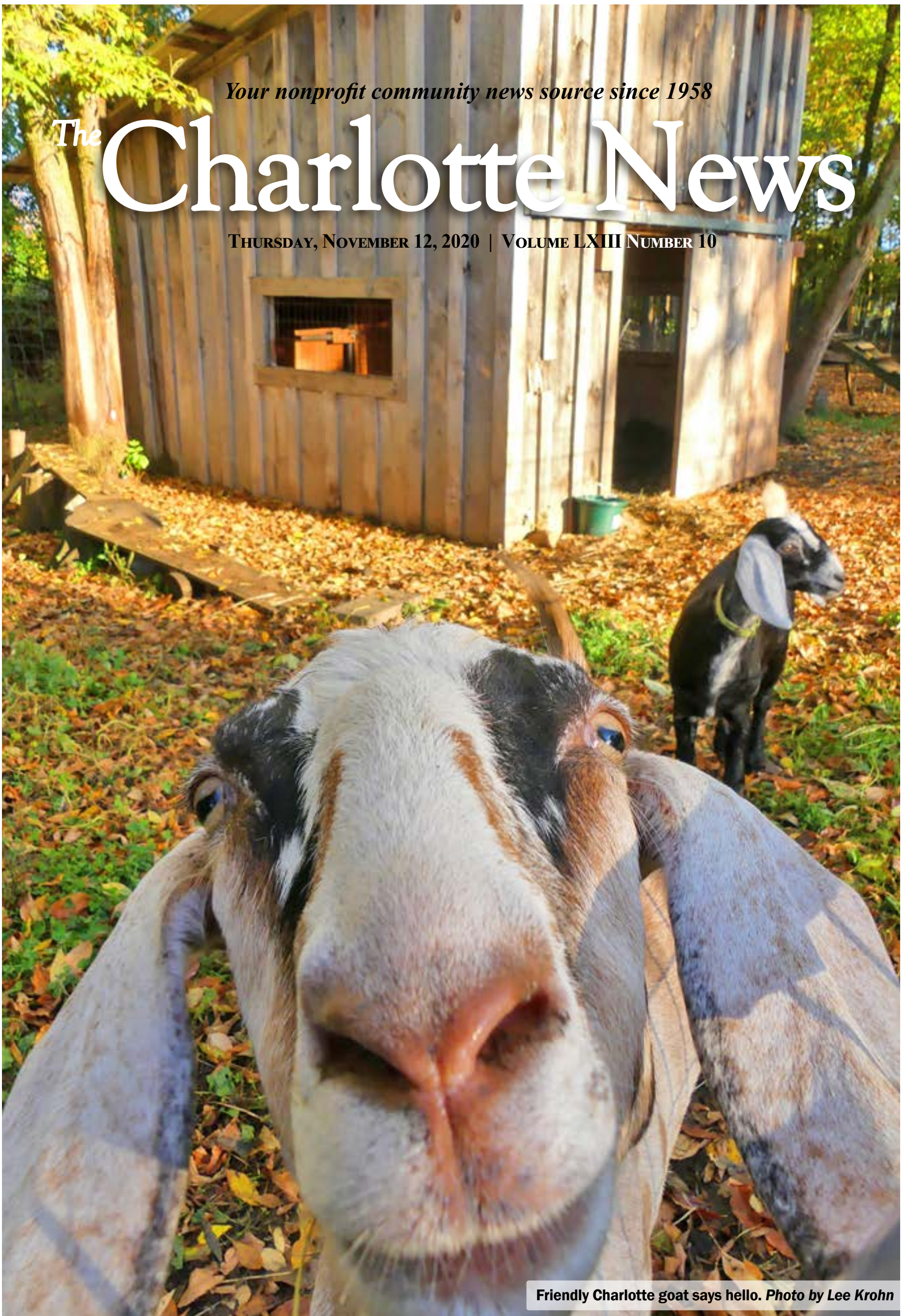


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# *The* Charlotte News

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2020 | VOLUME LXIII NUMBER 10



Friendly Charlotte goat says hello. Photo by Lee Krohn



## Redactions, Open Meeting Law violations, and Ethics and Procedures issues

Chea Waters Evans  
NEWS EDITOR

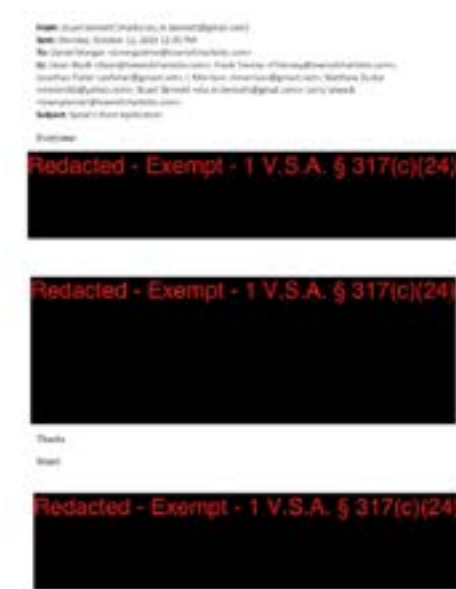
Over 1,000 pages of emails from the Charlotte Zoning Board of Adjustment included a building permit from 1976, a zoning fee schedule from 1989, and several emails in which a zoning board member referred to his colleagues on the board as the “Z Boys.” What those emails and documents didn’t contain was a discussion among ZBA members outlining a change in policy and procedure for future applicants. What they did contain were conversations that took place in advance of a warned application hearing and written statements that contradict their publicly voiced policy.

Emails and documents were obtained via two public records requests by The Charlotte News on Oct. 26 and Oct. 28. No member of the ZBA responded to repeated requests for comment or clarification over the past two weeks, with the exception of Vice Chair Stuart Bennett. On Nov. 2, Bennett wrote in an email, “As I have said before, it’s best practice for ZBA members, like a judge or jury, not to comment.”

On Oct. 26, The Charlotte News requested emails and documents from the ZBA relating to a conditional use application by Carrie Spear and Court Street Associates. The application was submitted to and approved by Zoning Administrator Daniel Morgan, who holds the sole authority in town to approve such applications.

He warned and set a hearing for the ZBA’s Oct. 14 meeting.

Spear and her project manager, Dan Goltzman, were prepared at that meeting to present their application for the addition of a deli and upstairs apartment at Spear’s property, Spear’s Store, which is on the corner of Charlotte Hinesburg Road and Spear Street in East Charlotte.



The Zoning Board of Adjustment, through the town attorney, shared over 1,000 pages of mostly redacted emails in response to two public records requests from The Charlotte News.

ZBA Chair Frank Tenney recused himself from the hearing based on his personal relationship to Spear as neighbors and the fact this his brother owns Tenney’s Snack Bar and a bottle redemption center next door to Spear’s Store. Bennett led that portion of the Oct. 14 meeting in his place.

At the start of the Spear’s application discussion, Bennett said that the board had decided

“internally” that Spear’s application was incomplete and that they had decided upon a “new way” of processing and evaluating applications before they came to the board. He ultimately made a motion that passed 3-1 to deny the application on the grounds that the application is incomplete.

Spear and Goltzman never got to present a word, despite repeatedly suggesting that should the ZBA hear their presentation, many questions on the application could be answered.

The ZBA does not have authority to decide whether or not an application is complete; that decision falls to the zoning administrator, in this case, Morgan.

Town Attorney David Rugh of Stitzel Page & Fletcher responded to The News’ public records request on behalf of Town Administrator Dean Bloch, who is the town records custodian. He redacted most of the emails, citing Vermont law protecting “records of, or internal materials prepared for, the deliberations of any public agency acting in a judicial or quasi-judicial capacity.”

From Monday, Sept. 28, to Wednesday, Sept. 30, as well as on Oct. 12, a series of emails, most of which were redacted by Rugh, were written among Morgan, Bloch and all members

SEE **ZONING** PAGE 4

## Town clerk reports record-breaking voter turnout

Chea Waters Evans  
NEWS EDITOR

Charlotters cast their ballots early and enthusiastically this year—out of 3,317 total registered voters in town, 2,920 voted in this year’s November election. Town Clerk Mary Mead and Assistant Town Clerk Sy Koerner weren’t up until all hours of the morning counting, though. Mead said they were finished by 8 p.m.

The reason for such an early night, despite so many ballots to count, is absentee and mail-in voting. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, the Vermont Secretary of State’s office mailed ballots to every registered voter in the state. At around 2:30 p.m. on Election Day, Nov. 3, Mead said she had already put 2,715 ballots through the counting machine; she started at 7 a.m. with absentee ballots, which totaled 2,606.

It took a few days for the national results to get sorted out, but Charlotte’s counts were decisive. Following are the official election night results, with the top finishers reported in each category:

### U.S. President and Vice President

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris (D): 2, 285  
Donald Trump and Mike Pence (R): 511  
Jo Jorgensen and Jeremy “Spike” Cohen: 32

Other notable vote counts were Kanye West and Michelle Tidball (I) who received 12 votes, and Howie Hawkins and Angela Walker



Town Hall was pretty quiet on Election Day this year; a high return of absentee votes meant short lines and small crowds.

Photo by Chea Waters Evans

(Green) who received 9 votes.

