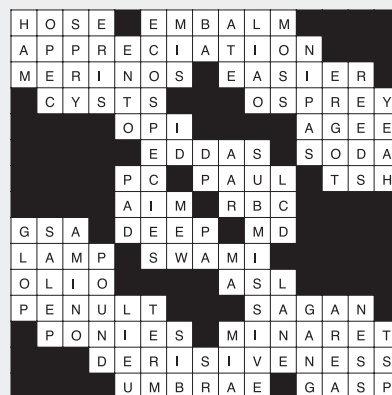
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GARDEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

disease management, soil health and other sustainable gardening practices are all welcome. However, Extension Master Gardener volunteers cannot provide personal

site visits to home gardens.

Commercial growers of vegetables, berries, tree fruit and related crops who need assistance with identifying an insect pest or plant disease, should contact the UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic (uvm.edu/extension/pdc). For other crop-related questions, contact the UVM Extension Commercial Horticulture Team (go.uvm.edu/hort).

The helpline is part of UVM Extension's Community Horticulture program that is committed to supporting local communities through science-based horticulture education and outreach. The program's Extension Master Gardener Program trains volunteers in horticultural best practices, empowering them to share knowledge and promote environmentally responsible gardening throughout the state.

For more information, visit the program website at uvm.edu/extension/mastergardener.



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EXHIBITS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

connection, and vulnerability, all rooted in the physicality of the body. On view through April 26.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

72 Porter Field Road, Middlebury

For more info visit 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. 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.

"Botanical: The Art of Plants." Wild or cultivated, plants of all kinds define landscapes, provide a sense of place, and connect us to the natural world. This exhibit highlights images that reveal the spirit and character of plants as well as our intimate connection to them. Juror Wendi Schneider selected approximately 35 images for exhibition in the Middlebury gallery, and 40 more for the online gallery. On view April 4-25.

SPARROW ART SUPPLY

44 Main St., Middlebury

For more info visit sparrowartsupply.com

"Collective Perspectives." This member show brings together 11 diverse voices from our collective, showcasing a wide range of mediums including cyanotype on textile, photography, acrylic paintings on skate decks and more. Exhibiting artists include Elise Bouffard, Andrew Clingenpeel, Caitlin Gildrien, Charon Henning, Michael Hollis, Jaqueline Lore, Catherine Raishart, Bart Robbett, Elizabeth Sylvia, Courtney Vengrin, and Heather Rusch Zelonis. On view April 18-June 15.

UPCOMING MUSIC

Community chorus brings new music to Middlebury with 'So We Try' on April 11

The Middlebury College Community Chorus will present a world premiere for choir and piano called "So We Try," on Friday, April 11, from 7:30-9:30 p.m., at the Mahaney Arts Center, Olin C. Robison Concert Hall in Middlebury. The piece is composed by Peter Buffett and arranged for chorus by Peter Kiesewalter. There are also selections by Pete Seeger, Felix Mendelssohn, Ed Thompson, as well as another world premiere by

Vermont-based composer Dorothy Robson.

This will be an evening chock-full of new music that will challenge the way you think about choral singing, our relationship to the earth, and our shared humanity.

The chorus is conducted by Ronnie Romano '20 at the piano. Free and open to the public.



