

*The nonprofit community news source since 1958*

# *The* Charlotte News

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## Conflict zone: ZA, SBA and Selectboard intertwined internally

Chea Waters Evans  
NEWS EDITOR

A conflict that crosses board boundaries in town has ignited planning and zoning, personnel, and public meeting conflicts. The issues center around an application considered two weeks ago by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

It starts with an application for a deli at Spear's Store. Carrie Spear, the owner, through Court Street Associates, applied for a conditional use permit to add a deli and apartment to her store. The application was denied by the ZBA during a hearing in which Spear or her representatives were not given an opportunity to present their application or answer questions from the board.

At the Oct. 14 meeting, Spear's project was first on the agenda. ZBA Chair Frank Tenney recused himself from the discussion due to his relationship with Spear and because his relatives are her neighbors and own a store and snack bar next door. Vice Chair Stuart Bennett took the lead.

Before the presentation began, he said, "As I—and we—were reviewing the materials that were submitted with the application," he said, "it became apparent to me in my judgment that this hearing had been prematurely warned, because we just don't have all the information we need based on the ordinance."

He said the site plan submitted is incomplete because it does not include historical use, current use and proposed use, and the same information was missing for floor plans inside the house. He said that without this information, the ZBA could not make a decision, and suggested the hearing be re-warned. "Let's do it right, let's do it once," he said. He suggested in his motion that the board waive the fee, which is not something the

ZBA has authority to do, as it is under the Selectboard's purview. In this case, the application had already been approved as complete by Zoning Administrator Daniel Morgan.

Bennett said that in the past, the ZBA accepted applications like Spear's, and that she happened to submit hers at the wrong time.

"It's coincidental that this hearing happens to be the next hearing after we, as a board, internally, were very, very frustrated with incomplete applications coming to us, and we tried to accommodate and accommodate and accommodate, and frankly we just got tired of it...and so you're not being selected for special treatment here, it just happened to be the next one in line that came along, and we all pretty much said, 'We're tired of this, let's get a zoning office, a staff, that can prepare things for us and present it to us well.'"

Bennett did not respond to repeated inquiries regarding the time and nature of these internal communications and whether or not they were conducted in accordance with Vermont Open Meeting Law, which requires any gathering of a quorum of any board to officially warn a meeting and make it open to the public. A public records request made to the ZBA by *The News* on Monday for communications relating to Spear's application was not fulfilled by press time at 1 p.m. on Wednesday; Town Administrator Dean Bloch said the town legally has three days to respond to such requests and expected to respond by Wednesday, Oct. 28.

The staff of which Bennett was speaking was Zoning Administrator Daniel Morgan; in an email to *The Charlotte News*, Bennett wrote, "Until recently, there has been

SEE **ZONING** PAGE 3

## General election and absentee voting 101

Mary Mead  
CHARLOTTE TOWN CLERK/TREASURER

The Vermont Secretary of State's Office was in charge of mailing out absentee ballots to every active registered voter in the Town of Charlotte. They started the mailing on Sept. 25 and finished up by Oct. 1.

As far as voting by absentee ballot is concerned, **this is the only thing that is different.** There is nothing different about the way we handle absentee ballots, nothing different about the way you return the ballots to us, nothing different about the way those ballots are cast or counted. People also seem to be worked up about early voting, like that is somehow something different from casting an absentee ballot. In Charlotte, **early voting = absentee ballot voting;** this is also the same as always. If you received a ballot, voted on it, and returned it to the Clerk's Office, you voted early by absentee ballot.

So here we go, to be clear:

**YES** – You can return your ballot to us in person, walk into the building (we are open, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.) and hand it to us. If the office is closed or you don't want to enter the building, you can put your ballot in the mail slot by the front door. It is locked, secure and checked frequently throughout the day and on the weekend as well.

**YES** – Your ballot needs to be placed inside the certificate envelope and you need to sign and print your name—legibly—since that is what we use to mark you off the checklist as "voted." If you are a Jr., Sr., III please make sure that's how you sign. Otherwise, we have no idea who to check off the list.

**YES** – If you make a mistake, like using permanent magic marker to mark your ballot and it bleeds through to the other side, you can bring your ballot in to us and we will give you

a new ballot.

**YES** – If you prefer to vote in person, on Election Day, you certainly can. We ask that you bring the ballot you received in the mail to use to vote on, as we have a limited quantity of ballots.

**YES** – If you show up at the polls wanting to vote in person with no ballot in hand, we will certainly give you one.

**NO**—We do not start counting ballots early. When the polls open on Nov. 3, we will start putting all the absentee ballots we have received into the tabulator. We will be casting those ballots at the same time as any in-person voting is going on. We check the mail throughout the day to make sure we are counting every ballot that has been returned. Every ballot that we have received before the close of polls at 7 p.m. will be run through the tabulator, even if that process takes us past 7 p.m.

We encourage you to return your absentee ballots to us before Nov. 3, unless you are voting in person, of course. There is a certain amount of data entry we need to do before the absentee ballot goes into the tabulator, so the more we can have done before Election Day, the faster it goes. The faster it goes for all of us worker bees, the faster you all get the results.

If you choose to wait until Election Day to appear on the scene, remember we will be at the Charlotte Town Hall, not Charlotte Central School. Please be prepared to practice social distancing, wear your mask, don't be in a rush, and all will be well. Stay calm and carry on as they say.

Nov. 4 is almost here—no, that is not a typo, I live for the day after an election. Feel free always to call us or email with anything you want to ask—425-3071, [mary@townofcharlotte.com](mailto:mary@townofcharlotte.com) and [Skoerner@townofcharlotte.com](mailto:Skoerner@townofcharlotte.com).



## Put your pumpkins on parade

Chea Waters Evans  
NEWS EDITOR

Trick or treating won't be the same this year, but some Halloween traditions can't be taken down by the coronavirus—as long as you have a squash and a sharp knife, you can't be stopped. Jessica Scriver, a Charlotte resident and artist, is coordinating an effort along with the Charlotte Library to light up the Town Green next week with jack o' lanterns.

Scriver said the idea was inspired by a parade of pumpkins she saw last year on the rotary in Winooski. "It was awesome," she said, "and really cool, and I wasn't sure about what was happening with Halloween here, and I thought it was something that we could do no matter what was happening with trick or treating," she said.

To participate, carvers of all ages and abilities can just carve their pumpkins and leave them on the porch at the library any time through Thursday, Oct. 29. Pumpkins are for sale locally at Tenney's in East Charlotte, and any

uncarved ones on the library porch are free and available for the taking. Anyone who wants to donate a pumpkin is free to leave one on the library porch for someone else to take.

The library is doing a virtual pumpkin parade—before you drop it off at the library, email photos of your finished creation to [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org) for recognition and to share your jack o' lantern on the library website.

The pumpkins will be lit up Thursday through Saturday on Halloween weekend. "If people are going to make the effort to do pumpkins, we're going to have them lit for more than one night," Scriver said.

On Halloween night, Scriver hinted that, while looking at the pumpkins on parade, there could be another treat in store. "Maybe you'll find some candy there...just maybe..."

In addition to pumpkins, donations of votive candles, both regular and battery-powered, are welcome on the front porch of the library.



Carve your pumpkins and bring them to the library to be part of the pumpkin parade.

Photo by Jessica Scriver



# News from *The News*

Dear Reader,

You probably remember the kerfuffle in town a couple months back over some food trucks that were abruptly absent. Much of the foofaraw played out over social media. But much of the information on social media turned out to be wrong. I'm proud to say that *The Charlotte News* got it right, covered *all* sides of the story—and folks got a little perspective and calmed down. Social media certainly has its place, but social media is not journalism. Sometimes you need the facts.

Why do I bring this up now? Because it illustrates the importance of information that is *trusted* and reporting that is in the interest of the people. That's what nonprofit news provides. And that's what we do. *The Charlotte News* is unafraid and unapologetic about telling the stories of our community, our issues and potential solutions—stories that might not get told otherwise.

*The Charlotte News* is a public service and a community newspaper that's worth your financial support. And when you donate now, you double the impact of your gift.

That gift ensures that we will continue to provide a place for town residents to find

**“I'm proud to announce that *The Charlotte News* has qualified for a prestigious national program called NewsMatch that is doubling most of our donations during the months of November and December.”**

trusted, measured information about our community and our neighbors.

*The Charlotte News* comes to you for free every other week, but producing the paper costs upwards of \$4,500 each issue. Advertising covers most of that cost, but a growing portion is paid for by people like you—people who *get it* about the public service the paper provides and are willing to do their part to keep it coming.

I'm proud to announce that *The Charlotte News* has qualified for a prestigious, national program

called NewsMatch that is *doubling* most of our donations during the months of November and December.

We don't receive the match unless we go get the donations, so it's a great time for you to give for the first time or to consider an additional gift this year. The contribution you make now will be doubled, and if you make a monthly contribution, that will be matched x12. That's a pretty powerful impact.

NewsMatch and its partner program, the Institute for Nonprofit News, support a network of more than 250 nonprofit, nonpartisan news organizations like ours throughout the county, with financial support from, among others, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

When you send your check to support *The Charlotte News* today, please date it for November or December, so your donation will be doubled. Here's the address: Friends of the Charlotte News, P.O. Box 211, Charlotte, VT 05445. Or make your contribution online in November or December at [FriendsOfTheCharlotteNews.org](http://FriendsOfTheCharlotteNews.org).

Gratefully,  
Claudia Marshall  
Publisher



## The Charlotte News

### Mission Statement

The mission of *The Charlotte News* is to inform our readers about current events, issues and topics, and to serve as a forum for the free exchange of views of town residents and community volunteer organizations on matters related to Charlotte and the lives of its residents.

### Editorial independence

The Board of Directors retains full authority over all editorial and advertising content in *The Charlotte News*. While we are funded by advertising revenue and donor contributions, our news judgments are made in accordance with our mission and independent of all sources of financial support, including support given through our affiliated 501(c)3 organization, The Friends of *The Charlotte News*.