### Representative to Congress

Peter Welch (D): 2, 184  
Miriam Berry (R): 527

### Governor

Phil Scott (R): 1,979  
David Zuckerman (P/D): 838

### Lieutenant Governor

Molly Gray (D): 1,725

Scott Milne (R): 954  
Chris Ericson (P): 48

### State Treasurer

Beth Pearce (D): 1,807  
Carolyn Whitney Branagan (R): 645  
Alex Wright (I): 104

### Secretary of State

Jim Condos (D): 2,019  
H. Brooke Paige (R): 520

### Auditor of Accounts

Doug Hoffer (D/R): 2,166  
Chris Ericson (P): 218

### Attorney General

T. J. Donovan (D): 2,136  
H. Brooke Paige (R): 465

### State Senator, voters chose six

Thomas Chittenden (D): 1,682  
Ginny Lyons (D): 1,677  
Michael Sirotkin (D): 1,581  
Kesha Ram (D): 1,539  
Phil Baruth (D/P): 1,444  
Christopher Pearson (P/D): 1,097

### State Representative

Mike Yantachka (D): 2, 213

### High Baliff

Daniel Gamelin (D/R): 1,943

### Justice of the Peace, voters chose 12

Jill Abilock  
Greg Cluff  
Moe Harvey  
Lorna Jimerson  
Mike Krasnow  
Leo Laberge  
Patrice Machavern  
Robin Reid  
Ed Stone  
Lucas Trono  
Peter Trono  
Seth Zimmerman



# News from *The News*

Dear Reader,

I'm Claudia Marshall, the publisher of *The Charlotte News*, and by now you may have heard that we have been selected for a prestigious matching grant program that doubles your donations in November and December, even monthly donations that continue into 2021. Many people have started to take action and we are so grateful for these early gifts! Your contribution now has more impact than ever.

Like everyone, *The Charlotte News* has experienced its share of challenges in 2020. The pandemic has hurt many local businesses whose advertising provides the financial backbone of this community newspaper. And at the same time, our commitment to bringing you the news has never wavered. From the food truck furor to the community response to COVID-19 - and everything in between, we bring you the local news that matters. We are a newspaper by the people, for the people.

**Nonprofit news is accountable to the people.  
This news only survives with your support.**

That's why we're thrilled to be a part of NewsMatch\*, a national call-to-action to fund nonprofit news organizations like ours. From now through the end of December, NewsMatch will double your new monthly donation or match your one-time gift, all up to \$5,000.

This is a fantastic opportunity to maximize your investment in the reporting you rely on in 2020 and beyond. So, what do you say?

Will you support nonprofit news that's accountable to you?

Your investment in nonprofit news is an investment in you and the Charlotte community we share. Give now to double your donation. Please send a check to The Friends of The Charlotte News, P.O. Box 211, Charlotte, VT 05445 or friends@thecharlottenews.org.

With gratitude,



Claudia Marshall, Publisher

The Charlotte News

\* 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 country, with financial support from, among others, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.



Claudia Marshall  
PUBLISHER

## What's the Selectboard up to this week? A lot.

Chea Waters Evans

Per Road Commissioner Jr Lewis's request, Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow is working up a draft to put an item on the town meeting Australian ballot to make an advisory motion that Lewis is allowed to use straight salt on the roads during the winter. At the moment, that decision is up to Lewis' discretion, but he wants to make sure he has a mandate from Charlotters to do so.

Recreation Director Nicole Conley is in the process of forming a committee to start the long process of planning and developing a community center in town. The center would have meeting rooms, athletic facilities and other multi-use areas. Selectboard members agreed that Conley is moving forward with an organized and thoughtful approach and expressed their appreciation for her initiative.

The potential committee consists of all five Selectboard members, Assistant Town Clerk Sy Koerner, Recreation commissioners Julianne Phelps, Richard Ahrens and Christy Gallese. Maura Wygmans, Matt Krasnow, Lee Dore and Jim Carpenter all volunteered as interested community members with expertise in everything from architecture to pickleball. Matthew Burke from the Energy Committee, Town Planner Larry Lewack, and all members of the Planning Commission all said they would lend a hand to the project when needed. Committee members will split up into separate smaller groups like fundraising, design and community outreach.

The Selectboard and Planning Commission are not in support of a submitted petition to alter the Land Use Regulations to change the allowed locations of parking spots at commercial buildings. Peter Joslin, PC chair, said that the commission is not in favor of repealing the current regulations. He noted that he agreed with Selectboard member Carrie Spear when she said that this proposed regulation came about from one particular business and decision. The owners of the Charlotte Crossings building on Route 7 have had issues with their parking spots in the past and initiated this petition. Should the Selectboard decide not to pursue the matter further, the petitioners will have another opportunity in the future to present it to a town vote.

Because of the coronavirus, Town Meeting could be a little different in 2021; instead of one day of meetings, it might be up to three informational Zoom meetings. Instead of voting with a voice vote, which is the usual process, voting will be done by Australian ballot just for this coming year. The Selectboard is going to consult with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns to make sure they're following the laws correctly and preparing the correct warnings in a timely manner.

Vermont Community Access Media, which currently broadcasts and shares the Zoom meetings for the Selectboard, will add back in its service from pre-COVID days, when they would mix the audio and have a more professional-looking recording with better sound quality. Meetings will still take place on Zoom but will be easier to see and hear for home observers. To make the equipment safe for Selectboard members, VCAM will remove the foam microphone covers and sanitize all equipment before and after it's used in Town Hall.

Recreation Commission Chair Bill Fraser-Harris requested a vinyl liner for the town skating rink on Hinesburg Road near the school; he said with more people pursuing outdoor activities lately because of the coronavirus, the liner would extend the skating season and keep the ice colder for longer. Krasnow said he did some research into vinyl and its impact on the environment, including the carbon footprint from transportation, the effects of vinyl leaching into the ground, and the cost and impact of eventually disposing of such a liner.

Krasnow suggested filling the skating area in with limestone from Shelburne instead of a vinyl liner; he thinks the light color will provide similar light-reflecting effects on the ice to slow melting and will prevent water from absorbing into the ground when the rink is flooded in fall or melting in spring. Fraser-Harris said he is on board with this idea and will work with Krasnow to figure out the logistics; skating season is about a month away.

The board once again also discussed in executive session, for over an hour, the role of the zoning administrator in relation to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.



## 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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# Letters

## 75 New Housing Units? Concerns about the proposed East Charlotte land use changes

To the editor:

I want to thank the Planning Commission members for their time and effort building these proposed changes for the East Charlotte Village Commercial area. However, I have a difference of opinion with the commission in the interpretation of the Town Plan (pages 1.28 and 1.29) and regarding the conclusions of the 2009 East Charlotte Community Planning Workshops. My interpretation of these documents is a desired outcome of modest and site-appropriate growth which would not change the character of the village.

For this reason, I am opposed to the currently proposed East Charlotte Land Use Regulation Amendments.

First, what are the buildout numbers for the East Charlotte Commercial District with current zoning versus the buildout with the proposed land use changes? Between the Oct. 1 Zoom public hearing of the proposed land use changes and the day after the second hearing on Oct. 16, the maximum additional allowable building lots count went up from 34 to 45. Our Town Planner said it was not easy to say what the buildout would be, that there were a lot of variables to be taken into account. Understood, but it seems that after two years of working on this the Planning Commission should have an accurate high/low range for buildout.

Without knowing what the maximum possible buildout is, how could the Planning Commission and the public understand and determine the real impact of the proposed land use changes? The latest buildout analysis says *up to 75 units* (this would include affordable housing and Elder Housing bonuses).

To the best of my knowledge, no hydrology studies have been done or are proposed. We don't have any idea of the impact of that much potential sewage would have on people's wells. Is there enough ground water to supply up to 75 more wells?

Second, the idea of pumping sewage, under town roads if need be, to another site, is a dangerous planning tool. It takes away all natural limitations the land type provides to prevent excessive development. Do we know the impact on groundwater supply of putting multiple units of sewage onto one area? No studies have been done. Our Town Planner thought this tool was not widely used elsewhere in Charlotte. It was asked if sewage could then be pumped onto the common land at Sheehan Green. During the Oct. 1 Zoom hearing it was confirmed twice that

none of the proposed land use changes would affect anything at Sheehan Green. In talking with our Town Planner the answer is more ambiguous: "Yes, maybe," "I am not sure," "It depends on the Open Space Agreement for Sheehan Green."

To the best of my knowledge, no hydrology studies have been done. Will groundwater supply be easily adequate for increased demands?

Third, there is only one limited traffic study offering possible ways to slow down traffic on Spear Street. To the best of my knowledge there are no studies proposed to assess how the people from up to 75 units could be handled on Spear Street for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Sidewalks, street lights, traffic signal? Who pays for that, and is that what we want our village to become?

The 2009 East Charlotte planning workshops asked the question, "What do you want the village to look like in 20 years?" The answers on pages 16 and 17 of that Final Report overwhelmingly indicate that the residents want the village to remain much the same as it is today but allow for "...carefully planned commercial infill (a pub and/or public meeting space was suggested) and minimal residential growth." Respondents' biggest concern was overdevelopment in the village area.

Last, I don't think it is correct to use the findings of the 2009 East Charlotte Village Planning Project / Community Workshops Final Report (May 2010) in developing these proposed changes, as was suggested in the Sept. 25 letter in response to Sheehan Green. Yes, there was talk of increased housing density and affordable housing in that survey, but none of it was tempered by talk of the impact to the village or cost. In fact, participants were asked not to consider cost or impact...the organizers wanted a free flow of ideas.

The number one takeaway from this survey was that the participants didn't want the character of the village to substantially change. Overdevelopment was a major concern. How could the character of the village not change with the addition of up to 75 more units?