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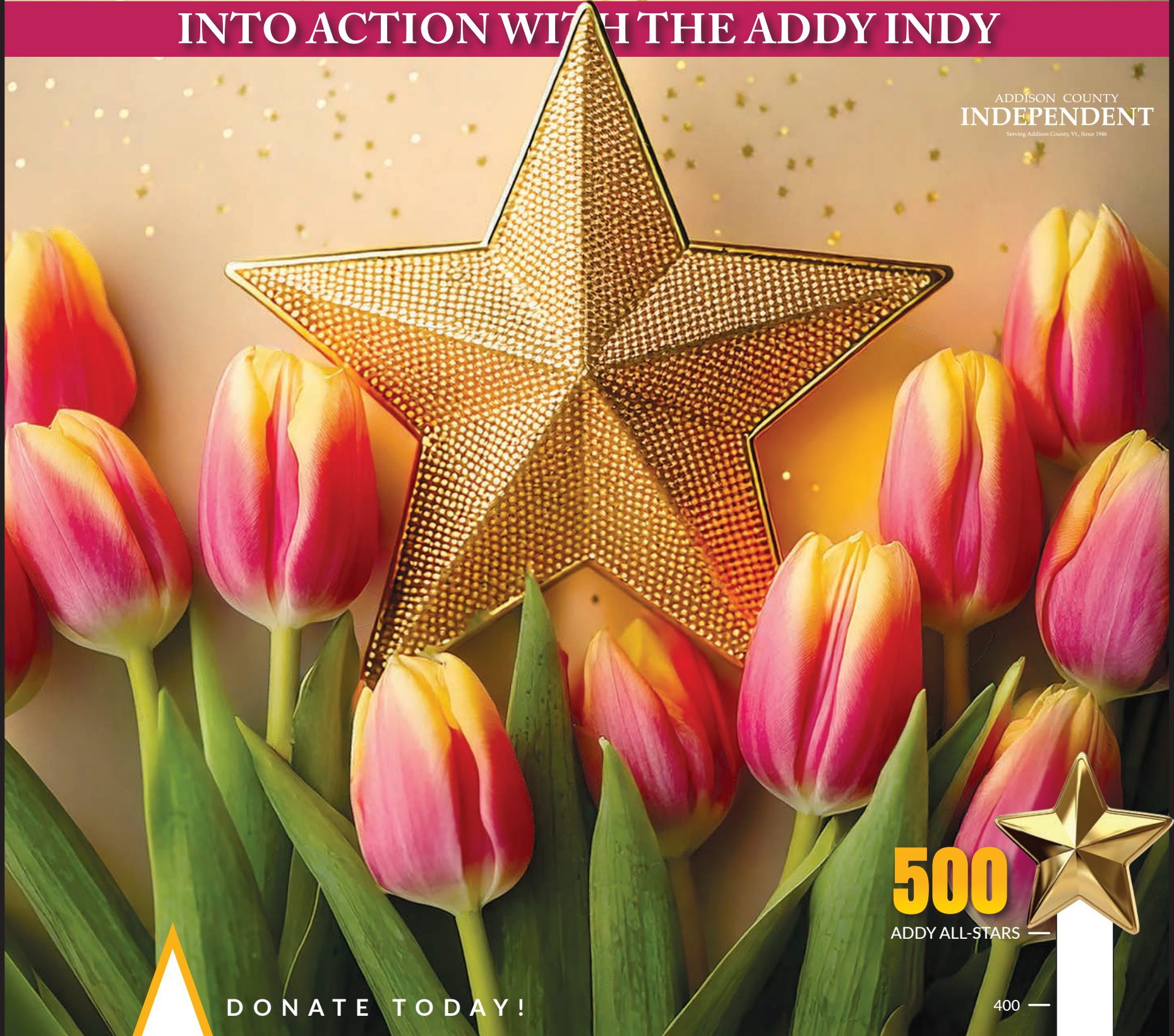
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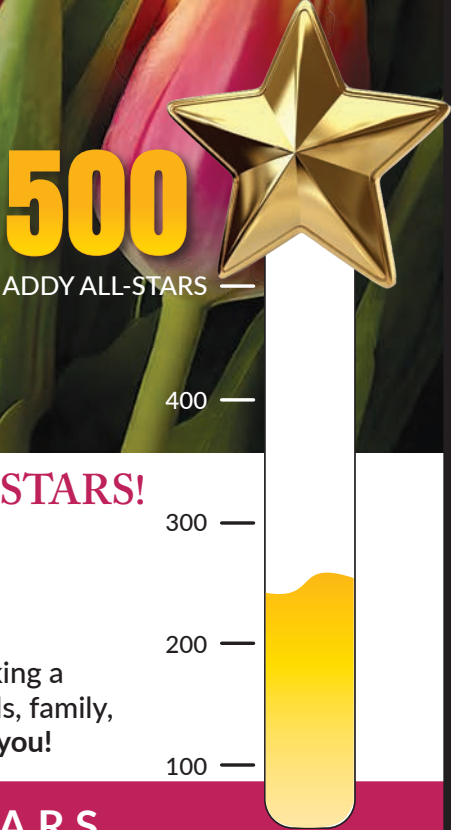
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