### Letters, Commentaries and Obituaries

Consistent with our mission *The Charlotte News* publishes letters to the editor, commentaries and obituaries from our readers. All letters, commentaries and obituaries are subject to review and approval by the news editor of the paper and to the following rules and standards:

- Letters to the editor, commentaries and obituaries should be emailed to [news@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:news@thecharlottenews.org) as attachments in .doc format. All letters, commentaries and obituaries must contain the writer's full name, town of residence and, for editing purposes only, phone number.
- Letters may not exceed 300 words, obituaries 500 words and commentaries 750 words.
- The opinions expressed in commentaries and letters to the editor belong solely to the author and are not to be understood as endorsed by either the Board of Directors or the editorial staff of the paper.
- All published letters and commentaries will include the writer's name and town of residence.
- Before publishing any obituary, we will need proper verification of death.
- All submissions are subject to editing for clarity, factual accuracy, tone, length and consistency with our house publishing style.
- Whenever editing is necessary we will make every effort to publish each submission in its entirety and to preserve the original intent and wording. We will confer with writers before publishing any submitted material that in our judgment requires significant editing before it can be published.
- The news editor makes the final determination whether a letter to the editor, a commentary or an obituary will be published as submitted, returned for rewriting or rejected.

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# Stormwater improvements at CVU

By Kate Kelly  
LEWIS CREEK ASSOCIATION

Champlain Valley Union High School partnered with Lewis Creek Association through its Ahead of the Storm program to actively improve water quality of stormwater running off the school property and flowing to Lake Champlain. This marks the fifth year of a partnership between the Champlain Valley School District and LCA to prepare school campuses as LCA's AOTS stormwater resilience demonstration sites.

Just before school began this fall, the swale off the north parking lot was improved. The bioretention ("rain garden") areas in this swale will help clean water running from 4.9 acres of CVU's campus, including 1.4 acres of impervious surface. As water runs off the parking lot and from the track/hill area, it enters a sediment forebay area that helps remove sediment. Then it flows down the swale, where it is caught in bioretention areas, which include soil and a native grass and wildflower mix to help remove phosphorus from the water, before it filters down into the underdrain pipe in the ground under the swale, removing nutrients. An overflow culvert was resized to meet resiliency goals for safe passage of large storms. Water then enters the stream, which flows into CVU's fire/stormwater pond. This pond's outlet then



Completed Champlain Valley Union High School swale. *Courtesy photo*

flows under Route 116, between the Carpenter-Carse library and gas station, under the road and beside the Bissonette Fields, then into Patrick Brook, which then empties into the LaPlatte River.

CVU students worked with the Lewis Creek Association, water resource engineers and school staff to help identify areas where stormwater improvements could be made. The eroding swale off the north parking lot was identified as an important location to treat dirty water running off of paved surfaces, as well as to fix erosion that was taking place in the swale, carrying phosphorus with it. Several students last year received a lesson on water quality through another LCA grant and met with LCA staff and Jessica Louisos, a Water

Resources Engineer at Milone & MacBroom, to develop project ideas for this swale improvement. This type of fix helps improve water quality in Patrick Brook and the LaPlatte River by slowing water down, spreading it out, and sinking it into the ground, as well as carrying more water that is expected with larger rainstorms due to climate change.

All of the stormwater runoff from the CVU property flows into the LaPlatte River via one of two routes, then into Lake Champlain at Shelburne Bay. The LaPlatte River is impaired for bacteria (*E. coli*) from its mouth up to Hinesburg, and we hope to keep it from being classified as impaired for phosphorus. Nutrients like phosphorus can cause algal blooms (including harmful blue-green algae) in the lake and can lead to fish die-offs. Chloride (which is in road salt, sodium chloride) is also bad for the environment and can kill off plants. At some campus locations, runoff from the CVU roof, parking lots, driveways and playing fields travels directly from an impervious surface to an aging pipe network with little to no treatment. Action on a community scale is critical to reduce the large amount of nutrient-rich stormwater directly entering the LaPlatte River, then Lake Champlain. You can learn more about the problem and what landowners can do to improve water quality in a presentation on LCA's website at [lewisecreek.org/water-quality-videos](http://lewisecreek.org/water-quality-videos).

This project was funded by an agreement awarded by the Environmental Protection Agency and by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission in partnership with the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

## Correction

In the Oct. 15 article "LUR amendment discussion prompts conflict of interest charge," by Chea Waters Evans, the wrong Adsit was credited with speaking during the meeting. The speaker was Eric Adsit.

The Oct. 15 cover featured a Lee Krohn photo of silos. The caption geographically placed them incorrectly; the silos are on Greenbush Road.



# Town

## ZONING

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

little or no attempt by the ZBA to address this issue of the ZA warning incomplete applications. The warning of incomplete applications has been a problem for the ZBA for some time.”

Morgan, who has been in the ZA position since the summer of 2019, was also the topic of conversation at Monday night’s Selectboard meeting. The first item on the agenda was “discussion of relationship between Zoning Board and Zoning Administrator.” Morgan had been issued a performance reprimand this fall by the Selectboard, though the contents of that warning are not public; he did file a grievance against the Selectboard for that reprimand which was addressed in executive session on Tuesday of this week.

Bennett conceded during the ZBA meeting discussion that, though Morgan deemed the application complete, he thought “it’s not as detailed as we asked for.”

Spear responded, “In my mind, it’s a very simple application. I showed you around, you didn’t want to go inside on Sautrday [during the site visit] and so I would have liked to have done that.” She also said that she hoped the ZBA would hear her presentation, which would answer many of their questions.

“What more do you want, Stuart?” Spear asked. Bennett said he had sent a list of what he wanted, and Spear responded that she was prepared to answer the questions in a red-line document that she had already submitted to the ZBA with responses.

“The fundamental issue is when you’re dealing with uses that are historical, current and proposed...we need a lot more information because we need to know what we’re approving,” Bennett said. He said the store’s location in a central part of the East Village made it more important than a regular application.

Spear said she hoped to address any ZBA concerns in a conversation at the meeting so it was clear what the ZBA wanted. Daniel Goltzman from Daniel Goltzman Design and Development, who is spearheading the project, was present at the meeting to make a presentation about the proposed improvements and answer questions from the ZBA. He said he was “quite surprised” to hear that the ZBA deemed the application incomplete. ZBA member Lane Morrison said, in disagreement with Bennett, “Complete is in the eye of the beholder,” and said he would support hearing from Spear and Goltzman during the meeting.

After 20 minutes of discussion of whether or not the ZBA should hear the presentation, ZBA member Matt Zucker, who was participating remotely, reminded Bennett that the intent of the hearing “is about the subject at hand, not about how the board executes its responsibilities.”

After 25 more minutes, for a total of 45 minutes discussing whether or not Goltzman and Spear should be able to make their presentation, Bennett made a motion and the ZBA voted 3-1 to deny the application without hearing from Goltzman or Spear about the project itself. Zucker, Bennett and Jonathan Fisher voted affirmatively to deny it; Morrison was the lone vote to approve.

Bennett wrote in an email to *The Charlotte News* that he could not comment on the application because the ZBA is considered

quasi-judicial and therefore “it is best practice not to publicly comment on pending applications, the same way that a court or judge would not comment on a pending case.”

During the Selectboard meeting on Monday, Oct. 26, after an executive session in which the ZBA and the Selectboard held a joint meeting with the town attorney, the board resumed the public session to discuss whether or not a clerk should be hired to assist Morgan with filing duties and discussed the fact that there have been three zoning administrators plus an interim ZA in the past four years.

Tenney said he had contacted Morgan regarding his job performance earlier this fall to let him know “things have been going on that haven’t been going perfect.” He said he offered to help look over items and oversee agendas and schedules to “help things run more smoothly.” The ZBA is not, however, the direct supervisor of the ZA. The town administrator, in this case Bloch, directly supervises Morgan. Though the ZBA works closely with the ZA, they are not in a supervisory position over him in that role, even though he also serves as the ZBA’s staff person as a separate role from his administrator duties.

Bennett said during the Monday Selectboard meeting that he has also been involved with the zoning administrator’s daily work and said he has been “feeding” Morgan “massive recommendations” about how he should be handling certain aspects of his job. Krasnow pointed out that both the ZBA and the ZA have statutory obligations that are complicated by the fact that Morgan “wears two hats” in his job.

Clark Hinsdale, a Charlotte landowner who has been involved in zoning and planning in town for almost three decades, said during public comment, “We have some senior expert members of the ZBA that are micromanaging staff...I think the micromanagement of zoning members going in at every hour of the day, and standing over Daniel’s shoulder, and telling him what to do, is a statutory error and I think [Town Attorney] David Rugh will underscore the fact that you, the Selectboard, appoint a zoning administrator, and if people don’t like his decisions, they appeal to the ZBA.”

“There’s a lot of Charlotters, particularly in COVID, who have a lot of time to have a lot of opinions about their neighbor’s application and are not shy about coming in and lobbying the staff,” Hinsdale said.

He complimented Tenney on his ability to run a zoning meeting well. “Stuart Bennett, apparently, does not,” he said, “I frankly think his behavior is so egregious you should remove him from the board.” He said he thought Bennett filibustered for the hour of discussion regarding the Spear application in order to keep any discussion of the application from happening.

Monday’s Selectboard discussion ended in the interest of time, with Krasnow saying he guessed they would schedule a special meeting to look at zoning and planning office organization.

Spear told *The News* she declined to comment on the matter, because she is currently in the process of resubmitting her application. Morgan did not respond to several requests for comment.

## Boo! It’s a book!



Thanks to an anonymous donor, the Charlotte Food Shelf will offer kids some Halloween food for the soul at the Oct. 29 Food Shelf distribution.

Photo by Cindi Robinson

# Town

## Community center committee forming, LURs the same for now

Chea Waters Evans

Here's the quick takeaway from Monday night's Selectboard meeting: there's a problem with the relationship between the Zoning Board of Adjustment and the Zoning Administrator (see article page 1), Land Use Regulation amendments are still up for discussion, there are a couple new people on the Planning Commission, and Charlotte town leaders are perking up their ears regarding planning for a town recreation center.

### Land Use Regulation amendment

Town Administrator Dean Bloch led the discussion regarding a proposed LUR amendment that was submitted to the PC through a petition submitted by Debra Kassabian and Mike Dunbar, owners of Gemini Properties, LLC, which owns the Charlotte Crossings building. They want to change the LUR so they can have a parking area at the front of their building, facing Route 7. Bloch said the Selectboard has three options: hold a hearing, which they are currently doing, and then do nothing to follow up; send the petitioned amendment to the town for a vote on Town Meeting Day in March, or submit an amendment that they have changed to the town for a vote at town meeting.

Kassabian spoke during the public comment portion of the hearing, noting that the regulation said that parking should be excluded from the front of buildings

"if possible." She said, "If there's no alternative, it's allowed." She argued that in the case of Charlotte Crossing, because of building entrance locations and accessibility requirements, they need to put those spots at the front of the building.