Using Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), could the unit density become even denser in the commercial area? Can TDRs be transferred out of the commercial district to be used elsewhere in the village?

Clark Hinsdale was quoted in *The Charlotte News*: "I just can't imagine the Planning Commission saying it is okay to kill density in the village in order to put more development in an open farm field." I don't think this is an accurate portrayal of the situation. I am not

against appropriate growth, I understand the concept of housing density in village centers, and I strongly prefer that houses don't pop up in the middle of prime agricultural fields. It is not a question of houses popping up in farmers' fields, but one of what is appropriate growth in the East Charlotte Commercial District and Village areas.

I am not against growth. I am for modest and site-appropriate growth.

I feel the proposed land use changes would give developers the tools to change unalterably the character of the village.

Again, I thank you for all the effort so far in developing proposed land use tools for East Charlotte. I encourage you to find a workable and fully supportable version.

Sincerely,  
*David Adsit, Spear Street*

## Chittenden says thank you

To Charlotte voters:

Thank you for electing me as one of your State Senators. If I did not earn your support in this election, I hope to do so in the years to come.

We are facing many new challenges in the coming legislative session. My plan is to work hard on priorities that attract opportunity, growth, investment and people to Vermont while increasing housing affordability, upgrading broadband access, improving the health of our environment and social justice issues.

My aim is to represent Charlotte in a maximally transparent and accessible manner. Please call, email, text or tweet at me.

And please write letters to the editor of this newspaper. Our community newspapers like The Charlotte News provide high quality local journalism critical to a functioning democracy, an informed electorate and vigorous public discourse. Facebook and Google are not writing articles about our local schools—this paper is. And in so doing they are strengthening our communities and keeping Vermont neighborly.

I wish everyone the very best during these

challenging times and you have my pledge to work hard for you in Montpelier.

*Thomas I. Chittenden*

## Yantachka says thank you

Dear voters of Charlotte and the southwest corner of Hinesburg,

Thank you very much for once again trusting me to represent you in the Vermont House of Representatives. I will continue to work for a clean environment, for working families and for social justice. As the new year begins, the Legislature will continue to work remotely with the possible exception of the first week. We will continue to provide the help Vermonters need to get through the pandemic, and we'll do it with a balanced budget. Hopefully, we will see additional help come from the federal government. I will continue to keep you informed about what is happening in the Legislature, and I will continue to welcome your questions and comments via email, phone calls and personal (socially distant) interactions.

Thank you again for your support and trust.

*Rep. Mike Yantachka*  
Charlotte-Hinesburg (Chit 4-1) District  
House Energy & Technology Committee  
mikeyantachka.com, (802) 233-5238



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The **Charlotte News**



# Town

## ZONING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of the ZBA, including Tenney, who had not yet recused himself from the matter. The subjects of these emails, sent during those periods by Bennett to Morgan, Town Planner Larry Lewack, Tenney and ZBA members Lane Morrison, Matt Zucker and Jonathan Fisher, were titled “Spear Application” and “Spear Store Application.” One email subject read “Re: FW: Re: Re: Spear Store Application,” which indicates that the email had been forwarded and responded to multiple times.

Rugh wrote in an email to The News, “To be clear, in the emails provided to you from September 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, the ZBA was discussing and deliberating regarding a decision on the completeness of the Spear Store application and its details, not general policy on processing applications.”

Rugh also wrote, “The deliberations of a public body acting in a quasi-judicial capacity like the Charlotte ZBA, which are often called deliberative sessions, are exempt from the notice and warning requirements of the Open Meeting Law...As a result, emails that are records of the ZBA’s deliberations do not constitute meetings.”

“A Guide to Open Meetings,” published by the Vermont Secretary of State’s office, identified deliberative sessions as such: “A public body may meet without notice or public attendance when it deliberates on its written decision as part of a quasi-judicial proceeding. A quasi-judicial proceeding is a case in which the legal rights of a party are adjudicated, conducted

so that all parties may present evidence and cross-examine witnesses and resulting in an appealable written decision.”

In this case, the ZBA had not yet met regarding the application; The Charlotte News appealed the redaction of those emails based on the fact that, if the board had not written a decision or met on the matter, the written materials relating to the application are not yet excluded from public record as part of a quasi-judiciary proceeding. Rugh responded on Nov. 9 with three emails that were previously redacted.

The ZBA’s Rules of Procedure and Ethics, which is posted on the Town of Charlotte website, in section XII, states, “Ex parte communication is prohibited...At each hearing, the Chair shall request that members disclose any ex parte communications. Board members who have received written ex parte communications shall place in the record copies of all written communications received as well as all written responses to those communications. Members shall prepare a memorandum stating the substance of all oral communications received, all responses made and the identity of each person making the ex parte communication, which shall become a part of the record of the proceedings.”

During the Oct. 14 Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting, no member of the ZBA disclosed that emails had been exchanged regarding the application prior to the hearing, nor that the application had been discussed with the zoning administrator, town administrator and town planner.

The Charlotte News also filed a public records request on Oct. 28 for emails and communications relating to the “internal” discussions re-

sulting in policy change that Bennett referenced during the Oct. 14 ZBA meeting. On Monday of this week, Nov. 11, 882 pages of emails and documents concerning this topic were shared. At press time they were still in the process of review, though some notable exchanges stood out.

One email chain of note contradicts what Bennett said during the meeting but also supports his statement that there was frustration among the board members. The emails do not, however, show a conversation that changes the way the board reviews applications, though Bennett said they had discussed and made decisions regarding that process.

Verbal and written exchanges amongst the board need to be legally warned; the “Guide to Open Meetings” says that the laws are in place to, in part, “Discuss all business and take all actions in open meeting, unless an exception in statute applies,” and “Allow members of the public to attend and participate in meetings.”

On Aug. 25 at 1:39 p.m., 30-year ZBA member Jonathan Fisher wrote to the board regarding an application that was on the next agenda, “I think there is a high degree of frustration with incomplete applications.”

At 1:56 p.m., Bennett replied to all, “I think it’s a mistake for the ZBA to change the schedule out of frustration—hold the hearing and see what’s presented and act accordingly.”

Weeks later, during the Oct. 14 meeting, Bennett said that the board had decided not to hold hearings on applications they had deemed incomplete. There was no policy discussion during a meeting or further written communication that the board agreed as a group to do so.

On July 7, an email from Bennett to the board reads, “Moving on, I think we should insist on complete applications. Table 5.1 lists the requirements. [SENTENCE REDACTED.] Daniel can decide if certain parts of the application can be dispensed with, if for example elevations/rights of way etc. are not relevant. I am going to be a stickler about this. Otherwise, we are hamstrung on approving things ‘as presented’.”

There are no other disclosed discussions or exchanges regarding the policy change in question; when the board collectively decided they were changing the way they look at applications it was not during a public meeting nor was it during an email exchange.

The Charlotte News last week also filed a complaint with the town for violating Vermont Open Meeting Law; the law states that minutes of public meetings should be posted within five days on a town or board’s website; the coronavirus pandemic caused the Vermont Secretary of State’s office to extend that period to 10 days.

On Wednesday, Nov. 4, minutes from one meeting in January 2020 were posted on the Town of Charlotte website by the ZBA. There were no minutes posted for meetings that took place Feb. 26, April 29, May 27, July 22, Aug. 12, Aug. 27, Sept. 9, Sept. 23 or Oct. 14.

By Tuesday, Nov. 10, all meeting minutes were posted on the town web site.

*Editor’s note: Zoning Board of Adjustment member Matt Zucker is married to Claudia Marshall, who is the publisher of The Charlotte News.*

# Around Town

## Congratulations:

to **John Oren** of Charlotte who was featured in an article in the Nov. 4 *Seven Days* that looked at his business of selling high-end, specialized microscopes to medical institutions, museums and research centers around the world. Oren runs his operation out of an unpretentious building at the junction of Church Hill Road and Route 7 in Charlotte. Residents may recall the building as a bingo parlor, snack bar and creemee stand, a regular stop for Little League baseball players after games. Oren sold the warehouse last year and now works from home.

John came to Vermont with his family, his father being the founder of UVM's Department of Sociology in 1958. The son lived in San Francisco during the early 1980s before returning to Charlotte midway through that decade. Originally a photographer, he became interested in microscopes that he had salvaged. Soon he became known as a repairer of previously owned scopes, which, if well refurbished, could be sold as used instruments to members of the scientific community. When sold new, the instruments were quite expensive. Although he calls his work a "specialty niche," he has enjoyed it.

Congratulations also to three Charlotte students whose poems appeared in the *Burlington Free Press*' "Young Writers Project" recently.

**Margaret Eagan's** poem titled "American?"

appeared on Oct. 30. Margaret says that, while she considers herself an American, she is not necessarily like her ancestors. She is here to learn, "not to exterminate." She says that while she is white, the color of one's skin or texture of one's hair should not be crimes. She is here for her family, and while she knows she is white, she asks readers to "believe me when I say I'm going to fight."

**Annika Gruber's** poem "Halloween night," and **Ava Rohrbaugh's** "Morning on the bus" were selected for the Nov. 6 Writers Project. Annika felt absorbed by the ominous nature of Halloween, an eerie, cold and still place, if only for a minute. She walks through a ghost town, shivering and breathing until she realizes that "Halloween has taken flight!"

Ava describes an early-morning bus ride over a dirt road with the mountains in the background. Her teeth click on the bumps. The trees appear to be paper cutouts in the early morning light. Ava sees the "yawning world through the dirt in the (bus) window."

