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The Charlotte News

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Morning frost. Photo by Lee Krohn



This week, there's a theme

Chea Waters Evans
NEWS EDITOR

As the person in charge of each word that goes into this paper every other week, I can say without hesitation that I'm full of gratitude and appreciation this week for the writers who contribute to this paper. Their humor and insight and inability to stick to a low word count make me so happy.

For this issue, I asked if anyone was possibly, maybe, please, I beg of you, interested in writing about the general theme of gratitude or giving thanks, and look what I got.

Grandma's house and a flower garden and the folks at town hall and good healthcare and family. These excellent people were grateful for all of those things, and I'm grateful for them. I'm also grateful for the awesome

and enthusiastic junior reporters, who put together a whole section for this week's paper.

A couple years ago I was talking to a photographer who was going to go out and take people's pictures and then ask them what they were thankful for that Thanksgiving.

"Tell them to say something other than their families, though," I said. "Everyone always says they're thankful for their family and that doesn't make a very fun photo essay, so ask them to forget about their families for a minute."

Everyone said they were grateful for their families, anyway.

I am grateful for mine. I'm glad to live near my mom, and sad that this is the longest I've

ever gone without seeing my brother and sister and their delightful children and spouses. We always spend Thanksgiving together.

Last week's governor crackdown on gatherings hit hard. No friendsgiving, no after-dinner bonfire with the neighbors, no dessert down the street that turns into dessert and a lot of wine. That's okay, though. We'll be back next year and all the more grateful for it.

Thanks, Charlotters, for reading the paper, wanting to talk about it at the store, or texting me random gossip about an article I wrote, and just generally for helping out whenever we ask.

A place to sit and remember



The Gluck family honored Charles Gluck, M.D., in association with the Town of Charlotte, by installing this lovely stone bench in a location that was favored by their father.

Photo by Bill Fraser-Harris

In thanks for and praise of Charlotte

Louise McCarren
CONTRIBUTOR

This election season, especially on the national level, has been full of chaos, dysfunction and uncertainty. Not here in Charlotte. We rule. This is due to the magnificent work of Mary Mead, Sy Koerner and the fabulous Jim at the Charlotte Post Office. Of critical importance was the cadre of volunteers who took care of the polls and vote counting. Charlotte runs on volunteers and this is a good time to thank them.

Every Charlotter received a mail ballot. Most were voted through the mail. Jim at the Post Office made sure they were timely delivered, including hand delivering them to the Town hall.

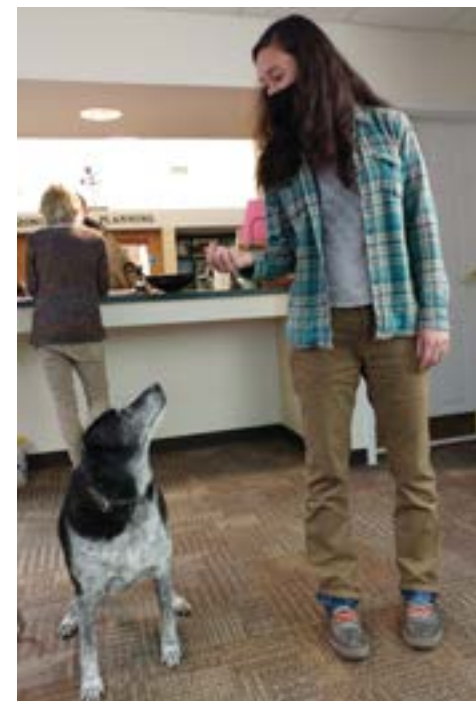
Mary and Sy had to open them and prepare the ballots to count on Election Day. No small task. They also had to set up the Town Hall for in-person voting.

On Election Day the volunteers came to staff the in-person polling and to start counting the ballots. A really generous guy brought cookies for the volunteers to share.

Ballots are run through a "tabulator" but each has to be inspected to see if there are any write-ins. If so, they are put in a separate pile for the write ins to be hand counted on a separate form. Tedious. As a very small contribution my husband and I did this part and were so impressed with the folks we teamed up with to get the job done. We were

awed by the volunteers. When we left I told Mary I would be back by 6:00 to help. I did. The polls were still open and staffed, but Mary had everything organized. The job was completed and all of Charlotte votes were reported by 8:00 p.m.

We should give thanks and praise for our town.



Assistant Town Clerk/Treasurer Sy Koerner and her pal Sally hold a very important meeting in Town Hall.
Photo by Vera Moroney

Giving Thanks

A thank you note to Vermont and Vermonters

Dear community,

Thank you.

I am appreciative of Vermont and Vermonters, particularly now and especially with a recent event in my life. My seventy-seven-year-old father had urgent open-heart surgery in New Jersey at the end of October following a heart attack. As a physician and can-do person, I thought caring for him after discharge would be easy.

I thought I'd pick him up at the hospital, get him settled in his condo and eat scrambled eggs for days in quarantine in between dressing changes and medication dosing. It was a hard ten days. My father recovered very well, thankfully, but challenges popped up nonetheless. Not many people in the Garden State were wearing masks or showing caution, despite moderate rates of COVID. Walking on the beach was my solace but on warm days there were throngs of people.

These observations made me nervous for COVID pressure from the northeast affecting Vermont. I felt thankful knowing I'd get to go home and live among like-minded Vermonters who believe in common sense. Knowing our state has benefited from excellent leadership from Governor Scott and Commissioner Levine felt good. Upon return to our state, I had my COVID test at Bennington Rescue Squad; a safe and professional experience.

While caring for my father in quarantine, I decided to go through his health care documents and get him organized. His former PCP retired due to COVID and he chose a new internist this summer. That said, his new doctor would not see him or manage his care without records, and they would not accept his old records in an electronic form. Not on disc or jump drive or via secure email. Paper only. Seven hundred pages of records.



Dr. Hunt took a walk on the beach in New Jersey while caring for her father last month.
Courtesy photo

He has a 20-year-old Inkjet printer, and we were in quarantine. We whittled his records down to about 150 pages of pertinent information. I re-directed my efforts to shoring up connections to his health care.

The TV is on often at my dad's and full of commercials show smiling older Americans easily navigating the numerous health care entities in their communities. This did not bear out in our reality. We made it so I could see his labs if they were done at one health care system, and that took hours to accomplish. Each provider seems to be associated with a different electronic health record, and therefore a different portal with a different passcode. And they clearly were not talking to each other.

The hospital that performed his coronary artery bypass sent his discharge information

to the old PCP. Before medical school, I worked in public health and throughout the years, I have always been an advocate of universal health care that prioritizes delivery and ease of navigation by patients. This optimism for sensible health care with minimal boundaries faded as I read through his charts and waited on hold for hours with his providers.

As refreshing as the Sip of Sunshine stash I brought with me on this road trip, the annual 207th Vermont Medical Society meeting occurred while I was in quarantine and I attended remotely. This group of healthcare professionals I feel proud to be part of celebrated leaders like State Senator Ginny Lyons, Dr. Mark Levine, Dr. Anthony Fauci, infectious disease specialist Dr. Jessie Leyse, and family doctor and Charlotte resident Dr. Jean Andersson-Swayze.

We also discussed and pledged support toward one another, patient care and health care reform. There is merit in our Vermont health care system—value-based payments and robust care coordination to name a few—and rich history in Vermont medicine. Our current health care system is not equitable—and sure as heck confuses most consumers, even health care providers themselves!

Vermont has a better shot at digging out of this crisis than other states. And the Medical Society's ideological nod towards principles of universality and single payer were well timed—both for the future of health in Vermont, and our nation, and for me, swimming in paperwork. I am most thankful for my family. After sleeping in the basement and not touching my three kids for days, I got my test result and re-entered warm, cuddly, loud family life! Back home in Vermont—yes!

Dr. Elizabeth Hunt



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 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.
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- 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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Giving Thanks Gratitude for Jeddah

Elizabeth Bassett

It’s tricky to focus on a big topic like gratitude. There’s the matter of scale. I am grateful for many things, that my loved ones have escaped the coronavirus and that an effective vaccine may be available soon. On a different scale, two things have eased my mental health during this pandemic slog. They are both places: Vermont and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Since the lockdown began in mid-March, I have treasured Vermont’s outdoor playgrounds. Successively I have cross-country skied; snowshoed; micro spiked to the summit of (closed) alpine ski terrain; hiked to these same summits amidst spring wildflowers; walked on quiet dirt roads and at Mt. Philo, Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge, Shelburne Farms, Raven Ridge, History Hike at Little River State Park, and Niquette Bay State Park. The list goes on.