She said she thinks the Selectboard is "not actually being open" to the idea that the guidance is not a firm requirement and said the current regulation "is really being pushed as a hard rule."

Charlotte landowner and developer Clark Hinsdale said that he thought changing the LUR in this case would be a "slap in the face" to the volunteers who he said put in "thousands and thousands of hours" to craft the current LURs to "make Charlotte special."

In the interest of time, the hearing was continued until the Monday, Nov. 9 Selectboard meeting.

### Recreation

Talk of a Charlotte community center has been kicking around town for years, but Recreation Director Nicole Conley took the concept a little closer to reality after the Recreation Department presented their preliminary budget figures for the next fiscal year. Conley showed a possible floor plan and map that could be the possible site for a recreation and meeting spot for Charlotters.

After Charlotte Central School consolidated with other area schools two years ago to become the Champlain Valley School District, the town lost its ability to use the school facility how it pleases. This means that CVSD has authority over how and when the building is used, which could be problematic when it comes to town meeting and voting, which have historically been held in the CCS multi-purpose room.

Conley's proposed building includes a gym and pickleball courts that rec programs can use, a large storage space, an indoor walking track, a conference room that could be rented, and locker rooms.

The center could potentially be located on the former Burns property, which the town owns, off of Greenbush Road near the West Village.

Conley is going to start a committee to research and plan and "see if the community wants it," and Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow said he thought the project could take some cues from the Friends of the Charlotte Library and make an effort to secure private donations for some costs so the burden on the taxpayer is lessened.

### Other news

Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue presented their first-round budget for

FY 21-22, though the figures for payroll were missing and will come out later this week. The Charlotte Senior Center also presented their budget spreadsheet, which is similar to this year's, with the caveat that with COVID-19 still a factor, less money might be spend in some areas.

After interviewing all candidates at the previous meeting, the Selectboard appointed Kelly Devine and Benjamin Pualwan to the Planning Commission. Devine's term goes until April 30, 2023 and Pualwan's until April 30, 2022. Both were recommended for the position by the board because of their experience and knowledge regarding planning and the town of Charlotte.

The trails committee made a request to form a Trails Steering Committee to work with Jim Donovan, a Charlotter who has agreed to donate his time as a planner to the project, thus saving the Trails Committee almost \$50,000, which will be redirected toward trail construction. The committee will be made up of Jim Faulkner, Bill Fraser-Harris, Bill Stuono, Marty Van Vleck, Bill Regan, Mark Dillenbeck, Laurie Thompson, and Jack Pella.



## Just Asking

# If you could invite any three guests from the past or present to dinner, who would be sitting at your table?

Photos and interviews by Jim Squires



**Augusta Good Krahl**

*Brené Brown, Glennon Doyle and Abby Wambach would be sitting at my table.*



**Joe Lasek**

*That's a hard one. I think I'd invite Siddhartha Gautama, Marcus Aurelius and Mark Twain. I imagine we'd have one interesting conversation.*



**Gloria Slauterbeck**

*I'd like to have Mel Brooks, Mel Blanc and Stephen King. Probably wouldn't do much eating, though.*



**Ann MacDonald**

*I'd pick Andy Warhol, Mick Jagger and Coco Chanel. That would make for an interesting dinner.*

## Around Town

### Charlotter contributes to New York Times Sunday Review/Opinion Section

In the Oct. 18 issue of the *New York Times* newspaper, the editorial board members contributed opinion pieces directed at "How to End Our National Crisis." **Jesse Wegman** who, while remaining on the big-city paper board, recently moved to Charlotte, is one of those members. His piece was titled "The Radicalizer in Chief."

### Congratulations:

once again to Charlotte 15-year-old **Ava**

**Rohrbaugh** who had a poem in the *Burlington Free Press* Young Writers Project of Oct. 23—the third week in a row for Ava. This week's was her end-of-life care for a dying mouse, titled simply "The Mouse." Noticing that a mouse in her room was close to dying, she decided to put it in a box with a burning flower to give it a good smell in its last days. The mouse curled around the flower as Ava carried it to a burial spot. The author ends her poem by thinking of "the little creature wrapped around the flower that I hope smelled nice."

## Town

# Gratitude in the time of corona—a happy tale

Nan Mason  
PRESIDENT OF THE FRIENDS  
OF THE CHARLOTTE LIBRARY BOARD

The Friends of the Charlotte Library would like to thank all who donated to the recent capital campaign. The fantastic and uplifting update is that we have reached our goal of raising \$600,000 to match the bond passed by a town-wide vote. Very fortunately, the new addition, which nearly doubles the size of the library, was 99% completed when the pandemic struck. We are looking forward to the full reopening of the library so all in town can enjoy and marvel at the new spaces that are truly spectacular.

Meanwhile, the site work around the expanded building is well underway. We wish to acknowledge, and to thank, Linda Hamilton, Karen Tuininga and Jim Donovan for their ongoing contributions to the Library Landscape design project, for which they generously offered a free landscape design course, eliciting ideas from nearly a dozen participants.

We all owe a great deal of gratitude and appreciation to former Selectboard member Fritz Tegatz who oversaw (and continues to oversee) every aspect of this undertaking, both on the inside and the outside. Fritz, as clerk of the works, made certain that ReArch and their subcontractors did everything to the exact specifications laid out in the design and in the contract. Fortunately, the ReArch crew members were up to the task—they were diligent, accommodating and a pleasure to work with. Both the addition and the renovation of the original building reflect their precision and their attention to detail.

At every step, the Library staff rose to the

challenge of working in a construction zone and now of dealing with the pandemic. In addition to being patient and creative they have applied for and received several grants. They were awarded a total of \$14,750, specifically for the addition, as well as another \$26,510 for programs and equipment for an impressive total of \$41,260! Their dedication and skills are exemplary.

We also wish to thank Meaghan McLaughlin, a vice president at the National Bank of Middlebury, who facilitated a loan on a schedule that matched the incoming pledges. We are incredibly grateful to all who sent in their pledges early, thereby decreasing our interest payments.

Given the current difficult times, The Friends of the Charlotte Library will forego our annual town-wide membership mailing that raises funds to augment the library's town budget. We will hope to resume the annual July book sale and related activities when the world returns to some semblance of "normal"—whatever that may be! In lieu of the mailing, we will be underwriting what we are calling "The Get Cozy Raffle" to engender some much-needed excitement and joy for the holiday season. Stay tuned!!

For the moment, we are incredibly grateful to Charlotters and other friends for their continuing support of the Library, and we are looking forward to the opportunity to share what we were able to collectively achieve.

*Nan Mason is president of the Friends of the Charlotte Library board. Board members include Missy Adams, Carol Clay, Shanley Hinge, Beth Merritt, Dana Murphy and Maria Wicker.*

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# COVID-19

## How resilient are we? Inquiring minds want to know



Trina Bianchi  
CONTRIBUTOR

As I write this update, we are close to finalizing the details of the community resilience survey. The unofficial COVID-19 team, Charlotte Community Partners, is busy making final tweaks to the community resilience assessment and

figuring out how to make it as easy as possible for everyone to access, complete, and submit it. And, more importantly, how to make sure everyone knows about it and why it's important to the future of Charlotte.

This assessment came to the attention of some very forward-thinking folks at the library after it was used in the wake of Hurricane Irene, when so many Vermont towns and families sustained substantial damage from the unexpected flooding around our state. It became apparent during the aftermath of the devastation that some towns rebounded easier and quicker than others—in other words, more resilient. To further study that, the Community Resilience Organization came into being.

To date, 10 towns in Vermont have taken the assessment and used the results to bring about change and improvements in those towns for their citizens. In Charlotte, several months ago, the CRO was contacted and the wheels to do this in Charlotte began turning.

The COVID team/Charlotte Community Partners, consisting of folks coming from various organizations/walks of life in our town decided to take up this mission as a way to learn whether or not our town was indeed

ready, in various areas, to handle a crisis in the future. The assessment was read and studied, then simplified, reworked, and tweaked to make it painless to complete and easy to understand.

The assessment looks at areas that are critical to each one of us: the availability of food and housing; our environment; our roads and bridges and whether or not they are adequate, maintained and/or safe; our natural resources and whether or not we are protecting them; the availability of health services; use of land; availability of emergency services and shelters; internet/broadband service; community connections and more.

All questions are important as are all answers, including “I don’t know,” which is critical as it may mean our town isn’t prepared in that area or it could also mean that what the town has done or has available hasn’t been effectively communicated to folks. In other words, if you have a lot of questions with the answer “I don’t know,” don’t feel that your assessment isn’t valuable.

If this assessment is to have value to our town, we need to hear from all Charlotte residents, and that means each one of you. To that end, the assessment will be available online and links will be in the *The Charlotte News* and *The Citizen* and on the library and town websites and in the CCS newsletter. If you don’t have access to a computer, you can access one at the library and complete the assessment there.

For folks who would rather read it on paper and complete it, you will be able to pick up an assessment at the Town Hall, the Library,

Spear’s Store, the Food Shelf, from the breezeway or at the Children’s Center of the Congregational Church, and at the Children’s Center across from the library on Ferry Road.

You can drop off the completed assessment at specially marked boxes at the Town Hall, the library, in the library box at Spear’s Store, at the breezeway of the Congregational Church and at the Children’s Center at the church.

The goal is to have the assessment available starting Nov. 9 and open until Dec. 11, giving everyone ample opportunity to complete it. All paper assessments will be co-mingled, and there is zero identifying information on the assessment, so responses remain totally anonymous.

Our hope is that each of you will take the time to read and complete the assessment as this is the first step in a Resilience Series, hosted by the Charlotte Library, Charlotte Community Partners and Community Resilience Organizations. It is our hope that through this assessment we can get a clearer picture of public perception of our preparedness across the many sectors that make up our community. This is the starting point to future discussions on how to make Charlotte the best community we can be for everyone who chooses to call our town their home.

As for resources available now:

### Food and meals

Available to Charlotte school age kids: the school lunch program continues whether students are in school or learning from home. Access the website [cvsdvt.org](http://cvsdvt.org), click on “District Resources,” click on “Menus,” or

call Scott Wagner at 802-871-6198.

The Food Shelf itself continues to be open Wednesdays from 5–7 p.m. at the Charlotte Congregational Church. Call 425-3252 to register.

### Emotional and mental health

Vermont 211 from your phone—available for referrals and questions.