**Sympathy:** is extended to family and friends of **James E. Mansfield** of Barre who died in an automobile accident resulting from a medical incident on Oct. 18 at the age of 54. James attended Charlotte Central School and graduated from Champlain Valley Union High School. The family asks those wishing to make donations to help his children with funeral expenses to contact his sister, Randi McCuin, in Essex at 878-7689.

# Obituary

## Catherine Turner Varney

Catherine Turner Varney, formerly of Charlotte, died peacefully with her family by her side on October 27, 2020. Born to Edith Charlotte (Merchant) and George Wilbur Coburn Turner on March 13, 1932 in New Haven, CT. The family eventually settled in Burlington, VT where Catherine Louise Turner was raised on a small farm on East Avenue.

Always learning new things, from preserving her garden produce to the gadgets of the information age, dressmaking—where she won the Vermont State 4H competition in dress design and construction and a prize trip to Chicago—caning furniture, and genealogy, Catherine was particularly interested in learning skills that are not as well known in this day and age. She graduated from Burlington High School and attended University of Vermont and Purdue University. Active in civic and community organizations over many years, she led Cub Scouts, joined the school board, and was a member of the Charlotte Congregational Church and choir, and the fraternal Order of the Eastern Star.

Catherine was married to Harry Ross Varney on August 30, 1952, beginning a union with her brother Gerald's best friend that lasted over sixty-five years. Together Catherine and Harry owned and operated dairy farms in Charlotte, where for many happy years they raised their five children. After retirement in 1980, Catherine and Harry lived in Florida during the winter months, where she enjoyed tending a vast orchid collection, was an accomplished landscape and portrait artist and became a very good golfer. They spent summers near family on Long Point in Ferrisburgh.

Catherine is survived by her four daughters: Linda (Steve) Reinhalter of North Carolina, Suzanne (Erik) Johnsrud of Utah, Dorothy (Jeff) Hill of Charlotte, and Carol Varney of Florida, and her son Robert (Donna) Varney of Jericho. She is also survived by her brother Robert (Pat) Turner, thirteen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and several cousins, nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her husband, Harry, brother Gerald Turner, and granddaughter Sara Jo Varney. An immediate private burial will take place in Bristol. Memorial contributions may be made in her name to the American Cancer Society.

## 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 20, 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



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# COVID-19

## Winter's coming. Now what?



Jim Hyde  
CONTRIBUTOR

The stress of living with the coronavirus in our midst for the last six months has been alleviated in part by the opportunity for social interactions with friends and neighbors outdoors where the risks of virus transmission are greatly diminished. But the reality for those of us living in Vermont is that with the onset of winter these encounters are less feasible.

In the past, family travel, holiday parties and indoor social activities helped us cope with the tedium of winter. Sadly, these are no longer encouraged or advised even as social interactions at work and in the classroom continue to be disrupted.

At the same time that we are being driven indoors, case numbers in the United States have exploded. Last week, and for the first time this year, over 120,000 new cases of Covid-19 were reported on a single day in the United States; Vermont has also recently experienced a surge in new cases.

Increasingly, scientists are coming to understand that the principal route of coronavirus transmission is through exhaled droplets and airborne micro-particles. This means that the risks of infection from person-to-person encounters in small indoor settings is enormous. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading infectious disease expert, put it this way:

"We're in for a whole lot of hurt...All the stars are aligned in the wrong place as you go into the fall and winter season, with people congregating at home indoors."

### So now what?

How do we address the need we all have for human contact? Are there strategies we can use that might allow for at least some form of direct social interaction?

One obvious approach is to turn to a strategy that young people and people with school-age kids have been using for a while: the pod or bubble. The idea is to form a small group of people who agree to adhere to a certain set of rules and guidelines as they get together for a shared purpose, whether childcare, socializing, card playing or studying. The concept is based on trust and a shared belief in the factors that increase the risk of contracting the virus and the behaviors that can prevent transmission: wearing a mask, physical distancing, hand and surface hygiene.

The element of trust is critical because it assures everyone in the pod that as a member you will divulge any possible exposures you may have had. It's also critical because for a pod to function, each member has to understand that their behaviors when outside of the pod have consequences that are then brought back to other members. A visit to a crowded bar by one member, for example, becomes a visit to a crowded bar by all members.

There is a lot of useful information on the internet about forming and maintaining pods. (See sidebar.) Although these suggestions about pods are principally for adults, it has been parents of school-age children and school systems that have had the most experience in forming and maintaining them.

### Things to consider before forming or joining a pod.

Pods may reduce the risk of transmission. They do NOT eliminate it. Unfortunately, there will be no risk-free options until effective controls, including a vaccine, are universally in place.

Advanced age, existing illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer, and health factors such as obesity—all are associated with higher risk of death from the virus ([cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html)). Clearly, if any of these apply to you, think long and hard before joining a pod.

Are you a threat to others by virtue of your job, recent travel to a high-risk area, volunteer work? How about a recent illness or upper respiratory infection? Do you live with someone who has either been exposed to the virus or been diagnosed with Covid-19?

Are you willing to agree to limit close contacts to a few people, say six or fewer, in order to be able to participate in face-to-face small group activities?

Are you willing to be open at all times about recent exposures or high-risk behaviors?

Are you willing to physically distance, wear a mask, and practice good hand hygiene at all times while interacting with other members of the group?

If you decide to form a group, it's also important to be clear about its purpose. Will it be purely social, for example, getting together for meals or watching movies, or will it have some other purpose such as recreation or exercise? Different activities are associated with different levels of risk.

Indoor activities with people confined to small space and with inadequate ventilation pose the greatest risk. However, these are exactly the conditions that are likely to exist here in Vermont in the winter. This means that if you are creating a pod that will function indoors, you should, at a minimum, adhere to the following guidelines:

### Pod formation resources

**Kristi McClamroch Ph.D., MPH**  
**The Essential Step-by-Step Guide to Forming a Pod during a Pandemic:**  
[elemental.medium.com/the-essential-step-by-step-guide-to-forming-a-pod-during-a-pandemic-933e5fcb18a1](https://elemental.medium.com/the-essential-step-by-step-guide-to-forming-a-pod-during-a-pandemic-933e5fcb18a1)

**Greater Good Magazine—Science-based insights for a meaningful life**  
**University of California Berkeley**  
**How to Form a Pandemic Pod:**  
[greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_to\\_form\\_a\\_pandemic\\_pod](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_form_a_pandemic_pod)

A pandemic pod could help you get through winter, experts say. Here's how to form one.

*The Washington Post:*  
[washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/pandemic-pod-winter-covid/2020/10/14/214ed65c-0d63-11eb-b1e8-16b59b92b36d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/pandemic-pod-winter-covid/2020/10/14/214ed65c-0d63-11eb-b1e8-16b59b92b36d_story.html)

**The Dos and Don'ts of 'Quarantine Pods'** *The New York Times*  
[nytimes.com/2020/06/09/parenting/coronavirus-pod-family.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/09/parenting/coronavirus-pod-family.html)

- Keep the group small. Six or fewer people is probably best.
- Require that at the outset members quarantine or have a negative PCR test before beginning to meet.
- Establish and enforce rules that each member must agree to while inside: mask wearing, distancing, hand and surface hygiene.
- Meet in the largest room in a house and make sure it is easily accessible to group members by passing through a minimal number of other rooms and spaces. All other rooms and spaces should be off limits.
- Designate one bathroom for use. Guidelines for cleaning and disinfection after use must be established and followed.
- If meals are being consumed, participants should bring their own food and utensils. Cleaning and washing up should be done when members return home.
- Require group members to keep a daily log of all encounters they may have with non-group members between pod group activities.
- Agree to keep alcohol consumption to a minimum at pod events, a behavior known to cause people to let down their guard about physical distancing and mask wearing.

Getting through this next phase of the pandemic will tax us all, but it will surely be easier if we can create small social networks that allow at least some form of face-to-face interaction with our friends and neighbors. Pods are not without risk, though if we proceed carefully, make use of materials that are available on the internet and elsewhere, and learn from the experiences of others, the benefits may well outweigh the risks.

*Jim Hyde is associate professor emeritus at the Tufts University School of Medicine. He lives in Charlotte.*

If you've had experiences setting up and maintaining covid-free pods and would like to share your stories with others, we'd love to publish them in *The Charlotte News*. Send your stories to news editor Chea Waters Evans at [chea@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:chea@thecharlottenews.org), and we'll take it from there. Thanks.

Town

Talk the talk, run the run

Chea Waters Evans

If you’re going to talk the talk, you walk the walk. Or in Dave Baird’s case, you run the run—and you keep running for 62 miles. To celebrate the end of a coronavirus-altered but still fun fall middle school cross-country season, the Charlotte Central School coach, 5th-grade teacher and athletic overachiever spent last Saturday running a mile for each member of the team. If there were a Ph.D. for perseverance, we’d be calling him Dr. Baird for sure.

Baird said he hadn’t been training but would give the long run a shot anyway. (For perspective, please keep in mind that “not training” in this case means not running 20 miles a day. This is not a couch potato we’re talking about here.) There was no doubt he’d make it. An accomplished ultramarathoner, Baird regularly tackles grueling 100-mile races and has participated in races that take 24 hours or longer.