This spring we visited our vernal pool at Raven Ridge, counting frog and salamander eggs and tadpoles. With little snowmelt to fill the pool, water evaporated a month earlier than in 2019; this year’s crop of tadpoles and baby salamanders did not survive to become frogs or adult salamanders. I listened to birdsong and learned some new species. I loved watching the family of barred owls on Mt. Philo. When the weather and waters warmed, I kayaked on bodies of water large and small, including tributaries of Lake Champlain: LaPlatte River, Lewis Creek, Otter Creek, and Lamoille River. I ogled families of loons and ducks on Green River Reservoir, Lake Iroquois, and Lake Champlain. Despite our dry summer, brilliant fall foliage provided more excuses to walk, hike, or bike. Soon snow will cover our mountains and the cycle will begin anew. I am so grateful to live in Vermont.

Several decades ago our family lived in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We had reasons for this escapade: a desire for adventure and exotic travel, leaving behind a high-pressure job, and salting away funds for our eventual home. Life was not easy in Saudi Arabia, especially for women. I could not drive or work legally. Out of respect for local customs, I sported voluminous dresses or skirts topped with oversized shirts, even on the hottest days. Our housing compound was bleak: metal houses resembled large shipping containers with holes for windows, doors, and air conditioning units; seven-foot cement walls surrounded

each house, enclosing a barren patch of sandy soil. The scorching sun faded everything to beige with a frosting of desert sand.

Beyond our fences and walls lay the port city of Jeddah with no public parks, no museums, no theaters, no sports arenas, no churches. Few restaurants allowed women. On weekend evenings Saudi families spread picnics on grassy traffic circles in the middle of intersections or along the beaches of the Red Sea. Most of the year it was hot. Very hot.

We did not have a telephone, email and the internet lay in the distant future, and mail, books, and media were all censored. Each time I flew to Jeddah I imagined the gates locking behind me. In order to leave the Kingdom I needed an exit visa, approved by my husband and his employer, the King Fahad Military Hospital. On bad days I felt like a prisoner.

And yet time passed, sometimes rather quickly. What kept me going? How did I muscle through nearly three years in Saudi Arabia, where scorching days with gales of gritty wind were more confining than our cold November darkness?

I wrote letters, the old-fashioned kind. When a hand-written letter from a long-lost friend arrives, folks pay attention. And respond. I cooked a lot, experimenting with local produce and spices from the souk. I listened to bootlegged cassettes and sang along. Sometimes I rode the public bus to the downtown souk, bouncing on the searing vinyl seats in the women’s section at the back of the bus. I read, savoring almost anything I could lay my hands on. Mostly, I put in my time and looked ahead to our next adventure. I tried to focus beyond the monotony of my days toward pleasures that awaited: trekking in Nepal, wildlife safari in Kenya, fine dining in France, or exploring Petra, the Pyramids of Giza, and Yemen’s ancient cities.

As I wrestle with the near certainty that we will not see our children or theirs for many months, I try to put on my Jeddah head. If we can stay healthy we will eventually get a vaccine. Some day we will see our family again. Fortunately, I love our home and where we live--this is a far cry from Jeddah. Of course I can do this!

Thank you, Jeddah, for the gift of perspective. As we move through this national nightmare, I am grateful.



Have a hot news tip?

Call us:
425-4949
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news@TheCharlotteNews.org

The **Charlotte News**

Giving Thanks

A treasure not tucked away in a stone wall

Katherine Arthaud
CONTRIBUTOR

In pondering the topic of Thanksgiving and gratitude, I find my mind wandering not to what on earth *this* Thanksgiving will bring, but back to past Thanksgivings—specifically, to Thanksgivings of my childhood, which would typically be spent at my grandmother’s house in Connecticut. A part of me didn’t love going there. In fact, if you had asked me at the time, I would have told you it was boring.

For one, it took a very long time to get there. And always, almost on cue, somewhere in the last few miles, my father would lose his \$%#\$, up to *here* with our bickering and too-loud singing. And once we were there, as much as a relief it would be to be released from the family station wagon and back on terra firma, it was a little claustrophobic.

I grew up on a farm and my grandmother lived in a fancy suburb. Which meant that there were no horses to ride, no woods to build forts in, no fields to gallop through, no friends our own age to romp with, and generally none of the stuff that typically entertained my sisters and me. My grandmother was an old lady. She loved antiques. Her house was not a children’s house. So, going there wasn’t exactly something my sisters and I considered “fun,” and I remember us whining about the annual pilgrimage. And yet, looking back on it, what I feel about my grandmother’s house at Thanksgiving time is: magic.

I remember the smell, which would hit us right away, of something rich and delicious cooking, with the vaguest hint of perfume and cedar in the air. I remember the front hall, and the happiness of seeing my grandmother when we

tumbled in with our jackets and suitcases, the feeling of knowing without knowing that I was knowing it as she hugged us one by one that we were loved, welcomed, wanted, cherished. I remember a tall, imposing antique mahogany cabinet with glass doors that sat in the hall, not far from the front door, and how way up on one of its highest shelves was a set of very small colored glasses. There was something about these little, translucent, beveled glasses, in gem tones of emerald, ruby, amber, blue, that was so tantalizing and mysterious. They were far out of reach to the likes of me—I think even my very tall grandmother would have needed a stool or small ladder to get at them—but their untouchability rendered them even more precious, rare, and unearthly. That they were never used in my presence made them even more glisteningly enchanted.

I once asked my mother about them and was told they may be in the possession of my cousin Trina. I suppose I could look into this, but somehow, I don’t feel compelled to own them or even see them again. The memory of them, glittering in their dark wooden nook, is vivid and profound and enough.

Though there weren’t many toys at my grandmother’s house, there were a few. And every year, there they would be, in a box in a closet. We would spill them out onto the floor: a wooden ambulance you could pull around with a string, a handful of plastic gems as big as our fists, a towheaded baby doll with one green eye. There were more, but not lots more, and we used our imaginations, my sisters and me, made up games and stories and worlds around these toys. We buried the plastic gems in a wide and crumbling fieldstone wall down the road and never retrieved them.

We played hide-and-go-seek and sometimes sardines. Once, my parents rented us bicycles from town and we rode around, exploring the quiet roads, usually pretending to be people we were not. There was a collie named Danny who lived next door who was very beautiful, but word had it he’d bitten a boy, so we steered clear, admiring his handsome pointy nose and tawny glossy locks from afar. One year, my grandmother drove us in her navy-blue Lincoln Continental to a big, dimly lit barn to see a collection of dolls from around the world. She called it the Doll Museum, and I guess she knew the man who owned it. He had a pet monkey, who leapt about from his shoulder to chairs, to shelves, to windowsills. He had a beaded collar and large, watery brown-black eyes. We were mesmerized. For many Christmases following, my sister would mourn when she didn’t receive a monkey of her own.

I remember the little electric shocks we would get skittering across the beige carpeting in my grandmother’s house in our bare feet. I remember the oil portraits in the hall that led to the bedroom my sister and I would share; one of my mother and one of her sister, Bambi. My mother was about seven in her picture, and she looked so angelic in her dress and white collar, her hair parted on the side, her hands clasped loosely in her little lap. Beside her was Bambi, about twelve, with a bowler on her head, a tweed coat, and a riding crop in her hand. My mother told us that Bambi, older, bossier and more defiant, had insisted on being memorialized in horseback riding attire, while my mother, far more polite and compliant, was stuck with the velvet dress. My sisters and I would often pause in our shenanigans to gaze at these portraits, fascinated by our mother and our aunt, once kids like us.

I remember my grandmother’s bedroom, vast to us, with its fluffy comforters, pale blue wall-paper, and a frilly dressing table covered with what seemed an infinite number of minute, expensive-looking bottles of perfume, which occasionally my grandmother would allow us to sample, just a touch to the insides of our bony wrists. There was a lace-covered table with an array of silver-framed pictures of friends and relatives. My cousin Trina on a dock. My grandmother’s brother, Uncle Dutch, holding a speckled trout. My mother and father waltzing on their wedding day.