Pathways Vermont, 883-888-2557, is free and is available 24/7 to call or text. Talk with a peer who has dealt with issues in the past. This is an awesome resource available to all Vermonters.

NFI Vermont: access through [nfvrmont.org](http://nfvrmont.org). Serves Vermont families whose children are struggling with emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges.

First Call, 802-488-7777, is for crisis situations. Available 24/7.

### Financial assistance

Remember that emergency financial assistance is available through the Food Shelf, Charlotte Congregational Church and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Requests can be made by calling 425-3252 or 425-3130.

### VT Department of Health

Stay abreast of the ongoing news in Vermont with respect to COVID-19. Check on what is opening, new regulations for traveling into our state, where to get a test if you need one, how to remain safe and well: [healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19](http://healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19).

## Re-Elect Mike Yantachka State Representative for Charlotte-Hinesburg



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Thank you for the honor of serving as your State Representative for the past ten years.

I am working for a Vermont that works for all of us. Vermont families deserve a healthy environment, an excellent public education system, safe communities, fair wages, and economic rejuvenation especially during this challenging time.

I would appreciate your support for another term.

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The Charlotte News





# Hi, Neighbor! .....

## Steve Schubart: In partnership with his cows



Phyl Newbeck  
CONTRIBUTOR

Steve Schubart grew up in Vermont, but in 2011, he traveled to California to pursue a degree in economics. While there, he decided to work on a ranch to get some cattle experience. “I had worked on farms growing up,” he said “but I got this really great job at an organic beef operation, and it changed my education direction and life path.”

Returning to Vermont in 2013, Schubart enrolled at Vermont Technical College for a degree in diversified agriculture with a minor in dairy. “Before I graduated I drafted a business plan for Grass Cattle Company,” he said. Schubart took a job in bovine genetics for a farm that specialized in dairy. “It opened my eyes to the scale of our regional agriculture,” he said. With the help of a federal micro loan, he leased 30 acres in Shoreham and started his ranch.

Recognizing that he couldn’t sell all the beef he raised, Schubart joined the Adirondack Grazers Cooperative. When their executive director stepped down, he left the genetics company and took that position, running an 80-member grass-fed beef coop for almost two years. “I learned a lot about supply chain management and herd management software,” he said, noting that the regional farms were challenged to meet demand because they didn’t have one massive feedlot like the larger ranches. “We had the challenge of how to prove that varying-sized, grass-fed beef farms could provide consistency,” he said. “It was a challenging job.” He said the board eventually closed the coop.

In 2017, Schubart began to search for land further north for his Grass Cattle Company. A year later, he signed a lease for his current acreage in Charlotte and began the process of applying for a mortgage. “I’m a sole LLC with no investors,” he said. “Getting a mortgage wasn’t a simple process, but I got one in March of 2019.”

It helped that Schubart’s land is permanently conserved. “That made it affordable for me,” he said. “The fence is appraised at a higher value than the house I’m living in. It’s all



Left: Beyond the regular rewards of cattle farming, Schubart said he is interested in its potential to solve a nutrition issue. Right: Vermonter Steve Schubart said a job in California changed his life and led him to starting the Grass Cattle Company. *Courtesy photos*



about the cows. The house is a fixer-upper, but the fence and the pasture are in good shape.” After buying the land, Schubart was asked to join the board of the Charlotte Land Trust. “I was honored that they asked me to join,” he said. “I hope I can provide a good, level-headed rancher/farmer viewpoint.”

Recently, Schubart received a grant from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to create a laneway for his cows in the pasture across the road. “It allows me to utilize that field for rotational grazing and to break up the field to make paddocks,” he said. “When I’m rotating the cows, they just go down one area where they compact the soil. It’s great for low-stress livestock handling.” Schubart has had success using laneways in the past, including the time he had to separate one cow so he could remove quills from her brisket after an unfortunate encounter with a porcupine.

This summer, Schubart averaged 60 head of cattle. The most he has ever had is 96, and at this point in the season, he is down to 16. He sells the beef through his website and to local families. Other retail locations include the Intervale Food Hub, Full Belly Farm, Last Resort Farm and a few farm stands outside

our area. He also sells to some wholesale live cattle buyers.

Schubart recognizes that the term “rancher” is not often used in New England. “Ranchers use livestock, usually cattle, to graze and build topsoil and regenerate the land,” he said. “When you ranch, your income comes from the land and its ecosystem which you’re trying to manage without tilling the soil. Progressive ranchers and even those who are conventional are learning the importance of soil health and how it offers a greater return.”

A proponent of whole animal utilization, Schubart recommends that people try eating offal. “It makes me happy when every part of the cow is used,” he said. Personally, he’s a big fan of flat iron and ribeye steaks. Schubart’s enjoyment of his work extends well beyond its culinary rewards. “I really like being outside and working with the land,” he said. “Grass-fed beef has a real shot at being a solution to feeding a growing population that needs healthy, regenerative protein, rather than growing monocrops and soy and wheat to make fake meat. I see this as a solution to feeding people in a regenerative way.”

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*Town*

# Inevitably, EAB arrives in Chittenden County

Mark Dillenbeck  
TOWN TREE WARDEN

On the morning of Oct. 21, I got the call I have been expecting and dreading. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has been detected for the first time in Chittenden County. State forestry officials positively identified characteristic serpentine EAB larval galleries below the bark of infested trees on private property in Richmond. To reach this stage, it must have been present for at least two years. The recently identified outbreak puts the northeast corner of Charlotte within the state-defined High-Risk Area (see yellow area of the map).

While EAB may well be in Charlotte, we have not detected it yet. Many people have been keeping their eyes out for signs and symptoms of EAB, such as extensive woodpecker flecking of the bark and epicormic branching (small branches that sprout from the trunks of weakened trees). This summer Tree Tribe member Alexa Lewis and I installed six green EAB traps set up in key locations throughout town. We checked these traps at the end of June and in September and did not find any of the beetles.

EAB has been in North America since 2002. Since then entomologists, foresters and others who have studied this pest have gained a better understanding of the trajectory of the infestation cycle. It typically takes approximately eight to nine years from initial infestation for EAB to reach peak population levels and 10 years for the peak of ash mortality. Because EAB has already been in Richmond for two years, that means the insect populations there will reach peak levels in six to seven years and tree mortality will peak in about eight years.

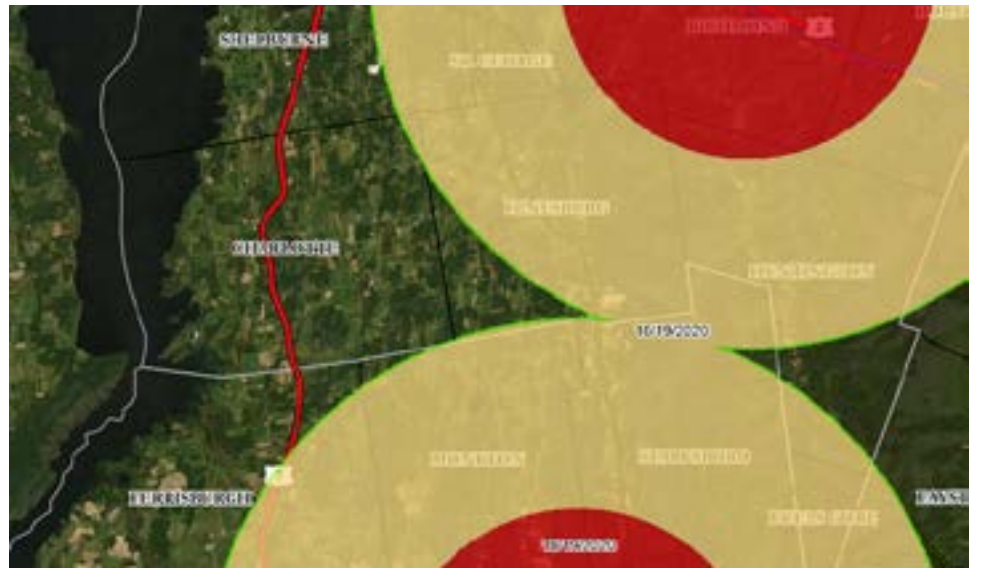
In Vermont we have been lucky. EAB infestation has happened later and has spread more slowly here than elsewhere in North

America. Credit needs to be given to the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry program, our County Foresters and other officials who have been working actively to educate people about the threat posed by this insect. We also need to acknowledge the foresters, loggers, firewood processors, mill operators and individuals who have been cooperating with the state's Slow the Spread guidelines.

Continued vigilance, particularly with regard to the movement of firewood, will buy us more time to plan and prepare. Woodlot owners may extract value from their forests by harvesting ash before it succumbs to EAB. Homeowners may opt to chemically treat ash trees that are important elements of their landscaping. With part of our town now within the high-risk zone, it is advisable to do that now. For trees that threaten homes and infrastructure there is still time to plan and budget for tree removal.

Regarding ash tree removals, it is better to fell ash trees while they are still alive and intact. Because of the particular characteristics of ash wood, it tends to crumble and collapse catastrophically when it is dead. This is especially true for EAB-infested ash. It can be dangerous for chainsaw operators to fell dead ash trees from stump cuts because of the likelihood of falling branches and the unpredictability of crumbling trees as they come down. As a rule of thumb, it can cost 50% more to remove a dead ash tree than a live one.

This calculus is part of the logic of the town's plan to preemptively remove potential ash hazard trees from the town's rights of way. In addition to avoiding the higher cost of removing dead trees we hope to spread the costs out over a longer period of time than would be the case if we operated in a reactive mode and just removed trees as they die. In



Emerald Ash Borer has been detected in Chittenden County. Though it hasn't hit Charlotte yet, infestation is inevitable. This map shows high-risk areas near Richmond, where it was recently found. *Courtesy photos*

places where EAB has run its course, near 100% ash tree mortality has occurred in a very short time frame—two or three years. The town's plan is to spread this cost over a five or six year period. The plan may be viewed in the Tree Warden section of the town website. An additional consideration is that we expect the cost of tree removals to increase due to demand for tree service companies when we reach the peak mortality period.