The CCS kids run at Palmer Field in Shelburne on a route that’s about 1.8 miles. Baird added a little extra to the student course and ran 32 of those 2-mile loops over a period of 13 hours. He lined up yellow post-it notes on his break station setup to remind himself for whom he was running in his classroom. 1: Archie and Aviana, 2: Charlie and Clover, 3: Dahlia and Ethan. Baird’s wife Shannon was there for much of the day to cheer him on, help with snacks and coffee, and run a few laps with him, too. Throughout the day, cross-country team members showed up with their families to join him for a loop or two, or in some cases, a lot more.

“I got the chance to run with dozens of kids,” Baird said, “and was inspired as I watched many kids run multiple loops and explore their own personal limits. We had multiple runners who ran 12 miles, and one who ran 14. Pretty amazing and inspiring!”

It’s been a challenging year, coronavirus-wise, and everyone has had to make adjustments; the middle school cross-country team was no exception. The camaraderie and competition of regular meets was dampened a bit with spectators limited to one person per family



Left: Dave Baird was all smiles after he finished running 40 or so miles on Saturday, even though he had a lot more to go. Center: Baird’s cheer squad, wife and snack supplier Shannon was there for moral support on Saturday as Dave ran 62 miles for the CCS cross-country team. Right: The names of his students were on display for a little motivation reminder. Photos by Chea Waters Evans

and only half the team’s runners competing in each race. Since students are in school either Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Friday, meets were held in two parts with whomever was in school on Tuesday or Friday. Runners left the field as soon as they were finished, and scores were added up at the end of the week, which was a bummer for anyone who loves an award ceremony.

Along with the seemingly impossible physical optimism comes a relentless sense of mental positivity. Baird routinely says things like, “That was a good struggle!” when his students are working hard and making mistakes in math class. For him, the value comes not from the result, but from the process. He said he keeps a picture of himself at mile 99.5 in a 100-mile race behind his desk at school.

“I tell kids that I keep it up there as a reminder that things always seem really hard until you are just about finished, and then they don’t seem so hard anymore,” he said. “100 miles seems really far to go until you only have a half mile left. Having that in mind can help you face big challenges, whether those are trying to learn a new strategy in math or pushing yourself on a run at cross-country practice.”

The year-end celebration usually involves lots

of kids and lots of families, which obviously couldn’t take place year. Baird said he wanted to acknowledge his runners’ hard work and get a good long run in himself.

“I normally do two or three 100-mile races every year,” he said, “so I was sort of missing the challenge that comes with the long races. I did a race called the Great Virtual Race Across Tennessee that started in May where I ran the distance across Tennessee (1000 km, about 635 miles) in 34 days, then I started the virtual trip back to the start and hit 1000 miles in 70 days, and completed the 1,270-mile round trip across Tennessee and back in 103 days. But that was a virtual race, so I really just ran a bunch around here, and it didn’t really feel like a real race.”

Almost 1,300 miles certainly is a bunch and seems real enough. And then as he was writing an email to me about his running this summer, Baird realized that he forgot that he ran all up and down Vermont one day this summer, too.

“I did do one other fun thing that I honestly had forgotten about until I started writing this,” he wrote. “In late August a friend and I did the Vermont 5, summiting all five of Vermont’s 4,000-foot peaks in a single day, and we think we actually did it in the fastest known time (going from the trailhead to summit and back for each summit, about 8 hours 21 minutes total running/hiking time). I probably should have just been happy with that.”

To celebrate with his CCS team, though, Baird said he wanted to do what I mentioned earlier: run the run. He said he thought it was important for the kids to “see me doing a lot of the ‘push yourself mentally’ stuff I talk about at cross-country. I never had anyone inspire me that way when I was in middle school, and so part of me was thinking that if even one kid gets inspired by this to do something they normally wouldn’t, that’d be a win in my book.”

Not only was that a real race on Saturday, but Baird definitely won.



Hi, Neighbor! .....

# Megan Bookless is happy to be a farmer



Phyl Newbeck  
CONTRIBUTOR

When Megan Bookless was 14 years old, she told her parents she wanted to be a farmer. They assured her that she didn't really mean it, so she followed their advice and went to St. Michael's College, where she majored in journalism. It turns out Bookless' instincts were correct. Since April of 2018 she has been the farm manager at ShakeyGround Farm, and she swears she appreciates every part of the job.

Bookless grew up in Rhode Island, and for several summers she worked on a farm with 80 head of cattle and 20 horses. "I was mucking stalls, landscaping and throwing hay," she recalls "and I knew then that I wanted to work on a farm." After graduating from St. Mike's, Bookless spent three years in New York City before returning to Vermont and trying out jobs as an account manager and fitness instructor. "I knew that wasn't what I wanted to be doing," she said.

When City Market organized some crop mobs she joined in, including one at Adams Berry Farm when it was located in the Intervale. She also helped Jericho Settlers Farm hastily harvest potatoes before Tropical Storm Irene hit. "Whenever I had the opportunity to work on a farm, I realized that was what I wanted to be doing," she said. "I just didn't know how to go from

account managing and sales into farming. It felt a bit daunting."

Bookless' first foray into the field was doing property management for Peter Swift and Diana McCargo, Charlotte residents who now own and operate Philo Ridge Farm. "I took care of their horses, gardens and trail system," she said. "I also pitched in with the livestock before they grew to what they are today, but I wanted to be a farmer rather than a caretaker." When Bookless learned that David Beckwith was looking for a farm manager at ShakeyGround Farm she applied. "It was a huge leap of faith for both of us," she said. "It was my first full-time farming job. It was exciting and I dove right in. I am so appreciative that he took a chance on me."

Bookless admits her first year was incredibly difficult, in part because of her lack of experience with sheep. "We had sheep and



Megan Bookless, far right, here with Becca Burke and Soren, said, "I have never felt more valued or loved or supported—by sometimes complete strangers—than I have since becoming a farmer in this community."

Courtesy photo

cows and just under an acre of certified organic growing space," she said "and I took on all of that without any previous hands-on experience. It was pretty wild." When the first year was over, Bookless looked back and wondered if it could have gone worse. "I made one mistake after another," she said. "I made poor decisions and bad calls, but I had a lot of support from

other farmers, and after that season I realized I still wanted to farm even though it hadn't gone well."

Bookless is quick to praise those around her for the farm's success. "I have said many times and will continue to say," she said "that I have never felt more valued or loved or supported—by sometimes complete strangers—than I have since becoming a farmer in this community." Bookless pointed to assistance and support from Jess and Adam

of Adam's Berry Farm, Jane Engelman, the former Market Garden Manager at Philo Ridge Farm, and Tom Kenyon of Aurora Farms. "The list goes on," she said. "Being able to learn from other farmers has made me feel so much a part of the community."

Bookless has taken advantage of the expertise at University of Vermont Extension, including entomologist Cheryl Sullivan, and she credits the Farm Beginnings course she took from the Northeast Organic Farming Association with helping her gain a better understanding of farming's business side. She is also quick to praise Becca Burke, who recently joined ShakeyGround as the lead grower. "This has been a hugely successful season for us despite the challenges of COVID and losing the farmers market, which is how we made most of our money the last few seasons," Bookless said. "We were able to do better this year even without the farmers market. That has nothing to do with me, and everything to do with Becca. The farm wouldn't be what it is without her."

For Bookless, there is no turning back to her previous office life, and she credits her difficult first year with cementing the decision in her mind. "If it had gone off without a hitch, maybe I wouldn't feel so confident in my choice to be a farmer," she said. "This is what I want to do with the rest of my life."

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# Town

## Have you taken the survey? We want to hear from you.



Trina Bianchi  
CONTRIBUTOR

After months of planning, the Resilience Survey has launched, and Charlotte Community Partners wants to hear from each and every one of you. The link, if you want to take it while sitting in the comfort of your own

home, is <http://bit.ly/05445VT>. And if you don't want to type all of that, you can simply type this: [bit.ly/05445VT](http://bit.ly/05445VT). You can also click on the Charlotte Library or Town of Charlotte website and click on the link there.

If you're not into doing the survey online, no problem. There are paper copies at the following places: Charlotte Library, Spear's Corner Store, Charlotte Children's Center on Ferry Road, Charlotte Congregational Church in the breezeway, Charlotte Children's Center at the church, or at the Food Shelf. Take it home, complete it, and return it to one of the specially marked green boxes at all of the noted places.

Why are we asking you to take the time to complete this? Because we do not want to simply hear from a few folks, we want to hear from all our residents. Unless you tell us what you think about our town and what you would like to see in our town, planning the future of our town becomes a guessing game. Are we prepared for the future? What do you think? Were we prepared to deal with COVID-19? If you see areas where our town was not prepared to help you and your family during the past 8 months, this survey is where you can make your voice heard. This pandemic will not be the last crisis this town will face, so help our town learn where we fall short in being prepared.

As you take the survey, don't be dismayed if you truly don't know the answer to some

of the questions. This writer has taken the survey and was pretty surprised at just how many questions I truly had no clue about. "Don't Know" is a valid answer as it tells us that either we are not doing what needs to be done in that particular area, or what has been done has not been communicated effectively. Communication sometimes has not been given enough attention or made a priority, and that's important information for the town to know.

And maybe you're now reading this and saying, "What survey?" This survey came to the attention of some very forward-thinking folks at the library as it had been formulated in the wake of Hurricane Irene when so many Vermont towns and families sustained substantial damage from the incredible, unexpected flooding around our state. It became apparent during the aftermath of that devastation that some towns rebounded more easily and more quickly than others; it was determined that it was the result of them being more and/or better prepared for the crisis. In other words, more resilient. To study that further, the Community Resilience Organization came into being and the survey was created. To date, 10 towns in Vermont have taken the survey 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 and 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 survey is out now and will be available for you to complete until December 11.