And always, always, I remember my grandmother, sometimes in the foreground, sometimes in the background, serene and accepting, and the peace of her home. Being around her changed the dynamics of my family. It settled us. With her, things seemed more spacious, more harmonious, more fair. It’s hard to describe, but many, many times in the many, many years that have followed these Thanksgiving treks to Connecticut to visit my grandmother—and I haven’t even gotten into the food, which was rich and delicious and perfect—I have drawn on these memories, and her love and her presence in our lives, her grace and patience with all of us, and this has been my treasure.

A treasure not stashed in a stone wall or tucked away on a high shelf in a front hall or gobbled up with cranberry sauce and gravy, but in my heart of hearts. My grandmother herself, and how she loved us and saw us, welcomed us and honored us and shared with us, sheltered us and fed us, and sent us back into our lives, with leftovers and her unspoken blessing, to live our lives out and through. For these times in her presence, I am so grateful. For her, today, I give great thanks.

Giving Thanks

What makes you think Thanksgiving comes in only one flavor?



Edd Merritt
CONTRIBUTOR

It was my first year as a resident of New York City over Thanksgiving. I lived off Union Square, around the corner from Max's Kansas City where Lou Reed and the Velvet Underground were the house band and where I knew the audience

would be small on the holiday, so I decided to accept an invitation from a co-worker at my advertising agency to join her family in the Bronx for Thanksgiving dinner.

Living in lower Manhattan, I chugged up by train to the northern borough, met her at the station, and accompanied her home, where I soon realized I was the guest of honor. I also discovered that dad was the cook. Although he made the dishes, he seldom ate them, because

he was skinny as a rail. Mom, on the other hand, was the eater, and that trait showed. An Italian family, pasta was the primary dish, and it was delicious. The table, in turn, seemed to be sloped in my direction, so, of course, I had to eat all that was on my plate. That I did, wiped my lips and waited for dessert that happened to be replaced by—yes, American turkey. Again the guest, I had to clean mine to the last drumstick.

Although I was full, I figured I had done my duty. That is until I learned we had two cousins to visit for dessert—not to be served one, but two helpings—of generous pieces of apple pie. Mangia! Mangia!

Well, you can imagine what I felt like by the time I got on the subway to head downtown—gorged probably does not do it justice. Unfortunately, the only thing I could share with my apartment mice were belches.

The Light in the Gloom

Jorden Blucher
CONTRIBUTOR

With all that has been going on in the world lately, I've been thinking a lot about the light in the gloom. The silver lining is a more common way to put it, but light in the gloom seems more fitting to me as a follower of Jesus. Unfortunately, whether we believe in a god or not we often miss the light, because we are so focused on the gloom.

In 1996 my friend Jarrod was killed in a car accident a week after we graduated from high school. On the morning before his death, I spoke to him on the phone and had planned to go meet him at his work. I never made it, and he was killed as he was leaving. At the emergency department, I, Jarrod's girlfriend, and another friend somehow persuaded a nurse to let us see his body. We made it as far as the green line by the door, in clear view of his body on the steel ER table.

Almost exactly a year earlier, I had become a father to a son, and now I was a witness to a life lost. My life plans on that day in 1996 were shaky at best, and emotionally I was a lost soul. In the moments after seeing Jarrod's body, I became completely unmoored and spent the next several years angry at everything and desperate to find understanding and my place in the world.

Jarrod was non-judgmental, empathetic, and compassionate beyond his years. The reason we became friends was that the year prior he was worried about me, he saw that I was struggling and he wanted to help. Since Jarrod's death, I have tried to learn from his non-judgmental ways with varying degrees of success. All the while I've struggled with why he was taken so young. What was God's plan in all of this?

It is most likely that I've suffered from depression all of my life, but I was not officially diagnosed until 2009 after I was laid off from my job as a creative director of a living history park by my embezzling boss, who needed more money for his secret cattle business. The last two years have been the hardest I've ever experienced in terms of my depression. When I reread my journals from this time I shudder at how dark a place I was in. At one point, my wife Erin told me she was worried that one day I would go for a walk and she would then find me hanging from a tree.

Amid this darkness, I came to realize that in his death, Jarrod has been instrumental in keeping me alive. I feel incredibly selfish and slightly ridiculous writing that, but knowing the type of pain I would inflict on my family and loved ones if I were to end my suffering has kept me safe. This in turn has allowed me to make monumental gains in coping with my depression and I am now in a far better place.

I've been a stay-at-home-dad since that embezzling boss let me go on a Monday morning eleven years ago. I am not bitter about that incident, not anymore. Rather, I am beyond grateful, despite all the times I stomped around the house insisting that I needed to get a job. Eventually, I came to understand that I was right where God wanted me to be.

Recently, though, I stepped into a business opportunity that was interesting and flexible enough for me to want to try out. Unfortunately, it did not work out, but in the time that I did try to make it work, I became friends with someone who had formerly been an acquaintance. One day, when he stopped by to talk about a weekly men's group I help facilitate at Charlotte Congregational Church—a group that has been instrumental in my wellbeing over these past eight months—our conversation turned to some personal issue he was having. We talked for some time standing there in the warm fall sun, and when he left, I realized that my foray back into the working world was not meant to make me buckets of money. Instead, it had been God's plan for the two of us to build our friendship so that we could help each other.

Finding the light in the everyday is so important to our wellbeing and something many of us have forgotten how to do. Sometimes, the light comes from something monumental that happened years before, and sometimes it is right in front of us in the moment. Regardless of how or when it arrives, we should all be grateful for the light, no matter how faint, that cuts through the gloom.

Hold fast. Slow yourself down. Unshackle the joy.

Jorden Blucher is a stay-at-home-dad who writes a weekly blog about the nuances of life and his journey with depression at quietlymakingnoise.net.

Giving Thanks

Thanks to the garden

Vera Moroney
CONTRIBUTOR

Did the garden understand what a tough year 2020 was going to be for us humans?

The early spring was cold and wet, yet the daffodils, narcissi and crocus were magnificent and lasted for a very long time. The tulips were impressive with little or no mole or mice damage (not to mention bunnies and deer). Were they telling us it would be OK? Lots of great bouquets to bring to folks.

Mid-season turned hot and we had a drought. Yikes, gardening is a crapshoot, but this may be too much. Not so. There were no red lily beetles. Perhaps it was the ravens that marauded the neighborhood and ate them in their grub stage. Thank you. Also no Japanese beetles, no explanation there. Also, few or no mosquitoes. The delphiniums, lilies and peonies were strutting their stuff.

The veggie garden was a riot of production. Tomatoes, peppers and eggplant for everyone. Did learn a hard lesson about the value of direct sowing pumpkins and squash...they do not like to be transplanted.

The plants knew it was going to be a difficult year. Let's give thanks!



Photos by Vera Moroney

Grateful for life in Vermont



The sunrise over Mt. Mansfield never disappoints.

Photo by Phyl Newbeck

Phyl Newbeck
CONTRIBUTOR

For the first time in years, I won't be gathering for a Thanksgiving dinner with friends or family, but that doesn't mean I don't have plenty to be grateful for. An early November trip to New York City to visit my almost 96-year-old mother—my first visit in over a year, thanks to the pandemic—reminded me of how much I love my adopted state. The narrow hallways and staircases of my mother's apartment building are claustrophobic, the sidewalks are littered with trash, the harried denizens of Astoria (a town in Queens just across the river from Manhattan) don't make eye contact with one another, and the closest green space, aside from some tiny private gardens outside the few single-family homes that remain, is a 20-minute walk from her building.

Instead, I live in a place where if I want to get fresh air, all I have to do is step out my door. Sure, there are a few beer cans by the side of the road, but for the most part, our streets, paths and sidewalks are clean. Even with our now ubiquitous masks, people are friendly and greet one another, albeit at a distance. I think many people are purposefully exaggerating their smiles to make sure they are apparent even though their mouths are hidden. The fact that many of us have decks or yards made it possible to continue social gatherings well into the fall, separated by six feet around a fire pit or grill.

I'm thankful for all the recreational options my adopted home (25 years here, but I know I'm still a flatlander) provides. I don't live on the Almost Great Lake, but it's a short drive to put my kayak or canoe in the water, and paddling

is a sport that lends itself to social distancing. For longer outings, there are several wonderful canoe/kayak camping options. A reservoir closer to home provides a great outlet for swimming and this year, with the late season heat, came an unexpected—albeit short—November dip.