Some parts of Charlotte are going to be affected more than others. Thanks to a grant from the Urban and Community Forestry Program and the help of two University of Vermont student interns, we now have a map of all the ash trees greater than six inches in diameter within the town's rights of way. These maps may be viewed in the Tree Warden section of the town website

West Charlotte has more ash than East Charlotte. Roads that are going to be severely impacted by the loss of ash trees include Thompson's Point Road, Converse Bay Road, Cedar Beach Road, Whalley Road, Wings Point, Lake Road and Ferry Road. Preemptive removals have been completed on sections of the latter two. I encourage all

Charlotte landowners, but especially people in these areas, to consider chemical treatments of exemplary ash trees now and to plan for tree replacements where natural regeneration or residual non-ash trees are sparse. If landowners opt to treat trees in the public rights of way (generally 25 feet from the road center line), I request that they inform me so that I can note these on our map and exclude these from future cutting programs.

The loss of ash trees is tragic, but the Town of Charlotte has a plan, and individual landowners are informed and many are taking action. Our roads and infrastructure will be kept safe and specimen trees will be preserved.

**Preemptive removals suspended:** At the start of the COVID-19 lockdown, in anticipation of anticipated revenue shortfall, the Selectboard asked us to determine if budgets could be reduced or eliminated. Because no EAB has been detected and given current understanding of the infestation cycle, I told the Selectboard that we could forgo one year of preemptive ash tree removals if tax receipts are significantly lower than initially projected.

## Sacred Hunter .....

# Wood Duck Heaven might be the fountain of youth



Bradley Carleton  
CONTRIBUTOR

Twenty years ago, I was 41 years old. My experience as a professional waterfowl guide was at its zenith. I had wealthy clients from big cities and fancy gun clubs that never seemed to have the time to scout and

practice calling ducks. My body was still quite strong, and I had an ego to match. I thrived on taking chances, navigating my duck boat in 20 knot winds with three-foot swells, marching through floating bogs where the matted vegetation was covering three feet of mud and two feet of water. When an errant step meant that I was in up to my neck with 30 pounds of decoys in a sack strapped to my back. It was during those years that my hunting partner John and I discovered a place we called Wood Duck Heaven.

We found it on a Northern Cartographic map of central Vermont. It was nothing but a piddly little horseshoe-shaped slough from a larger heavily hunted swamp. Using our map scale, we estimated it to be about ½ mile from a fourth-class dirt road. We both agreed, “How bad can it be? Maybe a few tangles, a little bushwhacking, maybe some mud?” We jointly accepted the challenge to discover this new spot. The next morning, we were at a small pull off on a muddy clay road. We slid into the small ditch. The tires had accumulated enough clay to render the treads useless. But we agreed that we would deal with that problem later – right now we were hell-bent on pursuing our adventure.

Headlamps mounted on our foreheads, a bag of decoys on our backs, guns, calls, and backpacks, we ventured into the woods where no path had been. We pushed through sapling whips with abandon. The occasional poke in the face be damned! We slugged through buckbrush and scrambled up gullies. When we got to the pool of water, still in the dark, it erupted in raucous whistles and quacks. This was our reward! The El Dorado of waterfowling.

It was a small pool – maybe 15 by 30 feet. We slid down the steep clay bank in our waders into bourbon-stained water assuming at some point that our feet would touch bottom. It wasn’t really a touch. It was more like being slowly consumed by a quagmire of rotting aquatic vegetation. Now when you’re young like we were, this was exciting. We had no concerns about swimming our way out of impending quicksand. We were bold. Foolish even. And full of optimism. After wallowing around in the mud and laughing at the difficulty we had walking one leg at a time in knee-deep primordial ooze. We set out our wood duck decoys on the east side of the pool and mallards and greenwing teal on the west side. We crawled back up the shoreline to take a seat on an old blowdown. As dawn slowly crept in over the pines and the mountain to our west began to take shape in the deep purple sky, the show began.

Hundreds of ducks began circling above the tree line to our north. They flew in every direction, squealing and whistling,

quacking, and peeping, each with their own distinct call. Most of them were wood ducks.

When legal shooting time arrived, we were able to take our two specimens rather quickly as they pitched in to our spread with utter disregard for the plastic deceivers. The daily bag limit then was two woodies per person. After we admired the stunning green crowns with the white racing stripes and the blood red eyes, we sat and watched the hundreds of others flapping in the water, calling to one another and generally celebrating the crisp autumn morning. We dubbed it Wood Duck Heaven, for never had we witnessed anything like this in our decades of waterfowling.

Fast forward twenty years. I am now 61 years old and life is different now. I can’t depend on my right hip to sustain my balance. My lower back is not what it used to be. My knees wiggle from side to side and I’ve put on some of that extra padding that often comes with age. But last week, my partner John and I had been discussing how to hunt in a drought year, where most of the boat accesses were not usable due to low water. We talked for a long time about where to hunt for the upcoming weekend. I suggested “Why don’t we make a pilgrimage back to Wood Duck Heaven?” John answered, “If we’re going to do that, we better do so before we get any older.” I agreed.

As we slid into the ditch of the old dirt road, we sensed that maybe we could both handle this challenge just one more time. Walking through the brush was a little different at this juncture. The uneven footing was downright painful to an aging lower back. The whips stung a little worse and the buckbrush at times appeared to be impassable. When we got to the gully, it was apparent that Hurricane Irene had had her way, carving out considerably deeper chasms. We literally slid down the bank on one side and climbed on our hands and knees on the opposing loose dirt on the uphill side. I had to stop numerous times to stretch.

When we got to the honey hole the bank seemed steeper and when we slid into the mud on the bottom, somehow it was more ominous than before. I was thinking, “What if...what if ...there is no bottom?” We slogged through, placing one foot at a time two steps in front of the other and rocking our back foot out of the unreasonably stubborn mud. We set out our decoys in the dark in this nightmarish subsurface.

We climbed up on the bank and took our positions on the same old blowdown and shared a cup of French roast coffee in the dark. The smell of the coffee, mixed with the aroma of decaying vegetation in the water and the cool autumn air with just a hint of woodsmoke from a distant camp, surrounded us.

As dawn crept up the side of the mountain, we heard the first “who-eeek!” of a drake wood duck. Within minutes the sky exploded with wings. Wings whistling in



## On Books

# Pondering reading and three good books on a rainy day



Katherine Arthaud  
CONTRIBUTOR

It's a cold, rainy Monday, and I am thinking about reading. I have always been a reader. I remember so many of the books and authors I read when I was young. *Pat the Bunny*, Dr. Seuss, Uncle Wiggly, Pippi

Longstocking, Robert Louis Stevenson, Mary Kinman Rawlings, *Black Beauty*, *Black Hearts in Battersea*—I could go on. And on. And on.

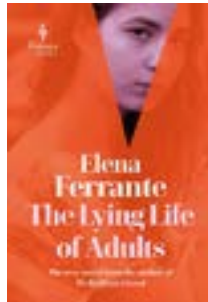
So many worlds that I have passed over into, just by turning pages one by one, allowing my eyes to pass over page upon page of black typeface on white paper, traversing left to right, mind, cognition, imagination absorbing ideas, events and images, painting pictures, having pictures painted upon me, feeling feelings, resonating, relating, envisioning visions, entering into and exiting relationships with characters, layered in time, some short-lived and fleeting, some lifelong and eternal as human memory and imagination can allow.

It seems to me that reading is art more than anything. Yes, it is passive—that is one thing to love about it—but it is also creative. My father, a writer, was also a voracious reader who would frequently recount that one of

the happiest years of his life was the one in which some non-serious illness kept him in bed for the better part of a year, and he read and read and read. The entire Wizard of Oz series, Lang's Fairy Books, the work of E. Nesbit.

It's interesting, though, that my children are not big readers, at least not now, not yet, even though they have been exposed all their lives to a mother who reads a ton. I don't think my sons would ever have learned to read at all if it hadn't been for Pokemon; they just had to find out what was written on the backs of those crazily addictive little trading cards. In her early years, my daughter was obsessed with books and was often found reading them aloud to her button-eyed stuffed animals and/or our long-suffering boxer, Bambi. But not anymore.

This month I read a book for which I have been waiting with much anticipation: Elena Ferrante's *The Lying Life of Adults*. Likely, a number of you are Ferrante fans. She wrote the Neapolitan Quartet, beginning with the unforgettable, darkly sumptuous, coming-of-age *My Brilliant Friend*. Her books are



so unusual, so well written, so compelling. And I love the fact that no one is entirely sure who Elena Ferrante is. Italian journalist Claudio Gatti thinks he has it figured out and claims that she is the translator Anita Raja, who lives in Rome with her husband, the Neapolitan writer Domenico Starnone.

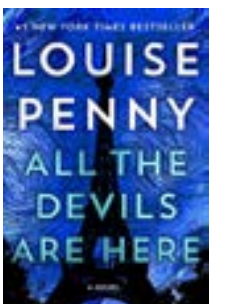
Gatti has gone so far as to suggest that Ferrante may not have written her novels on her own, but rather, in collaboration with her husband. Gatti's theory is rather annoying and by no means watertight. And really, I don't give a fig who Elena Ferrante is in real life. I only care that she keeps writing. It is hard to describe the style of her prose. Here is the opening of her most recent novel: "Two years before leaving home my father said to my mother that I was very ugly. The sentence was uttered under his breath, in the apartment that my parents, newly married, had bought at the top of Via San Giacomo dei Capri, in Rione Alto. Everything—the spaces of Naples, the blue light of a frigid February, those words—remained fixed. But I slipped away, and am still slipping away, within these lines that are intended to give me a story, while in fact I am nothing, nothing of my own, nothing that has really begun or really been brought to completion: only a tangled know, and nobody, not even the one who at this moment is writing, knows if it contains the right thread for a story or is merely a snarled confusion of

suffering, without redemption."

Breathtaking, right? The narrator, Gianni, is determined to lose her virginity, to find and bond with the aunt whom Gianni has been said to be as ugly as, and to get her hands on an heirloom bracelet that seems to have a life of its own and that gets passed from woman to woman in strange, irrational, inexplicable, and suspicious ways. *Brillante! Superba!* If you haven't yet read Ferrante, you are in for a *trattare*.

Two other books I highly recommend are *Transcendent Kingdom* by Yaa Gyasi and *All the Devils are Here* by Louise Penny. The latter is the most recent of the bestselling series and takes place in Paris. I am a huge fan of Penny, who is Canadian, and I am one of the many who long

always to return to the cozy village of Three Pines, where the books usually take place,



SEE **ON BOOKS** PAGE 11

# Books .....

## ON BOOKS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

and reconnect with my old friends there, but I have to say, this recent novel is one of my favorites.