## Residents question 23-acre solar array

Ciara McEneaney  
COMMUNITY NEWS GROUP

The Charlotte Planning Commission met on Nov. 6; one topic on the agenda was a response letter that will go out to DG Vermont Solar about its application for a 23-acre solar array project. Michael and Margaret Russell own the property at 2257 Lake Road where the solar array will be constructed; because the project is so large, it falls under the state's Public Utilities Commission's purview and does not need municipal approval to proceed.

The Pringle Solar Project was originally proposed a year ago by Morgan Kerns, Lead Project Manager for DG Vermont Solar, and states that it was "selected as part of the 2019 Standard Offer Program by the Commission after recommendation by the Standard-Offer Facilitator," as stated in a 45-day notice given to the Town of Charlotte. The 23-acre solar array will be in designated "Rural" zones.

"We stress again that it's the applicant's responsibility to communicate frequently with their neighbors and to include all neighbors in that communication group, which they clearly had not done to date," stated Larry Lewack, Charlotte town planner. Beyond this single oversight made by DG Vermont Solar, the application seems to have multiple issues that

need fixing.

These issues range from not communicating with the residents near the plot of land that will be used, not following Charlotte land use regulations and not being as thorough on the application as they should have been. Before the Planning Commission decided anything, they wanted to hear comments from the public about the changes and any concerns about the project in general.

"We're wondering about the groundwater reach relative to the panels and the increased runoff related to that and what the stormwater measures are going to be to reduce the impact of that," stated Kristen Destigter, Charlotte community member and neighbor, during the public comment forum. "And then from an environmental perspective, we believe that the panels contain cadmium and that if damaged, there could be runoff. And we're wondering what the measures would be in place to recognize damaged panels quickly and replace them."

The biggest concern with members of the public who spoke during the meeting was Vermont Solar's lack of communication with Charlotte residents during this process.



# Town

## Food Shelf News

Susan Ohanian

Although Thanksgiving and December holidays are on the horizon, we do want to note that our dedicated volunteers added Halloween festivity to the late October distribution—with a clown, a cowgirl and a boat captain working curbside and a backdrop of orange and black decorations, cobwebs, a pumpkin, and spooky eyes lighting up the entrance.

### Monetary donations

Thank you to: Carol Slesar & Stanley Rosenthal, a gift in honor of Pat Nestork's birthday!, J.A. Morrissey, Inc., Margaret Berlin, Sharon & Douglas Weaver, Hank & Josephine Kaestner, Peter & Diane Rosenfeld, Terrance Dinnan & Marty Illick, Kathleen Nolan, Alexis & Thomas Carlson, Beth & Edd Merritt.

### Appreciation for longtime contribution

Please note that Karen Doris, President of Charlotte Food Shelf Inc. Board of Directors, wrote a letter expressing great appreciation to the Charlotte Central School teachers, staff and students—in gratitude for 25 years of partnership. In this long-standing collaboration, artwork to baked goods offerings from the school have helped to make Thanksgiving and December holiday distributions unique. A special thank you to Kris Gerson for all her years of coordinating this community project. In her letter, Karen noted that because of the COVID pandemic, the Food Shelf can no longer accept the donation of food baskets, including those wonderful baked items and creative edibles. Likewise, this year we won't have the large morning gatherings where community volunteers gather to fill boxes with a great variety of foodstuffs. Instead, the Food Shelf



Caps and mittens knitted by Hilary Smith.

*Photo by Cindi Robinson*

will provide each family with a turkey provided by the Charlotte-Shelburne-Hinesburg Rotary and a Hannaford gift card for their holiday meal.

Distribution of turkeys and gift cards for each registered family to complete their Thanksgiving dinner will be on Saturday, Nov. 21, curbside, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Please note: There will be the regular Wednesday night distribution on Wednesday, Nov. 18, as well as this special Saturday distribution. There will be no distribution on Wednesday, Nov. 25, the night before Thanksgiving.

The Charlotte-Shelburne-Hinesburg Rotary, whose motto is "Service Above Self," is doing more. From now through November, they are collecting new and like-new jackets, boots, hats, mittens and gloves in both adult and children's sizes to distribute to the schools in Charlotte,

Shelburne and Hinesburg. School liaisons will distribute this clothing, making sure every child may enjoy a warm Vermont winter. Please look in your hearts and your closets and consider donating clothing or money for this effort. To donate cash at the drop-off locations, please make checks payable to "CSH Rotary Club." Drop-off locations include the Charlotte and Hinesburg libraries, the Shelburne Town Offices, Adirondack Audiology (Marsett Road and Route 7), and the law office of Richard J. Fox PLLC (181 Falls Road in Shelburne). Speaking of making sure children are outfitted for winter, take a look at the beautiful caps and mittens lovingly knitted by Hilary Smith.

Thanks to Tara Mullen and Bill Lockwood for their sumptuous gala donation of new toys to brighten children's holidays.

Backdoor Bread continues to provide top-of-the-line delicious bread. We also received lovely jars of honey from Jen Slater, many great veggies as well as toddler clothes from Tai Dinnan. Will Murphy donated eggs from his home flock, Louise McCarren has been keeping her garden going with fall veggies, and community farmer David Miskell's fresh greens continue to bring big smiles.

### Giving trees

Each child's Holiday Wish Ornament has been hung on a Giving Tree at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church or at the Charlotte Congregational Church. These ornaments went up on Sunday, Nov. 8. The wrapped gift with ornament attached should be returned to the church by Dec. 13. We send a big thank you to all who participate in this long-running children's program that brings immeasurable joy to the kids. If you have questions or need further information, please call your church office and leave a message for Giving Tree coordinators Anne Marie Andriola and Kelly Stockwell at OLMC or Kristen Nelson at CCC.

### Important notice

If a family can't get to the Food Shelf, they should call 425-3252 to arrange for food delivery. Just leave a name and number for a return call. We don't want anyone cut off from necessary basics: food, shelter, utilities or gas for their car. Our community calls out to people: Don't be reluctant to ask for a little help when you need it.

For anyone suffering economic hardship from COVID-19, look into the possibility of assistance through the Vermont Covid-19 Arrearage Assistance Program (VCAAP). This program provides eligible Vermont utility ratepayers served by a fixed-line telephone service, Vermont electric or natural gas with a grant to assist with past-due balances. For more

information, you can call your local Vermont Community Action Agency or contact the Department's Consumer Affairs and Public Information (CAPI) Division at 1-800-622-4496 or email [psd.consumer@vermont.gov](mailto:psd.consumer@vermont.gov).

The Charlotte Food Shelf is an all-volunteer organization supported by the Charlotte Congregational Church, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church and the Charlotte community. It is located in the Congregational Church vestry at 403 Church Hill Road.

It is open Wednesday evenings from 5 to 7 p.m. for curbside pickup. Delivery is also available to those sheltering in place for health reasons and to those who find themselves unable to get to the delivery night. The Food Shelf contact number is 425-3252.

Visit the website for more information on other assistance programs, such as 3 Squares VT: [charlotteucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf](http://charlotteucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf).

### Keeping safe

The Food Shelf continues to take precautions to help everyone keep safe. Anyone who has a fever or cough—or symptoms that might seem like a cold—should not come to the distributions. Also, don't come if you have been in contact with anyone who has these symptoms. Instead, call 425-3252 and leave your name and number. You will receive a call back to come up with a plan. We need to help families and volunteers stay safe.

### Financial assistance

Reminder: The Food Shelf has some funds available for emergency assistance with fuel and electric bills. Call 425-3252 if you need assistance.

For emergency food call John at 425-3130.

### Volunteers welcome

The Food Shelf welcomes volunteers to assist with:

- Food distribution
- Food shopping
- Special projects throughout the year

For information please call 425-3252.

### Donations

The Charlotte Food Shelf, Inc. is a nonprofit organization; all donations are tax deductible. Our organization is run by volunteers, so all donations made to the Food Shelf go directly for nutritious food or assistance to our neighbors in Charlotte and North Ferrisburgh. Should you wish to honor someone with a donation, a special acknowledgement will be sent to that person. Checks may be mailed to Charlotte Food Shelf, P.O. Box 83, Charlotte, VT 05445. Call the Food Shelf number (425-3252) for a recording of the distribution times.



# Out Takes

## Guns or butter?



Edd Merritt  
CONTRIBUTOR

*About the time that Daddy left to fight the big war I saw my first pistol in the general store In the general store, when I was thirteen I thought it was the finest thing I ever had seen So I asked if I could have*

*one someday when I grew up Mama dropped a dozen eggs, she really blew up She really blew up, and she didn't understand Mama said the pistol is the devil's right hand*  
**The Devil's Right Hand – Steve Earle**

Two articles in *New York Times* issues near the end of last month caught my eye. One happened to be in the sports section; the other was a column by writer Roger Cohen.

The focus of the sports article was on Alabama University football coach Nick Saban's positive test for the corona virus. However, it was the half-page picture of Saban and two policemen walking down an empty hallway, probably in a hospital, that caught my attention. What police carrying guns have to do with coaches and, in this instance, medical issues, connect only in ways that make me think we feel bound to believe games and wars are one and the same. Protect the generals, right? I wonder why we do this every time I watch a college sports event with the police covering the coaches as though there were a foreign terrorist waiting in the

stands to blow them away. My feeling, however, is that it is more an image than a reality, and it portrays where sports have gone—away from games and into war in a way we would like to remember it with soldiers in uniform on the battle field carrying out “plays” that they hope will defeat the enemy and with generals on the sidelines guarded by armed militia. Who could build a clearer image?