The relatively uncrowded back roads are wonderful for cycling, and if I want even less in the way of motorized traffic, I can opt for my gravel bike and get further off the beaten path. The silver lining to the premature end of our last ski season was getting an early start on the cycling season, and as a result, I logged significantly more miles than in any previous year. Hiking options abound across our region, ranging from casual walks around a lake or pond to more serious treks up the peaks for stunning views.

Now, with winter approaching, I'm really in my element. I've already had one day of skinning up and skiing down Bolton and I'm looking forward to plenty of skiing, snowshoeing, micro-spike hiking, and skating to keep me entertained through the winter months. Things are going to be very different at alpine ski areas and cross-country ski centers, but the snow will (hopefully) still be there and Vermonters will learn to adapt. Many of these sports can easily be done with social distancing so people can continue to enjoy the companionship of others while recreating, when COVID protocol allows. Traveling may be off limits for a while but there's no better place to be stuck than here.

My best wishes to all our readers with the hope that you, too, will find activities to make you thankful you live in this great state.

Giving Thanks - Kids Section

Thanksgiving word jumble

Louisa Langfeldt
CONTRIBUTOR

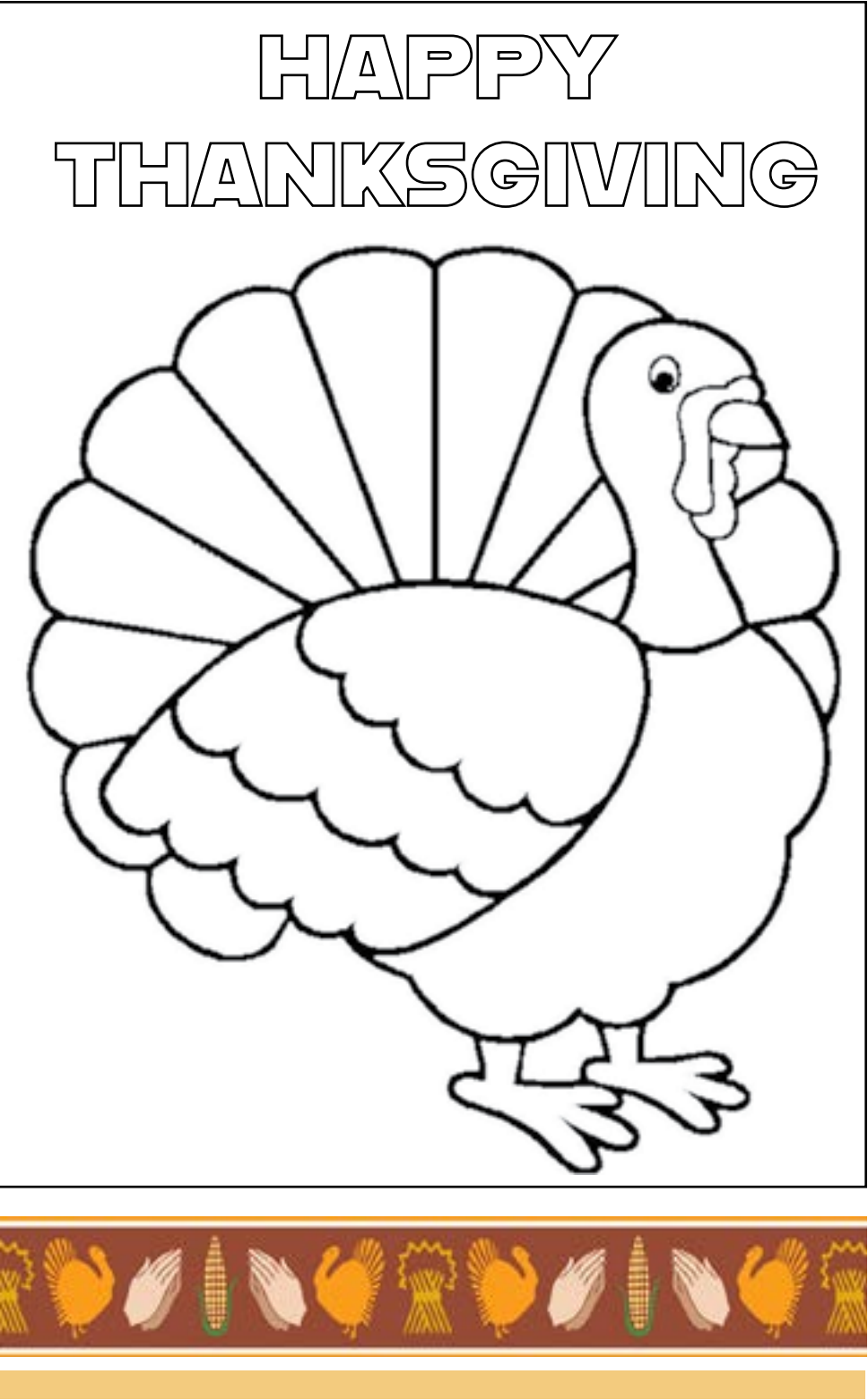
Unscramble the following words. Use the letters in “()” to reveal the secret word.

gtfufins _ () _ _ _ _ _ afukthln () () _ _ _ _ _
belogb _ () _ _ _ _ _ esatf _ () _ _ _
raetfgul () _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
caeepp _ () _ _ _ _ _ Secret word

Unscramble the bonus word: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
moapagwna _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Answers: Stuffing, Gobble, Grateful, Peace, Thankful, Feast, Pilgrims Bonus: Wampanoag

Hey kids! Color this turkey and have your parents take a photo. If they have Instagram, they can tag us and your work can be part of a turkey parade! @thecharlottenews



Giving Thanks - Kids Section

Family Traditions

Mavis Carr and Lily Mae Siedlecki
JUNIOR REPORTERS

When you think of Thanksgiving, you think warm, cozy, lots of food, and smiling faces lighting up the room. Let’s hold on to all your family traditions! Here’s an interview with Rory Donahue about some of his family traditions.

“What are some of your family traditions?” junior reporter Mavis asks.

“Usually having a turkey, and we go to our grandparents. We watch football on Sunday and spend lots of time with family,” Rory responds.

“What traditions are you looking forward to?” Mavis questions.

“Family time. I love that because that usually doesn’t happen so much,” Rory says.

“If COVID-19 wasn’t happening, what traditions would you change?” Mavis asks.

“All changes are because of COVID-19,” Rory responds.

“What is your favorite thing about Thanksgiving?” Mavis wonders.

“The cranberry sauce.” Rory says surely.

“Thanks!” Mavis concludes.

Thanksgiving in COVID times

Eloise Glasscoe and Lily Mae Siedlecki
JUNIOR REPORTERS

Thanksgiving! Just think of it! Relatives pouring through the doors, heaping piles of food, loads of family tradition! But this year’s different. Here’s an interview with Charlotter Charlie Moore and Charlotte pod teacher Sarah Attig on how all that might have to change due to COVID-19.

“All right, first question. How will you have to do Thanksgiving differently this year?” junior reporter Eloise Glasscoe asks.

“We’re going to try not to change anything so Thanksgiving will feel just like any other year, but we might have to change a few small things,” Charlie informs.

“I won’t be able to see my family this year, and I don’t think I’ll be cooking the traditional food for Thanksgiving this year,” was Sarah’s response.

“How do you think this will affect your family?” Eloise asks.

“I don’t think they’ll really be affected by it, since our Thanksgiving won’t be very different.” Charlie states.

“Well, my parents won’t have anyone over, so they won’t have the stress of cooking for so many people,” Sarah responds.

“What are some family traditions you’ll



Image by congerdesign from Pixabay

have to change due to COVID-19?” Eloise questions.

“We won’t have to change much, but we won’t be able to hug our grandparents,” Charlie says.

“I usually make cranberry sauce with my mom, but I can’t do that this year. I also usually spend the night at my parents’ house, but this year I’ll be staying home,” Sarah declares.

“Great, thank you!” Eloise concludes.

As you can see, COVID might change our traditions, and we’ll have to do things differently, but that won’t stop us from making Thanksgiving a time to give our thanks to all that we are lucky to have in our lives. COVID won’t stop us from spreading love this winter! Even if it’ll be over FaceTime, we can give our family and friends just as much experience as previous years this holiday season. We’ll find ways to work around the roadblocks COVID might bring and make Thanksgiving fun!