Penny is a master of character development, to the point that one feels that her regulars are old, dear friends. Armand, Reine-Marie, their children Annie and Daniel, Annie’s husband, Jean-Guy Beauvoir—my heart warms to meet them once again and join with them on another adventure. Always, there is darkness and intrigue in Penny’s books (I mean, how can you have a mystery without darkness and intrigue?), but she has an unusual and impactful way of describing, evoking, and emphasizing love, connection, loyalty and the deep comfort that can be found in family and true friendship. Where are the devils? Read and find out. But along the way of finding the devils, you will also feel the angelic touch of love, warmth and kinship, along with the deep appreciation Penny has for her characters. I highly recommend all of Penny’s books. This one is particularly good.

*Transcendent Kingdom* is Gyasi’s second novel. Gyasi was born in Ghana and raised

in Alabama, which gives her a really interesting lens and sensibility as a writer. This book is un-put-downable. It focuses on Gifty, a sixth-year Ph.D. candidate in neuroscience struggling to come to terms with the death by heroin overdose of her beloved brother, Nana, while wrestling with the un-wrestleable-with, incapacitating depression of her mother, and the absence of her father, referred to as the Chin Chin man, who went to Ghana one day and never returned.

The Chin Chin man becomes a lost cause, and nothing can bring the once stellar Nana back, and her mother won’t get out of bed. Meanwhile, there are the Herculean challenges of caring for a bunch of white lab rats and figuring out what makes their neural circuits of depression and addiction tick. Gifty looks to science and also to her childhood faith to help her navigate her world. I really loved this book. I liked the first half better than the second. See what you think.

*Arrivederci amici miei! Stai al caldo! Buona lettura!* And apologies for any butchering I might have inadvertently done (and *si*, have most likely done) to the beautiful Italian language.

## New memoir by Norm Riggs



Vince Crockenberg  
CONTRIBUTOR

In our July 11 and 28, 2018 issues, *The Charlotte News* experimented with publishing two long-form installments of what eventually became a book-length memoir by Norm Riggs about how, in the summer

of 1964, he and a friend, Dave Dyer, two college guys in Des Moines—unable to face another three months of typical, tedious, low-paying summer jobs—decided to take a big chance. They would hop from suburb to suburb across the country, painting house numbers on curbs and asking homeowners to donate for the service.

As Norm describes his and Dave’s thinking at the time, “Seeing new places, meeting new people, fascinating the neighborhood kids, and earning spending money for the fall. Perfect. It wasn’t illegal (was it?). Nobody else had thought of this so they had no competition (did they?). Americans were friendly, trustin, and generous (weren’t they?). What could go wrong?”

*Curbing Across America in the Age of Innocence*, Norm’s self-published book, answers those questions and many more as it chronicles the unpredictable adventures and encounters that he and Dave had that summer.

“By the time we had returned to Des Moines,” Norm writes, “we had full pockets and a lifetime of memories—many hilarious, some scary, a few dangerous, and one ... well, almost triple-X, as we said back in those days. But you have to read the book to hear more about that. For more than a half-century, when I have recounted tales from that summer to friends, neighbors and co-workers, they have often told me the stories should be in a book. So now it is.”

And it’s getting some traction back in Iowa. Word of its publication is spreading among Norm’s friends, and Iowa State University mentioned it in its Extension retiree newsletter last week.

After finishing the book, Norm sent it, with some trepidation, to Laurence Paul, who retired in 2009 as the executive editor of the New York Times News Service and Syndicate. Forty years ago, Paul, who at the time was working for the Des Moines Register, rejected several press releases that Norm had written while he was working for the Iowa Governor’s Office for Planning and Programming. After reading Norm’s book, however, Paul wrote back: “I can say as an editor that it is a wonderful yarn. Your skill at building each little vignette to a climax is artful. Your digressions into nature and scenery are evocative. Your musings about how American society has changed are poignant. Alas, our kids and theirs will probably never know that sweet, innocent, secure world. What a shame.”

For Boomers in Vermont who were coming of age in the mid-60s, the book should evoke memories of the halcyon summer of ’64 when the Beatles were coming to the fore—and just before everything was about to change. America has not been the same since.

*Curbing Across America* can be ordered, in hardback (\$29.99) or paperback (\$8.99) at Norm’s website, NormRiggs.com. Be sure to include the capitalized N and R in the address.

Norm retired in 2006 from Iowa State University, where he worked as a rural community development specialist. He and his wife, Sandy, then moved to Ferrisburgh, where they still live.



# Outdoors

## Pandemic goings-on



Elizabeth Bassett  
CONTRIBUTOR

With most of our foliage now decomposing on the forest floor—or your lawn—we’re entering what is euphemistically called Stick Season or the Quiet Season. There are still ample opportunities for outdoor expeditions and plenty to observe in the animal kingdom. While many pleasures are risky or off limits (indoor dining, contact sports, movie theaters and ski gondolas), there are many outdoor activities that, with adaptation, will serve us well in the coming cold, dark months.

### Skiing

Both cross-country and Alpine skiing present lower risks than indoor sports. It is estimated that for downhill skiing and boarding, 80% are visitors from out of state, a concern for Vermonters who have maintained a relatively low incidence of COVID-19. Resorts are preparing for a season like no other: lodges, restaurants, restrooms and ski schools will operate with limitations and will look different. Customers are encouraged to arrive dressed and shod in order to avoid indoor spaces. Much ticketing will be online with some resorts requiring reservations. Others encourage family groups or pods to share chairlifts and gondolas. Now, as you are thinking of equipment or tickets you might want, do research on specific restrictions at your favorite winter destinations. Think Snow! **Take a stroll** There are many venues where it’s possible to



walk two or three abreast and be distanced. Seek out dirt roads with little traffic; the History Hike at Little River State Park is on ancient roads, wide enough for safe conversation. Cotton Brook, accessible from Moscow, offers miles of old logging roads on hilly terrain. We are blessed with proximity to Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge, Mt. Philo State Park and Shelburne Farms. Charlotte’s Town Link Trail offers two loops on the town-owned Burns property, one in the woods and one in fields, in addition to two point-to-point segments, Co-Housing and the Trevor and Melissa Mack trail. In Burlington, wide trails at the Ethan Allen Homestead connect to the Intervale; and miles of recreation trails stretch through South Burlington and Burlington.

### Winter preparation

It’s a busy time of year in the animal kingdom. With a bit of luck we can witness some of this winter preparation.

Many birds flock or gather before migration, which is why you may see dozens or hundreds of similar birds at one time. With their loud honking, geese in V-formation are easy to hear and spot overhead. Loons gather on bodies of waters close to where they nest and spend the summer. Because Vermont loons are recovering from very low numbers, researchers have banded many, making it possible to follow their movements.



Unlike populations in other parts of the country, local loons depart for nearby ocean waters in the Northeast, a flight of just one to two days for adults. Departures from Vermont bodies of water

SEE **OUTDOORS** PAGE 16

## Stalking the Wild Mushroom

Lee Weisman  
CONTRIBUTOR

After a dry summer/fall, recent rains and warm spells have brought on a widespread mushroom fruiting here in the Champlain Valley. For those interested in gathering and eating wild shrooms it’s a great time of year. For beginners there are two tasty ones currently fruiting that are particularly easy to identify, quite distinctive in appearance, and safe/good to eat, as well as many others. They’re likely growing right now on local lawns and pastures in your neighborhood.

Most folks know about the risks of eating poisonous mushrooms, anywhere from gastric upset to certain death (Amanita poisoning is a killer). I suspect this fear might inhibit some folks from learning how to gather edible mushrooms safely. The key early on is going after varieties that are especially easy to identify such as Shaggy Manes and Meadow Mushrooms (which I describe below, currently widespread), with no poisonous look alikes. There are many other similarly safe ones easy to learn such as springtime Morels, puffballs large and small, orange Chanterelles in summer, many others. Once you learn them and know where they grow, you can come back regularly. It’s good to go out with an experienced forager when possible. Look at photos online and in guide books. Never eat a mushroom you’re not 100% sure of. Always save one or two uncooked just in case.

The beautiful Shaggy Mane (*Coprinus comatus*) has a white distinctly conical shape with a shaggy/scaly surface, usually in clusters/groups, in a lawn or mowed pasture, also along

roadsides. As they age the lower edges turn a black mess and the whole cap just melts (auto digests). Nice light flavor picked young. The appearance (look it up), location, and the black autodigestion are key to positive ID.

The ‘Meadow mushroom’ (*Agaricus campestris*) is the first cousin to the store bought kind and somewhat similar. Smooth buff dry white cap, low in the grass. The gills at first are covered by a thin veil, then are pinkish color but become brown and leave a brown spore print. The key is the appearance, location in grass/pasture, brown spore print (see below) and gills as described, and me finding them currently in many locations. Look up photos for comparison. Send me a photo if unsure or ask your local forager. There are several edible first cousins out there too with similar characteristics, especially the gill color and spore print. (Cut off the stem and lay the cap on white paper for a while to get a spore print.)



Shaggy parasols and meadow mushrooms make a great vegetarian addition to any recipe.

Photo by Lee Wiesman

A mushroom is the fruiting body of a higher class of fungi, akin to the flower of a plant, it does no harm at all to harvest them. The actual ‘plant’ is a vast network of filaments in the ground (or rotting wood) called ‘mycelium’. Fungi are the ubiquitous original composters, converting dead leaves, dead trees, dead dogs, anything organic (even motor oil) into a usable elemental form. (See Paul Stamets’ great TED talk on YouTube: “Six ways mushrooms can save the world”) Fungi are a unique life form having branched off from the plant and animal kingdoms very early on in the evolutionary tree of life; they combine cellular features of both

SEE **MUSHROOMS** PAGE 15

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# Town

## Library news



Margaret Woodruff  
DIRECTOR

**Jack o' Lantern Parade:** Light up the town with a pumpkin parade. Carvers of all ages, sharpen your knives and get going! Drop off as many jack o' lanterns as you can on the porch at the Charlotte Library until October 29. Jack o' lanterns

will be lit each night, October 29 to 31. Take a picture and email it to the library to participate in the virtual pumpkin parade: [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org). For more information or to volunteer to help, check Front Porch Forum or email Jessica Sriver ([jess.sriver@gmail.com](mailto:jess.sriver@gmail.com)) or Stacy Fraser ([sfraser@gmavt.net](mailto:sfraser@gmavt.net)).