The other article was titled “Freedom as the Muzzle of a Glock,” written by Roger Cohen about his trip to the Shooters Grill in Rifle, Colorado. You tell me what the culture of this small burgh is based on and what symbolizes both town residents and the bar's patrons—yup, with loaded holsters. Cohen says it's about “preserving American self-reliance—the God-fearing, straight-talking and gun-toting head of the frontier.”

Of course, the author then goes on to place Rifle in the context of our current political state of affairs. He wonders why, in fact, the party of the right is called “Republican” when they do not want this country ruled as a “republic” because for most of the Grill's



Photo by Skitterphoto from pexels.com

patrons, the right to carry guns is a human right based on an individual's choice, not that of a government (a republic).

Cohen's evening in Rifle ended when a waitress at the Grill, her guns holstered, said the bar's owner wanted him out—not on any particular grounds—“She just wants you out.” Cohen, in turn, says “So much for freedom.”

Besides Rifle, Colorado, and the *New York Times* sports section, the small southwestern hill town of West Pawlet, Vermont, was found by *VT Digger* to have stashes of weapons and ammunition that a group of militia uses to carry out paramilitary-style training and “professional gun fighting.” The owner of the property calls it the Slate Ridge Center and has been using it for that purpose for the past three years, attempting to gain a permit for it as a “school.” The town denied his request, and he has not been able to obtain an Act 250 permit.

The Pawlet residents who live on land that abuts the “training” property felt they were in physical danger as they hunt in the area. They carry weapons themselves but use them for

hunting game, not for teaching basic military manners, as does the Slate Ridge Center.

The Vermont State Militia, based in White River Junction, just across the state from Pawlet, dedicates itself to “defending the Vermont Constitution, which carries a provision protecting the right to bear arms for self-defense and the state.” The Pawlet training group does not claim to be a militia, however. The owner, rather, says its mission is educational and uses its “gun range” as a part of its curriculum.

Apparently, language matters as well as weapons control.

So guns seem to be the mitigating factor for a number of foregone conclusions about elements of our culture. From my point of view, this culture has, in too many derivations, carved itself in a military pattern. Rather than enhance a gun-toter's job in the variety of ways we now do, let's look again at the Woodstock generation's plea and, maybe to the late singer John Prine who lived in Paradise, Kentucky, and would travel down the Green River near Airdrie Hill:

*Where the air smelled like snakes and we'd shoot with our pistols, But empty pop bottles was all we would kill.*

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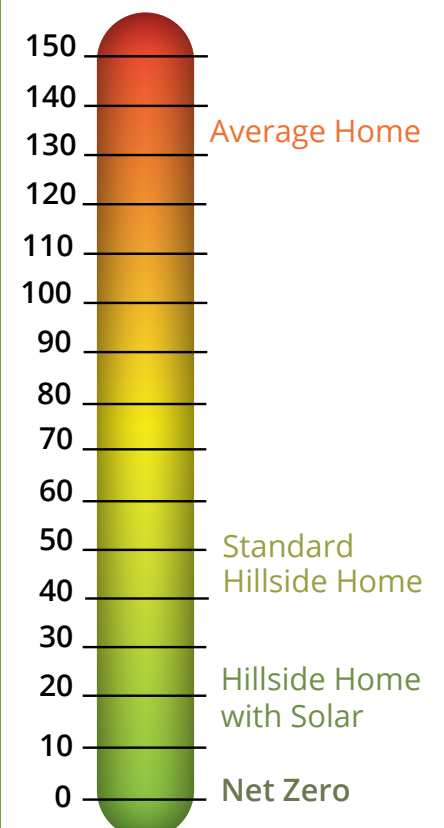
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# Sports

## Fall season rolls to an end for CVU sports



Edd Merritt  
CONTRIBUTOR

This fall's Redhawk athletes exhibited quite a mix of cheers and groans. Both soccer teams led the groans as the men lost to Essex in overtime in the Division I semi-finals and the top-ranked CVU women were upset by South Burlington with a late-game goal in the state finals to give the Wolves a 2-1 win.

The men's game was a scoreless tie at the end of regulation play, but three minutes into OT a Hornet midfielder drilled a 35-yard free kick into the CVU goal to lead third-ranked Essex over second-ranked CVU and into the championship contest against fifth-ranked Burlington. Played at Buck Hard Field in Burlington on Saturday, the Hornets lost to the Seahawks in overtime, 1-0.

The Hawks romped over Essex, 63-34 in a semifinal football game that saw three quarterbacks throw for over 600 yards with starter Max Destito hitting on 21 of 38 attempts for 359 yards and five TDs, followed by Jake Bowen (149 yards and two touchdowns) and Isaac Bergeron (seven completions, two touchdowns). Seth Boffa



Left: Josie Pecor splits the defense. Right: Charlotte Redhawk Seth Boffa brings in a pass.

and Shane Gorman caught two touchdown passes apiece. In the championship game number two-ranked Colchester squeaked by the top-ranked Redhawks by two points, 35-33.

In cross-country running, senior Caleb Nye led the CVU men's team to a second-place

finish behind U-32, and Jasmine Nails led six of her teammates to a second-place finish for women, behind Harwood Union.

And, what occurred in volleyball? Again, it was a split between men and women. The men gained the championship game by defeating South Burlington in the semi-finals

and then upset No. 1 ranked Essex for the title.

Going into a state semi-final game against No. 1-ranked Essex, the No. 4-ranked CVU women came out of it the losers.

Photos by Al Frey



# Gardening

## The Jerusalem artichoke: An unsung hero

Nadie VanZandt  
CONTRIBUTOR

In the fall of 1621, the colonists joined the Wampanoags to partake in a thanksgiving celebration of the harvest. Historians believe that they shared cabbage, carrots and parsnips from their home gardens and native plants such as walnuts, chestnuts, Concord grapes, cranberries, garlic and an unsung hero, the Jerusalem artichoke.

Contrary to its name, the Jerusalem artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosus*) did not originate in Jerusalem. Instead, it is a North American native with a captivating history.

In 1605, Native Americans introduced a root vegetable they called "sunroot" to the French explorer Samuel de Champlain. Its taste reminded him of artichokes. Champlain, in turn, sent this new vegetable to France,



The Jerusalem artichoke, a hardy herbaceous perennial native to North America, produces edible tubers that are low in carbohydrates and high in potassium and inulin. Photo by Beverly Buckley/Pixabay

where it became prized. The French named them topinambours after the Topinambà, a Brazilian tribe, which was visiting the Royal

Court around the same time that they were introduced. Later, when sunroots arrived in Italy, they were identified as girasole, or "sunflower" in Italian, due to their large yellow blooms.

A mispronunciation of the name by English speakers led to girasole becoming "Jerusalem." It was through this interesting sequence of events that this vegetable became known as the Jerusalem artichoke.

Today they are commonly referred to as sunchoke or sunroots. They are a hardy herbaceous perennial of the Asteraceae (sunflower) family with rhizomes (underground stems) that bear tubers (storage organs).

Consider growing some in your garden next year. They can be grown in U.S. Department of Agriculture plant hardiness zones 3-9 and

prefer full sun to part shade. Tubers planted in early spring through early summer yield plants that can reach 6 to 10 feet in height that will be adorned with showy yellow flowers from August to September.

They are cultivated for their edible, knobby tubers. However, due to their aggressive growth habit, they easily can overtake the home garden and should be planted in a dedicated location. You can begin harvesting tubers after the first frost up until the ground freezes. Adding a thick layer of mulch before the frost can facilitate digging and extend harvest time.

Tubers can remain in the ground through the winter for storage and harvested the following spring when the soil is easy to work. If grown

SEE **ARTICHOKE** PAGE 15

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# Town

## Library news



Margaret Woodruff  
DIRECTOR

### Community Resilience Assessment:

Join us to bring our community together! This brief and confidential assessment is ready to go and we warmly invite you to participate. You can

find paper copies at the Charlotte Town Hall, the Charlotte Library, Charlotte Children's Center, Charlotte Food Shelf and Spear's Corner Store. If you prefer, you may take the survey online using this link: <http://bit.ly/05445VT>.

**Hygge Season:** Despite the warmer temperatures earlier this week, we are in full "hygge mode" at the library. Stop in for a look at the cozy recipe kits on our Charlie Cart, pick up cozy reads and sign up for the "Get Cozy Raffle" sponsored by the Friends of the Library. The raffle centerpiece is a beautiful and comfy quilt made by Amanda Herzberger. It is surrounded by coffee 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: Nov. 13 through Dec. 15. To enter: <https://go.rallyup.com/8a580c>.

**New Books for November:** Don't miss great new tales from old favorites like Michael Connelly and Lee Child as well as new titles, including the long-awaited Janis Joplin biography and a new uplifting tale, *Miss Benson's Beetle*, by the author of *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*.

**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 Nov. 2 through Nov. 23.

### Connecting with Friends & Family Near & Far

Thursday, Nov. 12, 3:30 p.m.

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. Email us at the library to sign up!

### Soup Stories

Thursday, Nov. 19, 2 p.m.