Food and thanksgiving

Amelie Fairweather
JUNIOR REPORTER

Thanksgiving is a holiday not to be forgotten. Every year my family celebrates the special day with festivities and a big feast at the end. There’s turkey, cranberry sauce, stuffing, potatoes, pumpkin and pecan pie, and more, and although this year will be different, the food will hopefully stay the same.

On Friday night, Amelie Fairweather interviewed Shayah Mercado, 17, about what she plans to eat and do.

“What are some things you normally eat for Thanksgiving?” Amelie asks.

“So, I eat lasagna, rice, turkey and ham, baked mac and cheese,” Shanyah responds.

“Are you going to be changing some of the things you do due to COVID?” says Amelie.

“Honestly, I don’t know. We haven’t really thought out Thanksgiving. I think we’re going to our grandparents’ house, but other than that I don’t really know,” Shanyah answers.

“Are there any special Thanksgiving traditions you and your family have?” asks Amelie.



“It’s more of a thing with my cousins, and this when we were younger, we used go to the back of my grandparents’ house and be like, let’s play tag, and we’d just have a lot of fun and run up and down the block and that was something I didn’t see lots of other families doing,” Shanyah responds.

“Thank you very much.”

“No problem!”

Everyone have a happy Thanksgiving and remember to stay safe—Thanks for reading!

Dad jokes for Thanksgiving

Staff report

Why doesn’t the turkey eat on Thanksgiving?
Because it’s already stuffed.

What smells the best at Thanksgiving dinner?
Your nose.

If April showers bring May flowers, what do May flowers bring?
Pilgrims.

What do you call a running turkey?
Fast food.

Why did the turkey cross the road twice?
To prove he wasn’t a chicken.

What kind of music did the Pilgrims listen to?
Plymouth rock

What are turkeys thankful for on Thanksgiving?
Vegetarians.

Where do turkeys go to dance?
The Butter Ball.

Which side of a turkey has the most feathers?
The outside.

Why can’t you take a turkey to church?
Because of its fowl language.



Hi, Neighbor!

Philip Fass: Capturing history for future generations



Phyl Newbeck
CONTRIBUTOR

As a teenager, Philip Fass liked to make short films, enjoying both the technical and creative parts of the process. Fearing he would be unable to earn a living behind the camera, he went to work as a business writer, but in 2004, the long-time Charlotte resident returned to his roots by opening Legacy Video Portraits. The business specializes in biographical videos, family histories, and community profiles.

"I enjoy getting to know the people I work with," Fass said. "I'm trying to make video portraits that are lasting and will please the subjects and all the people who get to see the work. I've been pretty successful in giving people something they're happy to have." Fass noted that video provides more detail than can be obtained through written words or even audio. "You may catch a facial expression," he said "or even a pause

when someone takes time to think before answering."

Fass believes he has a knack for inspiring trust. "I somehow seem to have the gift for enabling the people I work with to trust me," he said, giving the example of a video he created called "Seven Portraits of Highgate." "I remember one man," Fass said. "When I'd arranged to interview him by phone he seemed reluctant. He was tall and he opened the door slowly and looked down at me before he let me in." Fass generally needs twenty minutes to set up his equipment and has found that this helps people adjust to his presence as they chat off camera. "Even though we'd approached each other warily at the beginning," Fass said "by the time we were done, he didn't want me to leave."

Sometimes, larger projects like Fass's unfinished "History of Burlington," lead to other endeavors. While working on that video which has been delayed by the pandemic, Fass met former Burlington mayor Frank Cain. "He was so charming and sharp and had such wonderful stories that I thought he and his wife Mary Jane would make for an excellent biographical video," Fass said. The couple agreed and Fass collected archival material to accompany the interview, eventually creating a DVD for the Cains' children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. "I'm sure those will stay in the family for many years," Fass said, noting that an unanticipated result of the time spent with Cain was that the two developed a lasting friendship.

For Fass, the key is to do his interviews respectfully and with a strong interest in the stories people tell. Another important facet of his work is allowing the interview to move in unexpected directions. "I have questions written down based on pre-interview discussions," he said "but I always let myself veer away from them and follow interesting threads wherever they go." Fass noted that sometimes when he watches someone else's interview he realizes the interviewer is simply



The crux of Philip Fass's work is sharing personal histories. Here, he sits with pup Etta.

Courtesy photo

going from one pre-written question to another without following up on unexpected tangents. "That's such a waste," he said. "When someone says something that captures your imagination, you want to take it further."

The crux of Fass's work is the telling of personal histories. "Those connect us, form our understanding of who we are, and tell future generations about us," he said. He pointed to a video he created for the centennial of the Bixby Library in Vergennes. Although the video included a narrated tour inside the building, for Fass the most relevant part was interviews with people who talked about what the library meant to them. "That is so much more important in terms of defining the value of the place than just the physical description or history," he said. "If you think

of the library as a living, breathing part of the community, it's really people's experiences that reveal that."

Fass notes that it's hard at the beginning of a project to estimate the cost. "I do my best to work within the time frame and the budget people give me," he said "and I'm open to exploring what is reasonable, but I hope people realize that a family video becomes more significant over time. It's something you hold onto. It's mostly for future generations." Since his goal is to make his subjects happy, Fass gives them the final say in their projects. "It's very much a collaboration," he said. "They are sitting down with someone they've never met but in the course of an hour I hope they can relax, forget about the camera, and enjoy the conversation."

Nominate your neighbor!

Know someone
interesting in Charlotte?
We want to interview them
and share their story.

Email
news@thecharlottenews.org

The Charlotte News



Winter and holiday safety reminders from CVFRS

Rob Mullin
DEPUTY CHIEF, CHARLOTTE FIRE AND RESCUE

Well, it is that time of the year again. Here are some tips to help you get through our Vermont winters safely.

Wood Stove Safety

It is advisable to get your chimney cleaned a minimum of twice a year. In the fall, before you light your first fire, to get rid of any nests that may have been built over the summer and in the spring, to get rid of any creosote that has built up since the last cleaning. It is also recommended to check your chimney on a regular basis during the burning season. When you check your chimney, make sure you check your dampers as well. When you burn wood, try to burn only dry wood, it will give you the maximum amount of heat, burn cleaner and reduce creosote buildup in your chimney. If you are new to wood burning, or unsure of something, follow the manufacturer's recommendations for operating your stove or fireplace. If you are not sure find a local dealer for that brand and they can assist you.

Furnace Safety

You should also have your furnace serviced a minimum of once a year. If it is an all-in-one that also heats your hot water, it should be checked twice a year, in the spring and fall. Please make sure that your vents are kept clear of snow and ice to prevent carbon monoxide from backing up and entering your house. I am sure that your fuel delivery folks would also love to have a shoveled path to your fill site as well.

Smoke Detectors

It is advisable to have a smoke detector in every room of your house except for kitchen and bathrooms. If you cannot do that, at least one on every level and in the common areas. The best location for a smoke detector is on the ceiling in the middle of the room. If they can be hardwired and interconnected, that is best. If battery operated, change your batteries twice a year. When you change your clocks, change your batteries. To have the best protection from fire, have both kinds, a photoelectric and an ionization detector. The photoelectric will detect a slow burning fire and the ionization will detect a fast-developing fire. If you have any questions, you can call Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services at 425-3111.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

You should also try to have a CO detector on every level of your home. Carbon monoxide mixes with the oxygen in your home and is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. It IS a



Stock image

SILENT KILLER! Carbon monoxide is the unburned gasses from a flame. If you have your furnace in the basement, be careful where you put your CO detector, you could get some false alarms when your furnace starts or shuts down. The best places for a detector would be on the first floor near the basement door and upstairs in the hallway near the bedrooms. We recommend the plug-in type with a battery backup. Again, if there are any questions, please call CVFRS.

Ice Safety

The only safe ice is NO ice! If you must go onto the ice, please make sure you do it safely. Go with a buddy if possible and stay away from each other. If one falls through, the other can dial 911 and show us your location. Call 911 before attempting to rescue anyone or an animal. The best thing you can do for your pet is to call 911 and lead the rescuers to them. If it is less than two inches thick, STAY OFF! Four inches may support a person(s), 5 to 6 inches may support snowmobiles and ATV's, 8 to 12 inches may support cars and small trucks, and 12 to 15 inches may support medium size trucks. If you do drive a vehicle on the ice, please make sure the windows are open enabling you to escape if the need arises. Please try to wear some sort of flotation device, if you do fall through, it will help keep you from sinking and possibly going under the ice.