**Library Rain Garden:** If you've driven by the library lately, you've probably noticed the disappearance of the east side driveway. Thanks to the collective knowledge and energy of our volunteer garden corps, this space is transforming into a Rain Garden. As part of the library expansion project, the garden will offset the permeable surface of our new addition. With nearly all of the 1200 plants in the ground, the garden is coming together beautifully. Our appreciation and hats off to Jim Donovan and Karen Tuininga, who led the library landscape course as well as the volunteer gardeners, Joanna Cummings, Abby Foulk, Deirdre Holmes, Marianne Kuitert, Patricia O'Donnell, and Toni Sunderland. A special thanks to Linda Hamilton for keeping everything together!

**Community Resilience Assessment:** Since April, an informal group, assembled from a broad cross-section of Charlotters, has met every two weeks in response to the COVID crisis. It was a natural evolution for this group to begin working with Vermont's Community Resilience Organization to develop a tool to assess Charlotte's resilience. This brief and confidential assessment is ready to go and we warmly invite you to participate, beginning November 9. For more details, please see Trina Bianchi's article in this issue of the paper.

**Hygge Season:** Get out your slippers and a cozy throw...we are embracing hygge for November! For those of you who need a refresher: hygge is "a quality of cosiness and comfortable conviviality that engenders a feeling of contentment or well-being." We'll be featuring some favorite cozy books for all ages as well as warming recipes, a session of Laughter Yoga and hints for virtual family connection to create some DIY hygge!

This all leads up to the ultimate in hygge: the Friends of the Library "Get Cozy Raffle." The centerpiece is a beautiful and comfy quilt made by Amanda Herzberger. It is surrounded by cof-

fee from Paradiso, cocoa and chocolates from Lake Champlain Chocolates, tea, beeswax candles, and an assortment of great books. Tickets will sell for \$5 each, or 5 for \$20. Raffle dates: November 13 through December 15.

**Book Art for November:** Make a seasonal wreath for your home! Simple instructions and all the supplies you need available for pick up at the library porch. Email us at [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org) so we can aside a kit for you! Kits available November 2 through November 23.

**DIY Recipe Packets:** Pick up a bag from our Charlie Cart and get started! The herbal tea kit, hot cocoa kit, favorite oatmeal kit and best baking mix kit will have you sharing hygge in no time.

**Upcoming at the Library:** Once you've got your tea and scones at the ready, join us for some lively and entertaining programs online. To sign up for a library program, email us at [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org) for a Zoom invite.

### Using the Libby App to Borrow eBooks & Audiobooks for Beginners

**Tuesday, November 10 @ 2 pm**  
Learn how to use your library card to read and listen to books on your computer or device with the Libby app in a live Zoom session with tech librarian Susanna.

### COVID-19: Winter Preparations

**Wednesday, November 11 @ 10:30 am**  
The news about pandemic preparations for the winter can be overwhelming and frightening. Join Jim Hyde, Associate Professor Emeritus for Public Health at Tufts University, for a realistic and practical overview of our current situation. He'll share his advice for the coming winter season and answer questions as well.

### Connecting with Friends & Family Near & Far

**Thursday, November 12 @ 3:30 pm**  
While we may long for the cozy gatherings that holidays bring, this year our get-togethers may be distanced and our reunions online. Join Susanna and Margaret for a brainstorm session to share how to make the most of these unusual holiday times. We'll share some of our ideas and inspirations and invite you to bring yours as well.

**11<sup>th</sup> Annual Agricultural Literacy Week: November 16 through November 19.** Tune in for this weeklong (virtual) celebration to inform, educate and create community around the topic of resiliency in all of its forms. Each night will feature a webinar bringing together the voices of our community. All events are free and open to the public. Sponsored by NOFA-VT, Ver-

mont Department of Libraries and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. For details, visit the NOFA-VT website: <https://no-favt.org/events/agricultural-literacy-week-2020>

Stay tuned for details about our own virtual cooking demo for ALW!

### Mystery Book Group: *Outsider in Amsterdam*

**Monday, November 16 @ 10 am**  
This now-classic novel, first published in 1975, introduces Janwillem van de Wetering's lovable Amsterdam cop duo of portly, worldly-wise Gripstra and handsome, contemplative de Gier who are sent to investigate what looks like a simple suicide, but they are immediately suspicious of the circumstances. Print copies are available at the circulation desk and online versions available through Hoopla.

### How to Hoopla: read, watch and listen on your devices

**Tuesday, November 17 @ 2 pm**  
Learn how to use Hoopla to read books, listen to books & music and watch tv shows & movies at home for free with your library card. Our tech librarian, Susanna, will walk you through how to get started with Hoopla on your device.

### Men's Book Group: *The Soul of an Octopus*

**Wednesday, November 18 @ 7:30 pm**  
In pursuit of the wild, solitary, predatory octopus, popular naturalist Sy Montgomery has practiced true immersion journalism. From New England aquarium tanks to the reefs of French Polynesia and the Gulf of Mexico, she has befriended octopuses with strikingly different personalities—gentle Athena, assertive Octavia, curious Kali, and joyful Karma. Print

copies available at the library circulation desk. Please email [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org) for a Zoom invite.

### Library Book Discussion:

#### *The Library Book*

**Thursday, November 19 @ 7:30 pm**  
Weaving her lifelong love of books and reading into an investigation of the fire, award-winning *New Yorker* reporter and *New York Times* bestselling author Susan Orlean delivers a mesmerizing and uniquely compelling book that manages to tell the broader story of libraries and librarians in a way that has never been done before. Copies to be available at the library circulation desk.

For the latest information about programs, books and activity kits, sign up for our monthly newsletter.

**Library Hours:** (Mon. - Thurs. closed noon to 1 pm for cleaning)

**Monday:** 10 am to 3 pm, **Tuesday:** 10 am to 3 pm, **Wednesday:** 10 am to 3 pm, **Thursday:** 10 am to 3 pm, **Friday:** CLOSED to the public, open for porch pickup, **Saturday:** CLOSED to the public, open for porch pickup

#### Porch Pickup Hours:

**Mon:** 10 am to 4 pm, **Tue:** 10 am to 4 pm, **Wed.:** 10 am to 4 pm, **Thur.:** 10 am to 4 pm, **Friday:** 10 am to 4 pm, **Saturday:** 10 am to noon

From Monday to Thursday, the library will be open to groups by appointment from 3 to 4 pm. Each appointment slot is 30 minutes and allows for up to 8 people in a pod/family group to enter together. Please contact the library at [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org) for details.



# Town

## Charlotte Senior Center news



Carolyn Kulik  
SENIOR CENTER  
DIRECTOR

“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, ‘I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.’”

~ Eleanor Roosevelt, *You Learn by Living*

### Last Outdoor Activity

**11/3 – Fall Road Hikes in the Champlain Valley with Joan Mollica** continue one more Tuesday to make up a previous cancellation for rain. There is some space, so if you are interested, please contact Joan directly at: jmollica3@comcast.net or call her at 985-2951 and leave a message. Be sure to include your name, phone number and email address for the contact tracing log. The 11/3 hike is to Rock Point Trails, Burlington. Word is that this is probably the most beautiful of the walks. There are stone steps and fenced-off overlooks for viewing the lake from various cliff spots. No fee.

### Starting soon

**11/6 – Yes, it’s lovely here in Vermont but are you still feeling stuck?** This is your last chance this season to “take a trip”—through language learning. You will have another chance to dive into Italian language and culture in case your schedule has been too busy in the past. On **Friday, 11/6, Italian Intro–B** (1:30 p.m.) and **Italian Refresher–B** (3 p.m.) both will run for 6 sessions into Dec. – with a break for Thanksgiving. The suggested fee is \$30, but donations of any amount are accepted.

### Never too late

Did you manage to find so much to do while the weather was nice that your days were just completely filled? Did you miss out on some classes that you wish you’d

been able to fit in? You are in luck!

Many of the courses with limited meeting dates are likely to repeat in the winter: Italian Intro, Italian Refresher, French Coffee Club, Mindfulness for Life Intro, Writing Your Life Story, probably another version of Script Writing—and possibly also Civil Discourse. There will be other new ones as well. Be sure to check the Winter Schedule online 12/1 or as an insert in this paper on 12/3.

Although it is late in the season, you can still join any of the ongoing courses—which basically never end. This wide array of exercise/health courses will continue to help keep folks in shape while we are hunkered down for the winter. With different levels of challenge, you can choose from (in alphabetical order): Chair Yoga (W/F), Gentle Yoga (M), Essentrics (W/F), Mindfulness (W), Pilates (Th), Pilates Plus (Tu), Tai Chi for Beginners (Tu/Th). If you have questions about any of these courses, email CSCZoom@gmavt.net and you will be put in touch with the relevant instructor. Probably the better idea is not to “hunker down” but, rather, “move around.”

### How to Register for a Course

All courses are online—and all require registration.

To register, send your name and mailing address to CSCZoom@gmavt.net. Be sure to note the name of the course in the memo line. You will receive confirmation that you are registered.

**Payment:** If there is a fee, kindly pay by check (made out to CSC) and send to P.O. Box 207, Charlotte, VT 05445. Be sure to note the name of the course in the memo line. Those in ongoing exercise courses pay that the end of the month for the classes they attended. For courses with limited dates, kindly pay prior to the start of the course.

### Foot clinics

After months of uncertainty, the notice has finally come this week that the Foot Clinics



(previously Footnoters) are not going to be offered during the pandemic. According to the email from UVM Health, “We knew that the program would not be able to continue in its current form, but hoped we could build on existing programs... After many conversations with clinical leaders at various organizations, we have made the difficult decision to discontinue our program.”

“Home Health and Hospice offers a **foot care clinic** at their South Burlington Adult Day Center and is available to all former UVMHC participants for a charge of \$50. To schedule with this clinic, you can call (802)860-4442. We recognize that this is not ideal for some, but it is the only safe and available option at this time (in addition to PCP and Podiatry office foot care services).”

There used to be a rather festive atmosphere on Foot Clinic days here at the Senior Center. Lots of people coming and going—and lots of happy feet bringing smiles to faces. Everyone was friendly and chatty. Folks were well attended to—Julia Jacques, LPN, started volunteering with the Foot Clinic way back in 2002, and Martha McAuliffe, RN, began with the Blood Pressure Clinic in 2013 and started supervising the Foot Clinic in 2015. They were a great team—along with the other volunteers who came to lend a hand. Life is about change, but sometimes it is hard.

### Talks on Wednesday at 1 p.m.

These free events are via Zoom. Please note that they do not require registration. You will find the Zoom invitation/link to the talks posted on the website the day before: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org.