We're heading into prime soup season! Many of us have favorites that we bring out of the recipe box at this time of year. And, this

year seems a perfect one to share them as we all anticipate spending more time around our stoves and in our homes. Since Nov. 16–19 is Agriculture Literacy Week, we invite you to share a favorite soup recipe that features the local bounty that our region offers for the soup pot! Join Ruah Swennerfelt, Karen Tuininga and Margaret Woodruff on Zoom to talk about what is wonderful about your locally-based soup, including any special stories you associate with it. Email or bring your recipe to the Library that week so we can make available to all. Please email the library at [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org) to sign up. Check out the rest of the Agricultural Literacy Week events here: <https://nofavt.org/aglitweek>. Sponsored by the Charlotte Library, Transition Town Charlotte and the Charlotte Seed Library.

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

Monday, Nov. 16, 10 a.m.

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, Nov. 17, 2 p.m.

Learn how to use Hoopla to read books, listen to books and music and watch tv shows and movies at home for free with your library card. Susanna, our tech librarian, will walk you through how to get started with Hoopla on your device.

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

Wednesday, Nov. 18, 7:30 p.m.

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*



New books arrive at The Charlotte Library.

Thursday, Nov. 19, 7:30 p.m.

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.

Please note the Charlotte Library will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday Thursday, Nov. 26 through Saturday, Nov. 28. We will re-open on Monday, Nov. 30 for modified hours and porch pickup.

### Library Hours

Monday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
(closed noon to 1 p.m. for cleaning)  
Tuesday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
(closed noon to 1 p.m. for cleaning)  
Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
(closed noon to 1 p.m. for cleaning)  
Thursday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
(closed noon to 1 p.m. for cleaning)  
Friday: CLOSED to the public,  
open for porch pickup  
Saturday: CLOSED to the public,  
open for porch pickup

### Porch Pickup Hours

Monday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Tuesday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Thursday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Friday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Saturday: 10 a.m. to noon

From Monday to Thursday, the library will be open to groups by appointment from 3 to 4 p.m. 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.

### Library Contact Information

Margaret Woodruff, Director  
Cheryl Sloan, Youth Services Librarian  
Susanna Kahn, Tech Librarian  
Phone: 802-425-3864  
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# Town

## Charlotte Senior Center news



Carolyn Kulik  
SENIOR CENTER  
DIRECTOR

“In the universe, there are things that are known, and things that are unknown, and in between them, there are doors.”

~ William Blake

The opposite of a fact is usually a falsehood, But the opposite of a great truth is very often another great truth.

~ Niels Bohr

### Coming soon

The Winter Schedule, which covers December, January and February, will be an insert in this paper on 11/25, posted on the website on 12/1, and mailed out the first week in December. Thankfully, despite the restrictions and being all online, it is still quite full. Our eight popular exercise classes will be continuing, of course, as will Spanish Conversation, French Conversation Gathering, Play Reading for Fun, and the Gents Breakfast. Add in two other courses in French, three in Italian, Writing Your Life Story, Mindfulness for Life, and Mindfulness Meditation.

New courses are Coping with COVID (a discussion group), Poetry Magic, Italian for the True Beginner, and Screenwriting. And, in case you missed it before—or want more practice—Conflict Resolution returns again.

Having a nice variety to choose from is terrific, but perhaps what is most wonderful about the courses is our instructors. They are caring and dedicated people—as well as talented and inspiring teachers who are much appreciated by their students.

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

Even though they are restricted to being online and no longer follow our fabulous lunches, the Wednesday talks continue to be well attended. You will find the Zoom invitation/link to the talks posted on the website the day before:

CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. There is no need to register.

Missed a talk? Visit the website to find the recording which usually stays up about two weeks. So, if there is something that you missed but would like to watch, don't waste any time—or it will soon be gone.

If you weren't there, yesterday's talk by Steve Gross on “Turbulence: What Can We Do About It?” might be one to visit. He works nationally with educators on this topic, but will be adapting it to the general public for CSC. This should be both interesting and timely. So check out the recording if you were not able to make it “in person.”

### Last Wednesday talk in November

#### 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 geo-political area.

### Talks in the Winter

The topics for the winter are wide ranging and just some of them are: Curbing Across America, Mystical Myanmar, Shakespeare: Myths & Mysteries, Chocolate: Techniques and Recipes, Bringing Portraits to Life, Astronomy and the Night Sky, Life in Nepal, and the artist Louise Nevelson. In January, there will also be a new update on COVID-19—which leads nicely to this next topic.

### Reminder on COVID-19

The news today is of a 90% effective vaccine and that certainly is very good. However, it will still be a while before we can afford to relax—and this is coming at a time when everyone has “pandemic



fatigue” with holidays just around the corner—and an increase in the number of cases. So, it is worth reprinting what Vermont Health Commissioner Mark Levine, M.D., conveyed in an email last month:

“As we start to head into the holiday season, I am asking us all to join together, to take a moment to re-center, to step back from pandemic fatigue and rededicate to doing everything we can to keep the virus from spreading. Think carefully about travel, and know that if you do, you will most likely have to quarantine upon your return.”

“And take a hard line if you are not feeling well. Even a headache or a runny nose—things you wouldn't think of as symptoms—could be a sign of the virus. I say this based upon our epi teams experience—multiple instances where people have continued their daily activities while symptomatic . . .

“We just need to double down on prevention, and not roll the dice on risk. Because one thing we do know is that when gambling with health the virus might really win. We have been a model for the nation, and if together we stay Vermont Strong, we can keep it that way.”

### Art exhibits

The Senior Center's monthly art exhibits are continuing, and visitors are most welcome. Bring a friend—or three. There is plenty of room for social distancing. To see an art exhibit, please schedule an appointment at least 24 hours in advance. Viewing days are Tuesdays and Thursdays 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 continues until 11/25. In the foyer is **nature Photography by James Regan**, and the Great Room has a whimsical display titled, “And Your Little Dog, too.” These are a series of small **paintings by Vivian Jordan** that are inspired by animals and nature. “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.”

The December and January Art Exhibit is “Visual Dancing”—a display of Jonathan Silverman's artwork that includes driftwood, non-functional pottery, watercolors and pastels. More on that in the next issue.

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

Be kind—it will lift 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



Town

SOLAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

“It said that we were invited to an open house, which is not true. I know this because I’m the one that invited all the neighbors to the open house. The application says that the adjoining landowners were sent a welcome package that never happened in the initial proposal,” said Clark Derber.

The 45-day notice given to the Planning Committee by DG Vermont Solar also states that the construction of this project would only take one month, but many residents said they have heard it will actually be closer to three. This notice also outlines the environmental and aesthetic impacts this project will have on the community.

“The Project will not result in undue adverse impacts to the aesthetics, scenic, and natural beauty of the area, and the Project would not violate any town or regional standards pertaining to scenic or open space resources,” states DG Vermont Solar.

The environmental impact worries many residents as well. Most of the concerns have to do with the underground powerlines that will be essential to making this project possible.

“It’s a low risk, but obviously I’d rather have zero risk than a low risk, especially considering the amount of exposure. And they’re saying that this would be where the trail, the

town trail would be on top of where these power lines are buried. And it’s like, how comfortable are people going to be using the town trail? To know that three feet under them are these high voltage lines, or not even three feet,” Derber said.

To date the only environmental impacts DG Vermont Solar has addressed are in terms of land use.

“The project will be designed to avoid/minimize impacts to Class II wetlands and corresponding wetland/riparian buffers. DG Vermont Solar plans to optimize the Project design set forth in Exhibit 1 to incorporate input from applicable state agencies,” states DG Vermont Solar.

The Planning Commission assured the public that it will be more involved in this process moving forward.

The three amendments added to the response letter to DG Vermont Solar were voted on and passed unanimously. This decision made by the Planning Commission will now be sent to the Charlotte Selectboard for review and to make any changes they see fit.

*Community News Group is made up of journalism students at the University of Vermont. They partner with local newspapers to provide quality local content and give students journalism experience.*

ARTICHOKE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

in the vegetable patch, take care to completely remove the tuberous rhizomes at the end of harvest to prevent spreading.

To harvest Jerusalem artichokes, first cut off several stems at the base of the plant with loppers. Use a shovel and dig straight down to lift a sizable clump of tubers, which look like pieces of ginger. Don’t worry about cutting tubers, as there will be plenty. They will easily come off the clump. Tubers are best fresh but can be stored for up to two weeks in a cool, dry place.

These tubers are nutritious and low in carbohydrates. They contain high levels of potassium and inulin, a starchy, soluble dietary fiber that helps maintain healthy intestinal flora and stimulates elimination. For this reason, it is recommended to eat them in small quantities.

Jerusalem artichokes have been the subject of various scientific research studies. Due to their low glycemic value and their high level of inulin, they are being studied for their health benefits in the treatment of type II diabetes and obesity. Their invasive nature and their tolerance to frost and poor soil also make them an excellent candidate as a source of biofuel such as ethanol and other chemical compounds.

Historically, Jerusalem artichokes have played an important role in hard times, notably during World War II in Europe when potatoes were in short supply. This year, consider adding a side dish of Jerusalem artichokes to your Thanksgiving table and sing praise for this vegetable.

Nadie VanZandt is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener intern.

Can we bear another winter?



This guy, spotted on a lovely fall day on Thompson’s Point, wore his mask while he was out fattening himself up for the long sleep ahead. Rumor has it many Charlotte residents are doing the same and wearing masks while they shop for large sweatpants and baking supplies to get through a long, dark, cold, quarantine part two.

Photo by Chea Waters Evans

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\$22.00 per foot

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\$22.00 per foot

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