If you do fall through while walking, cover your mouth and nose, and keep your other arm outstretched to catch the ice shelf as you fall. If you do fall through, don't panic and keep kicking! Get to the shelf and stretch out your arms and then kick to try to get yourself out, if you do get out, ROLL away from the hole, DO NOT STAND UP! If you are unable

to get out under your own power, allow your arms to freeze to the shelf. This will keep you from sliding under the ice shelf. Please do not go onto the ice to rescue your pet, dial 911, we will respond to rescue animals. Tell somebody your plans and location in case something does happen.

Winter Driving

Please get your snow tires on sooner than later! All season tires on front or rear wheel drive do not work. Put together a small survival kit (extra hats, gloves, scarfs, blankets and some protein bars) and keep it in your car just in case. It may be helpful to have a small container of sand in your car to help get unstuck. Increase your following distance on slippery roads and use your headlights 100 percent of the time. Be aware of your location all the time in case you go off the road and need to call for help.

Holiday Safety

Fry turkeys outside and not on a porch or under an overhang. Make sure that the turkey is 100 percent defrosted. and don't overfill the fryer with grease. Lower the turkey in slowly to avoid splashing--oil and water do not mix. Check out the turkey fryer video on our Facebook page to see what can happen.

If you have a real Christmas tree, make sure the water reservoir does not dry out. If at all possible, use LED lights, they are much safer. Keep your tree away from uncovered electrical outlets and put your lights on a timer. Use wires, rope or string to help support your tree.

Have a bucket of sand near your entry door for the steps and/or walkway, keep your pathway shoveled and clear, keep your driveway as clear as possible. This will allow emergency vehicles to get to your house.

On that note, can we find your house? Is it well labeled with a reflective 911 sign that is visible from both directions in all types of weather? If not, we have them available at the fire station for a small cost. Just visit our website at www.cvfrs.com, click on Community Outreach at the bottom, download or print the 911 sign form, fill it out and send it in. We will contact you when it is completed.

Do you live alone? If so, if something happens to you while you are alone, can we get in to help? If not, we will have to force entry, more than likely causing some damage. Please call the fire station to inquire about our Knox Homebox Program.

As always, Charlotte Fire and Rescue is only a phone call away. If you have any questions, call the station. And if there is ever any doubt whether it is an emergency or not, dial 911.

The Charlotte News Seeks an Advertising Manager

Vermont's oldest nonprofit community newspaper is looking for someone who would like to work in the community, with dedicated and interesting colleagues, while also having the ability to maintain a flexible schedule.

Responsibilities:

- Print and digital advertising sales and occasional ad design.
- Maintaining contact and building relationships with existing and potential advertisers.
- Working with managing editor to place ads into the layout of the paper and onto the website.

Requirements:

- Newspaper print sales experience preferred with online advertising experience a big plus.
- Creative experience in ad design.
- Competency in InDesign, Photoshop, Excel and Word.

Compensation:

- Part time position, compensation negotiable.

To apply, please send a cover letter and resume by December 4th to Vince@thecharlottenews.org

Notice of Vacancy Canine Control Officer

The Town of Charlotte Selectboard hereby provides a notice of vacancy of the position of Canine Control Officer.

The position is responsible for enforcing the Charlotte Ordinance Regarding Nuisance Animals, including levying fines when appropriate. The position is also responsible for bringing stray dogs to the Town-approved shelter and impounding any dog that has bitten a person, to determine if the dog is rabid. Additionally, the position is responsible for filing animal bite reports at the Town Office.

The position is reappointed annually in April and is currently paid \$250 per month. There are no benefits offered with this position.

Inquiries regarding can be made by calling the Town Administrator at 425-3071 ext. 5. The deadline for submitting an application is November 27, 2020. Letters of interest should be submitted to: Charlotte Town Office, Attn: Town Administrator, P.O. Box 119, Charlotte, VT 05445

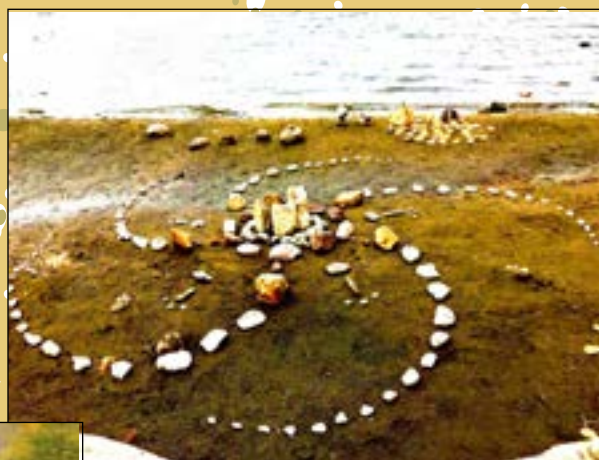
Or by e-mail to: dean@townofcharlotte.com

CHARLOTTE BEACH SCULPTORS ROCK!

The Recreation Commission and Charlotte Recreation held a beach sculpture challenge this fall. Inspired by visitors creating displays over the summer, Recreation Commission Chair Bill Fraser-Harris said they decided to “put it out to the community as a great way for kids and adults alike to be creative in a safe, open air, and community fun-based pastime. The low lake level gave us a perfect working palette and residents stepped up, kids and adults alike.” Entries all got a free beach pass for next summer.

Fraser-Harris also said, “The challenge is open potentially over the winter, as lake levels remain low and ice and snow may become part of the artist’s medium.”

Photos contributed



Town

I’ll meet you at deer camp



Bradley Carleton

My father was born the eighth child in a family of 10 children that subsisted from week to week on a coal miner’s solitary income. He would climb 200 feet down into a mine shaft to help his one-legged father extract enough chunks of coal to bag, walk into town and sell in order to purchase food for the evening’s dinner.

He told me he swore that his children would never suffer for lack of anything.

He set out on a course that took him to a small college in Alliance, Ohio and on to a career in business. He started as an insurance salesman, and within his first year he sold a million dollars’ worth of insurance (which back then was a lot of money). He quickly learned that he was a consummate salesman and began working at a used car dealership, then purchased a small diner on the college campus. From there the entrepreneurial spirit was lit.

He started working deals to purchase anything that appeared to hold a modicum of the possibility of making money. He loved making deals. By the mid-60s he had amassed a small empire of hotels, nightclubs, nursing homes and partnerships in Swiss banks, and even a racehorse that was bred to a Kentucky Derby winner. He had a private plane and pilot, a big ugly green limousine, and one of the first car phones in the back of his Oldsmobile Ninety Eight.

Sounds materially impressive for a coal miner’s son, right?

It would prove to be an ironic twist later in life that the value of all these things was nothing compared to what he gave us as a gentleman.

He had married the love of his life, the Homecoming Queen, my mother, who was a well-heeled matron worthy of raising children. Four of us.

He was jet-setting around the country and relied heavily on our mother to rear his progeny.

Then there came a time when his eldest son, an awkward, sensitive young lad, who failed miserably at team sports (even when his father owned the team), was in desperate need of a connection to find even the slightest vestige of traditional virility.

I was 13 years old when he sent me to a Hunters’ Education class and gave me a Marlin model .22 caliber bolt action rifle for Christmas. I studied that Hunters Ed course like it was to be my master’s thesis. I was going to be a master of my own

destiny! I would learn everything I could about safety, proper etiquette, habitat, ecosystems, conservation and yes, even hunting. I practiced in the back woods of our house in Pennsylvania, stalking rabbits and squirrels once I had received my first license.

When I had exhibited enough interest in learning to master something, I was 15. I tried football and got creamed by the big dudes that they grow around Pittsburgh suburbs. I tried baseball but could not find the courage to take a swing at a ball when I was up. Basketball? Are you kidding? My seventh-grade class had kids with full beards that stood over six feet tall. It was hopeless. I was a loner. But I had found my path: the outdoors.

That year my father did something extraordinary. He planned a deer hunting trip into central Pennsylvania, where he had grown up.

I sat up late that night, polishing my new Marlin 30-.30 and watching voluptuous snowflakes falling from the darkened sky and waiting for our departure. We had planned on a 2 a.m. start with a four hour drive. I awakened my father around midnight telling him that the snow was coming down hard and that we had better get going now before the roads became impassable.