### 11/4 – Long Ago in Charlotte: Train Depot & West Charlotte Village with Jenny Cole

Take a photo tour Charlotte’s West Village and train depot in the early 1900s. Adding a few more details and stories of longtime Charlotte residents will bring this enterprising village to life. People in the audience are invited to share their own memories. Co-sponsored by the Charlotte Library, Charlotte Historical Society and local historians.

### 11/11 – Turbulence: What Can We Do About It? with Steve Gross

To say the least, we live in turbulent times. Covid-19, the struggle for racial equity, and a volatile political environment are just some of the forces we are dealing with as a society, as individuals, and in our families. This talk will help you better understand

the nature of turbulent change and steps you can take to respond effectively to it. Steven Jay Gross is Professor Emeritus at Temple University.

### 11/18 – Is America’s Oldest Asian Security Alliance Ending? with David Rosenberg

A crisis is brewing between the U.S. and the Philippines. President Duterte sees that U.S. influence in the region is waning, while China is becoming more aggressive. He is concerned that the U.S. is not living up to its end of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the two countries and is charting a slow, but steady, course away from the U.S.—and toward China. Are there any options for averting the end of America’s oldest strategic alliance in Asia? David Rosenberg is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Middlebury College and an international specialist in this area.

### Art exhibit

The Senior Center’s monthly art exhibits are continuing, and visitors are most welcome. To see an art exhibit, please schedule an appointment at least 24 hours in advance. Viewing days are Tuesday and Thursday between 1 and 3 p.m. Leave a message anytime at 425-6345 and include your name and phone number for a confirmation of your appointment.

The November Art Exhibit extends the **Photography by James Regan** and adds a whimsical display titled, “And Your Little Dog, too.” These are paintings by Vivian Jordan, inspired by animals and nature. Vivian says, “Many are detailed and realistic, others express feelings, and some have a surprising twist. All have a signature touch of sparkle...but you won’t see that until the light hits it just right.”

Remember, there is a lot of space in the Great Room to walk around in and relax. Take a break for art.

Be careful. Keep your spirits up. We are all in this together.

The Senior Center’s mission is to serve those 50 and up; if a course is not full, pre-seniors may also enroll. Feel free to leave a message anytime at 425-6345; voicemail is checked frequently.

Charlotte Senior Center  
802-425-6345  
CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org



Sports



Edd Merritt  
CONTRIBUTOR

CVU Soccer takes  
it on the chin by the  
Free Press 20 years  
after it happened

I suppose when you are looking for news that will elicit readership, papers turn to unusual sources. The *Free Press* seems to have done just that in last Saturday’s issue with its front-page column headed, “Reliving VT’s Major Upset.” The column (that goes on for another full page) details Lyndon Institute’s upset of CVU men’s soccer in the year 2000. Yes, it was a play-off game, and yes, CVU had been dubbed “Soccer Central” for number of years. So, it was a memorable event, and its anniversary probably did deserve mention—but front-page news?

CVU did, in turn, remedy its record after another nail-biting loss to Colchester in 2002, as it went on to take four straight Division I titles beginning in 2003.

This year it was Essex that halted CVU’s 37-game win streak, taking a heart-stopping match 2-1 on Oct. 3. With that hurdle under its belt, the Redhawks came back with a 3-0 shutout of Rutland on Oct. 22. Charlotters Holden Batchelder (2 goals) and Henry Bijur (1 goal) led the way.

**CVU runner Caleb Nye named “Athlete of the week” by Free Press**  
Redhawk cross-country runner Caleb Nye was

selected male “Athlete of the Week” of Oct. 12–18 by online voters to the *Free Press*. Caleb led all runners in this month’s CVU 3-mile race, 18 seconds over the second-place runner. Doing so, he paced the team to a 32-point victory over Burlington. He also led a group of runners (several Redhawks) to a team title in the Northern Vermont Metro Championships at Swanton. Caleb headed the group, followed by CVU’s Kai Hillier in second, Matthew Ireland in fourth and Matthew Servin in eighth.

The CVU women also won the large-school team title in the NVAC Metro Championships. Alicia Veronneau finished first, Jasmine Nails, second, and Alice Larson, fifth.

“Soccer Central” may become  
“Golfers Paradise”

CVU men golfers won their third straight Division I title on the Quechee course earlier this month. A team effort in which the four Redhawks shot in the 70s and low 80s with seven birdies among the group. Evan Forrest and Alex Leonard both struck the ball 78 times.

The Redhawk women came very close in their state effort, losing to Burr and Burton after CVU had been ten strokes up in the club-house going into the final round. Lindsey Beer’s 96 and Clare Stackpole-McGrath’s 97 were the low Redhawk scores.

Field hockey earns quarterfinal win

Ranked third in Division I, the Redhawk field hockey team moved along to a quarterfinal win over Colchester 4-0. Sydney Peet’s two goals



They’re off and running.

Photo by Al Frey

sparked CVU’s attack. Goalie Marina Schmidt was not called upon for saves during the entire game.

Football finally loses its grip, then  
regains it

Despite Max Desito’s throwing arm, which earned him “Athlete of the Week” the week before, throwing nine touchdowns over three games, the Redhawks finally lost in overtime

to Burlington/South Burlington 38-35 for their first defeat this season. Max and Jake Bowen came back to throw for 157 and 104 yards respectively to lead the Redhawks to a 35-20 win over Mount Mansfield on Saturday.

The one bonus of the new high school seven-on-seven play is that they draw the same number—if not more fans in the stands—than the Patriots.

MUSHROOMS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

animal and plants. In fact, systemic fungal infections in humans are very difficult to treat because of their similarity to human cells, yet they grow just like plants. Fungi were the first organisms that emerged from the sea to live on land, paving the way for all that followed.

For more advance foragers, I picked a bunch of beautiful ‘Shaggy Parasol’ mushrooms this morning (*Lepiota rachodes*) a great edible, very different shape from the Shaggy Mane. Look up photos and if you have a similar one send me a photo and I can review the important ID details. This gem has a white spore print (as does the *Amanita* family) so not one for beginners, but distinctive (and delicious) once you know what to look for and where it has previously grown.

Incidentally mushrooms can be grown at home, indoors and out. Oyster mushrooms are especially easy, can be grown on straw, sawdust,

even coffee grounds, in a closed bucket in your back closet. Or one can buy ready to grow kits that just need watering, (especially Oyster mushroom varieties and Shiitake). The company, *Fungi Perfecti* is one good resource for everything mushroom. I know that some folks absolutely hate mushrooms, that’s too bad. I understand childhood culinary trauma but who didn’t love Campbell’s Cream of Mushroom soup?

It always surprises me that despite years of foraging and a small library of field guides, I still come upon distinctive looking mushrooms every season that I just can’t identify. It’s an extremely complicated field and frustrating at times. A good field guide is essential (I like the Audubon guide in general but use several others to cross reference.) Online resources are widespread. There’s a delightful movie called “Fantastic Fungi” that came out last year, beautiful, very informative that can be found on YouTube.

Happy foraging,

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This 100,000 SF, heated, warehouse on 1741 Route 7 South in Middlebury will be accepting boats, motor homes, trailers, motorcycles, cars, and pickups for storage this season. Storage runs from October thru April. Rates are listed below.

Reserve your heated indoor space now!

Cars & Pickups	\$250 each for indoor storage
ATV & Motorcycles	\$115.00 each for indoor storage
Boats (ball hitch to propeller)	\$22.00 per foot
Campers (bumper to bumper)	\$22.00 per foot
Travel Trailers (hitch to bumper)	\$22.00 per foot

Rates payable by cash or check at the time of storage. No exceptions.

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Lee



# HUNTER

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

pre-dawn. Squeaks, peeps, quacks, and whistles echoed through the slough. The show had begun. Just as it had twenty years ago.

As we stood to shoot, my body suddenly came alive. It was as if my youth had returned. I shouldered my shotgun and quickly swung on a fast passing left to right shot on a drake intent on strafing our decoy spread. It was instinctive. Without thought or calculation for the speed of the bird, I swung through the target and pulled the trigger as though I'd done it a thousand times.

The bird dropped into the decoys and I slid down the bank to retrieve it. When I returned to my post, I said to John. "Funny thing. That mud seemed a lot deeper when we got here."

*Bradley Carleton is executive director of Sacred Hunter.org, a non-profit that seeks to educate the public on the spiritual connection of man to nature.*

Right: John Leshar and his puppy, Finbar, made the trek to Wood Duck Heaven with Bradley Carleton.

*Photo by Bradley Carleton*



# OUTDOORS

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range from early September to late November, with chicks migrating at an average age of 17 weeks; it will take these young much longer to reach salt water. The young will spend several years on the ocean before returning to lakes in the region of their birth.

In recent weeks hundreds of screeching blackbirds filled our cottonwood tree. Flocks that migrate in large numbers are better able than individuals to fight predators and locate food. Shortening days trigger migration with some species molting and growing new feathers before the long flight. Others try to gain weight for additional fuel. Daylight migrators use thermal air currents to conserve energy; night flyers navigate using the stars. All seem to be imprinted with a recognition of the Earth's magnetic field.

Be on the lookout for claw marks on American beech trees. Black bears climb in search of fat-rich beechnuts as they bulk up for a long winter sleep. They clamber up to where they feast, leaving a tangle of bent and broken branches in their wake.

### Coyotes

Nearly every night howling coyotes penetrate my sleep. With both mountain lions and wolves eliminated from our ecosystem centuries ago, coyotes moved in, migrating east from west of the Mississippi River. The nonprofit Vermont Family Forests explains, "As coyotes expanded east, they intermixed

with canid cousins. DNA analysis shows the eastern coyote's genetic makeup as 64% coyote, 13% gray wolf, 13% eastern wolf and 10% domestic dog. These adaptable omnivores consume small rodents, plants, fruit, deer, snowshoe hare, cottontail rabbits, woodchucks, insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds and more."

Because coyotes are seen as a threat to livestock, hunters kill more than 400,000 each year across the country. But coyotes are wily and their reproduction responds to this stress; the more coyotes that are killed each year the more pups are born the next. VFF explains, "under normal conditions, only the dominant (alpha) male and female in a coyote pack breed. When one or both alphas are killed, other coyotes in the pack vie for dominance, breeding at younger ages, birthing many more pups, and often spreading into new territory. In most cases, the fewer coyotes you kill, the fewer you'll have."

If the day comes when mountain lions and wolves return to Vermont as top predators, coyotes may not be waking us at night.

Get outdoors and be safe!



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