He steered the Olds Vista Cruiser north to Interstate 80 and slid onto the slippery snowbound surface, busting through snowdrifts as if they were feather pillows. This is the first time that I saw my father as my hero. We plowed east through the night, listening to an old country radio station from Wheeling, West Virginia. My father drove with the window down so he could grab the wiper blades every few minutes and bang them against the frosted windshield to rid them of the heavy flakes. He sang along to Hank Williams, Merle Haggard and Charlie Pride--names that I didn’t know.

Six hours after we left, we pulled off the interstate and took a few back roads that I was sure would lead us closer to a tow truck. But within half an hour we plowed our way into a driveway with drifts over my waist and slammed the bow of the Vista Cruiser into a snowdrift about 20 feet from the door of an old, poorly lit log cabin.

We knocked on the door of the cabin and as it opened, pale yellow light from kerosene lanterns filled the doorway. The smell of cigar smoke, bacon, coffee and whiskey filled the night air around me. This was no place for kids. This place was a bastion of manhood – the old kind. And I was welcomed in as a man.

Town

Town Link Trail west end study in process

Jim Donovan
CONTRIBUTOR

The Trails Committee is taking the lead in helping the town decide what portion of the Town Link Trail should be built next. The Town has \$57,000 to build the next section of the trail, thanks to the generosity of Charlotte voters. The town's long-term goal for the Town Link Trail is to connect the East and West Villages to the Town Beach. To make the most of the trail segments that have already been constructed, the Trails Committee is currently focusing on the portion of the trail between the West Charlotte Village area and the Town Beach.

To do this work as efficiently and wisely as possible, the Trails Committee started a public study in October to look at the numerous alternative off-road alignments that might be possible between the West Charlotte village and the beach, with the goal of finding, with public input, the most viable and appropriate one. To help with the study, the Trails Committee asked the Selectboard to appoint a steering committee to lead the work. The steering committee consists of representatives of other committees and boards in town that have an interest in the trail, such as the Selectboard, Planning Commission and Recreation Commission, as well as landowners both from within the study area and from other parts of town. Their role is to bring the concerns of their respective groups to the study, as well as to report back to their groups about how the study is going.

I am assisting the steering committee; I'm a Charlotte resident and landscape architect

focusing on bicycle and pedestrian planning work. Together we have explored as many different off-road options as possible and evaluated them against different criteria, including user safety, aesthetic impacts, the number of easements that might be needed, the impacts to natural and cultural resources, the connection to important destinations in the area, the use of existing easements, the proximity to parking, and potential landowner concerns.

After their initial evaluations, the steering committee narrowed the options to two alignments with several alternate locations for portions of each. They held an online public work session on Nov. 11, to discuss the alternatives with town residents. Before finalizing a recommendation, they will hold two more public work sessions. The next one will be on Nov. 24, again online, to look further at the two alternatives under consideration.

After they have come up with a draft final recommended alignment, they plan on holding one last public work session online to review the recommendations with those who attend the meeting. They are also planning on presenting the final recommendations to the Selectboard in December, if they are interested in hearing the result of the study.

Look for more information about the online public work sessions on Front Porch Form. If you would like to look at the work done so far, or review the alignments, the work is posted in the Town Offices or available on the Trails Committee webpages on the town website. You can also send any questions or comments to bikeped@gmavt.net.

Cozy in quarantine, help the library

Missy Adams
FRIENDS OF THE CHARLOTTE LIBRARY

In this difficult time of curtailed holiday festivities, The Charlotte Library is ready to help. We are holding a Get Cozy Raffle to provide cheer and goodwill. The centerpiece is a beautiful and comfy quilt made by Amanda Herzberger. It is surrounded by coffee from Paradiso, Vermont Artisan tea, cocoa, and chocolates from Lake Champlain Chocolates, Wild Blossom beeswax candles, and an assortment of great books.

Tickets will sell for \$5 each, or 5 for \$20.

Raffle dates: Nov. 13 to Dec. 15.

The drawing date is Dec. 16 at 10 a.m. The system will randomly draw the winner. We will notify the winner by email and will also announce it on social media.

To enter the raffle, go to this page <https://go.rallyup.com/8a580c>



This handmade quilt is one of the many fun items that are part of the Get Cozy Raffle for the Friends of the Charlotte Library.

Courtesy photo

All proceeds will benefit the Charlotte Library. The prize will be on display at the library throughout the raffle.

Sympathy:

is extended to **Gail Knope** of Burlington who passed away November 14 at the age of 66 after battling Alzheimer's disease. She grew up in Charlotte, enjoying the

pleasures of Lake Champlain, taking care of her children, teaching preschool and caring for her own mother, Marlene Preston. The family asks that in lieu of flowers donations be made to Walk to End Alzheimers at <https://act.alz.org>.

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SHELBURNE | 985.4445
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Town

Library news



Margaret Woodruff
DIRECTOR

From Margaret Woodruff, Library Director, for the Library Staff

This time last year, our sights were set on library expansion. Library staff managed the packing of books and reworking of entrances with the promise of our new spaces as a reward for the inconvenience. We imagined turkey crafts in our new program room and book discussions in the renovated adult reading room; we never imagined the masks, plexi barriers and hand sanitizer that mark our days instead.

And, yet, despite so many plans and programs off the calendar, we at the Charlotte Library find so much to be grateful for. The good cheer and patience that library visitors bring with them when

they come in the door, the excitement that book lovers share about a new favorite waiting on the porch, the kind comments and fellow feeling that so many have communicated to us—all of these make us feel so fortunate to share our library with this community.

Certainly, we are incredibly thankful for the generosity of our fellow Charlotters in supporting the library expansion, both through the bond vote and the open-hearted donations that helped us reach the fundraising goal and ultimately this wonderful new space.

We look forward to seeing you all once we open our doors and can welcome everyone in. In the meantime, please let us know if we can make any books, activity kits or other resources available to you. On behalf of the Charlotte Library Staff, be safe and well.



From Jenny Cole, Inter-Library Loan Librarian & Local History Curator

Thanks to all! The new addition to the library provides so much good space for our work. It will be wonderful

when everyone can come in and enjoy all the library has to offer without the restrictions now in place due to the pandemic. It looks like the volunteers working on the rain garden and other plantings around the building are just about done. I can't wait to see what comes up in the spring!

From Susanna Kahn, Assistant Director & Tech Librarian

One of my favorite parts of working at the library is connecting with people of all ages. Interactions are different now, tech classes have turned into how to Zoom (on Zoom!), Coding Club requires an extra layer of screens with our now virtual meetings, and moms click mute as they tend to their little ones during Better Together Book Club discussions. While I miss in-person events, I am grateful to see so many of you on Zoom and appreciate your patience as we figure it out together!

Sports

Winter high school sports have new schedules, rules and fewer fans



Edd Merritt
CONTRIBUTOR

Julie Moore, Secretary of the state's Agency of Natural Resources, and Bob Johnson, associate executive director of the Vermont Principals' Association, said that things will happen differently this winter

with high school sports. A couple – indoor track and wrestling – won't happen at all. Basketball and hockey schedules will be limited to two games per week, and masks will be worn whenever possible. Interestingly, gymnasts will not have to wear a mask when they are competing upside down because, according to the *Free Press*, "a facial covering could affect their field of vision."

Fans in the stands of indoor events will be a scarcity, as well, as games will be played to very limited audiences.

Teams may begin practicing at the end of this month, but will not face each other in games until mid-January.

All in all, the changes appear to be made for the primary good of the athletes themselves, allowing them to gain the benefits of sporting competition without endangering themselves or others involved as spectators, coaches or trainers. Vermont schools will provide the educational credential given to sports while minimizing the threat of disease.

Youth hockey finds itself stuck in Vermont

Contrary to the practice when my sons played youth hockey and traveled throughout New York and New England, the governors of this area's states and New Jersey suspended interstate games through December 31 at least. The rule applies to public and private schools as well as youth teams and began November 14. The limitations will be re-evaluated as more data on public health becomes available.

This practice appears to test our desire that sports, like a number of other matters, be governed locally. However, thinking back

to my own history, when I played youth hockey I could not wait to ride the bus from Minnesota to Colorado, pretending my next broad tour could be the NHL – talk about traveling beyond reality.



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Charlotte Senior Center news



Carolyn Kulik
SENIOR CENTER
DIRECTOR

“Human kindness has never weakened the stamina nor softened the fiber of a free people. A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough.”

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

“We can’t help everyone, but everyone can help someone.”

~ Ronald Reagan

Treating everyone with kindness is a form of thanksgiving. And it can be great fun to perform random acts of kindness— anonymously. Give it a try!

Have you been looking in vain for the Winter Schedule insert that was supposed to be in this issue? An unexpected deadline change has moved its debut to the next issue. Fortunately, there will still be plenty of time to sign up for new courses—most of which start later in the month. You can also find the schedule posted on the Center’s website: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org.

Courses starting soon

And there is good news: The Better Balance course, generously offered by Dee Physical Therapy as a community service this fall, is continuing through the winter months. The 11 a.m. time has remained the same, but days have changed to Tuesdays and Thursdays. The two sessions, with 12 classes each, will now have a modest fee of \$45 for each series to be paid to the Senior Center. (Please see the accompanying box about how to register and pay.) If these fees present a hardship, please request an adjustment by sending an email to CSCZoom@gmavt.net. We want everyone to be able to keep themselves healthy and engaged, especially during this challenging time.

12/1 - Better Balance: Comprehensive Exercise

Tuesday & Thursday mornings, 11–11:45.

Session A: Dates: 12/1–1/14. (No class on 12/24 or 12/31.)

Session B: Dates: 1/19–2/26.

Physical therapists from Dee Physical Therapy will lead two 6-week courses designed to improve your balance and reduce fall risk. There is progressive advancement towards more complex balance exercises. Appropriate for individuals of varied balance abilities; recommendations will be made to adjust exercise difficulty. Newcomers welcome. *Fee: Each session \$45 for 12 classes. Registration required.*

Two other popular courses are returning for December and January, and they also welcome newcomers.

12/10 - Screen Writing for Fun, Part II with Mark Williams

Thursday evenings, 6:30–7:45

Dates: 12/10, 12/17, 1/7 & 1/14.

Each participant will be creating the beats or turning points in their movie’s story that propels the main character into action. Everyone’s movie is discussed supportively in class each week, and this helps to build the creative energy. *Please register by 12/08. Fee: \$58 for the 6-week series of 75-min. classes.*

12/11 - Writing Your Life Story with Laurie McMillan

Friday mornings, 11–12:30.

Dates: 12/11, 12/18, 1/8 & 1/15.

You’ve got your story to tell, but what to include and what to leave out? Explore storytelling techniques and utilize in-class exercises to help launch your own meaningful and important stories. Newcomers welcome. *Please register by 12/9. Fee: \$48 for the 4-part series of 90-min. classes.*

A brand-new course starting in mid-December will meet twice a month and aims to be supportive and informal. It is not necessary to commit to every meeting.

12/16 - Coping with Covid with Karen Chatfield

Wednesday mornings, 11–12. Dates: 12/16, 12/30, 1/13, 1/27, 2/10 & 2/24.

Join your peers to discuss coping strategies and share methods you have used to deal with life during the pandemic. This group is designed to provide connections and support as we navigate “the new normal” together.

Please note that this group is not intended to be a substitute for therapy or professional mental health treatment. *Karen Chatfield, M.A., is a trained spiritual director and energy healer with extensive experience facilitating meetings and providing training in the non-profit sector. Registration is required. No fee.*

How to Register for a Course

All courses are online—and all require registration in order to receive the invitation/link.

To register, send your name, mailing address and phone number to: CSCZoom@gmavt.net. Be sure to note the title of the course in the subject line of the email. 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 title of the course in the memo line.

- For ongoing exercise courses, please pay at the end of each month for the classes attended.

Unless otherwise stated, tally your attendance and figure \$5/class.

- For courses with limited dates, kindly pay *prior* to the start of the course. Please check the course description for the fee.

If fees present a hardship, don’t hesitate to request an adjustment by sending an email to CSCZoom@gmavt.net. We want everyone to be able to keep themselves healthy and engaged, especially during this challenging time.

Talks on Wednesdays 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.

Have to miss a talk? Visit the website to find a recording of the event. It usually stays up about two weeks, so if there is something that you would like to watch, don’t waste any time or it will soon be gone.

12/09: Wrapping Up a Good Read with Library Director Margaret Woodruff

Join us for an online, interactive show-and-tell session all about books—and just in time for the holidays. Staff from the Charlotte Library share their favorite selections for all ages. Books are available

to purchase at the Flying Pig Bookstore in Shelburne.

12/16: Curbing Across America with Norm Riggs

Come hear about Norm’s adventures in the summer of ‘64 when he was painting house numbers on curbs across the USA. “Seeing new places, meeting new people, fascinating the neighborhood kids, earning spending money for the fall. Perfect. No competition. Americans were friendly, trusting, and generous (weren’t they?). What could go wrong?”

Art Exhibits

Sadly, the Senior Center’s monthly art exhibits are suspended until February. The original **December & January Art Exhibit —Visual Dancing by Jonathan Silverman** will be rescheduled for a later date. Silverman’s exhibit will include his two- and three-dimensional artwork that ranges from landscape and abstract watercolors and pastels, to whimsical driftwood character sculptures, to functional and non-functional pottery inspired by Japanese aesthetics.

When things do open up again, remember that the Great Room, where the artwork is displayed, has plenty of room for social distancing. State guidance on gatherings is likely to change from time to time, so calling for a viewing appointment will avoid any problems.

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.

“Kindness can become its own motive. We are made kind by being kind.”

~ Eric Hoffer

Charlotte Senior Center
802-425-6345
CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org

Town

HUNTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Now I know that by today’s standards that scene would be quickly labeled inappropriate for a young man. But society hadn’t developed into the calculating, politically correct version we have accepted today. And that is what I needed at the time. It was certainly better than getting hazed in the locker room of the high school!

The next day we stood in the woods together listening for deer. The trees were bowing down to the earth begging for mercy from the heavy snow on their boughs. Rabbits peeked out of their burrows to find a world that had miraculously been altered overnight. The sun shone brightly creating pillars of light through the branches and errant flakes drifted down from the sky with rainbow-like halos surrounding them.

And I had my father to myself for the first time.

We would get together every season after that until I went away to boarding school. Eventually, I convinced my family to move to Stowe because I’d had a vision of a white-mountain nirvana. We continued to hunt together each season until the family decided to move closer to New York City, where my father’s burgeoning investment business was demanding more and more of his time.

Decades later, my father having lost every penny of his fortune, I found myself living in Vermont and he in Connecticut. I was able to lease a small and very dilapidated deer camp in Huntington. My buddies and I fixed it up with hemlock paneling, an indoor bathroom – even a hot water shower and decorated it with random furniture found along the roadsides. It was perfect. I invited my aging father to my

camp with a few of my closest friends who comprise my inner circle. We laughed, we lied, we played cards, we swore, we drank a bit and generally asserted our God-given right to misbehave a little.

My father sat in a huge blue EZ Boy chair with his feet propped up in front of the woodstove and we reminisced about how we finally found our connection all those years ago.

In the last three years of my fathers’ life, his health declined significantly and he was no longer able to make the trip north.

I drove to Connecticut to visit him in his senior home just a mile away from my youngest sister at the end of June and realized that it would likely be my goodbye. He told me that his only regret was that he didn’t leave a fortune to his kids.

I held his withering hand and told him that he had given me a gift far greater than money. He had given me a love of nature and a connection to him that only I will understand.

To all of us he was a gentleman, a wise and adventurous soul, a remarkably compassionate and kind person who possessed a spirit that always saw the best in everyone.

But to me, he possessed the character of the kind of man that I wish to be.


I held his tender hand and whispered in his ear “I will meet you at deer camp. You remember how to get there right?” He squeezed my hand and mouthed, “Yes.”

In his eyes I saw the pale, yellow light of the doorway.

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 and raises funds for Traditions Outdoor Mentoring.org, which mentors at-risk young men in outdoor pursuits.



Deer camp. This was no place for kids. This place was a bastion of manhood – the old kind. And I was welcomed in as a man. *Courtesy photo*



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FOUND on Greenbush Road in Charlotte on Nov 12th, tool box and tool/tools. If you identify it, it is yours. contact info is dleary123@yahoo.com.

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