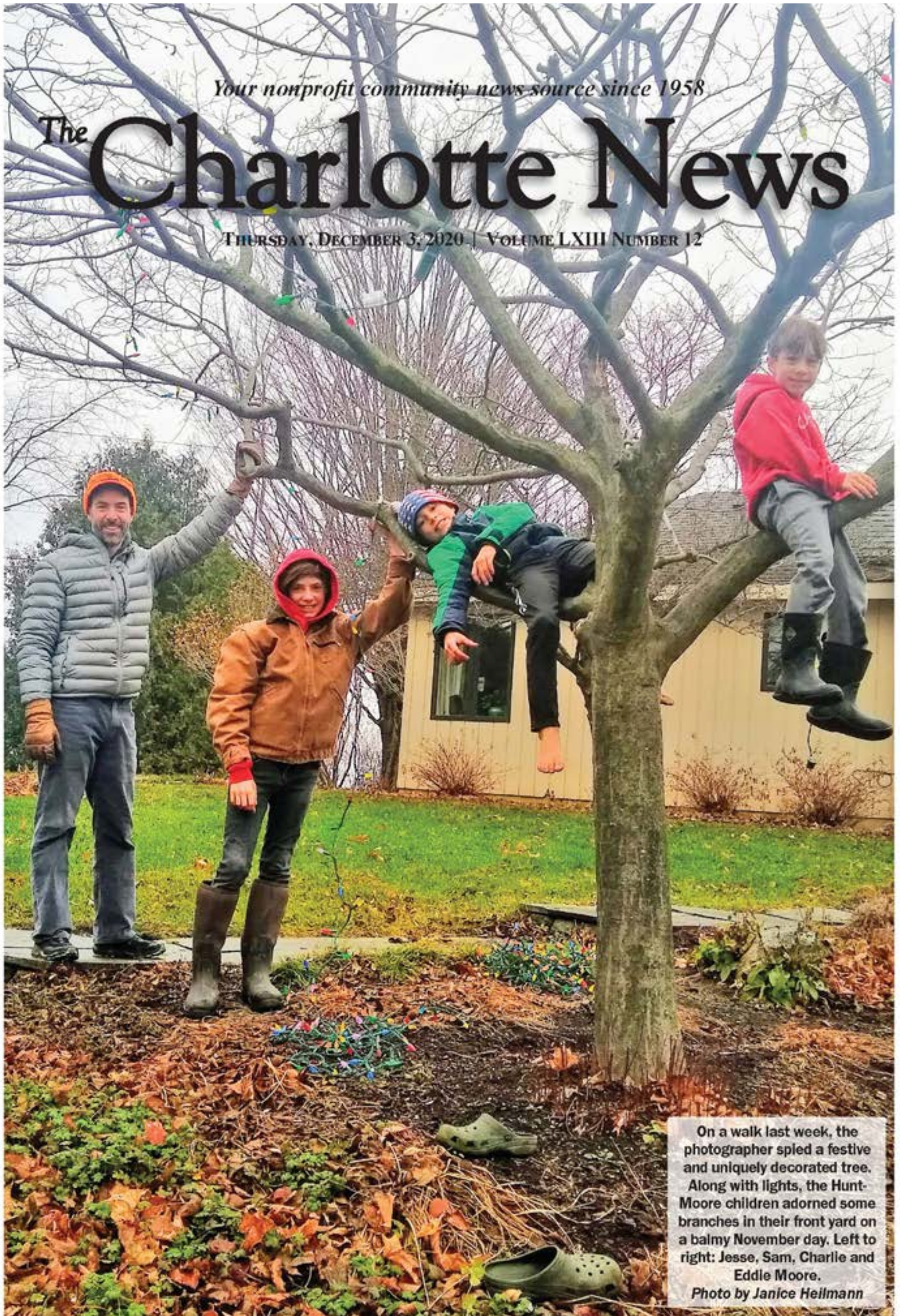


Your nonprofit community news source since 1958

The Charlotte News

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020 | VOLUME LXIII NUMBER 12



On a walk last week, the photographer spied a festive and uniquely decorated tree. Along with lights, the Hunt-Moore children adorned some branches in their front yard on a balmy November day. Left to right: Jesse, Sam, Charlie and Eddle Moore.
Photo by Janice Heilmann

Shopping with Chea: 2020 edition

Chea Waters Evans
NEWS EDITOR

There's no hustle and bustle. There's no cheek-kissing or champagne-glass-clinking or holiday parties that involve squeezing yourself into a dress that you could have sworn fit just fine a month ago. It's 2020, the year of scary infections and that terrible new phrase, social distancing, which really drove home for me how weirdly often I touch people who I don't know that well. Some say everything is the worst right now, and some say, Bring it on, I haven't worn pants in six months and I've stopped using silverware altogether. Hand eating is where it's at. Whatever your pandemic mood, though, you're going to have to buy gifts for your loved ones this year whether you leave the house or not. Here are some local options that don't involve going out into the real world outside of Charlotte.

Building Character

Father and son cabinet and furniture makers Rich and Carson Ahrens use their downtime to turn their talents toward smaller items that are well made, beautiful, and a little bit cheeky.

I know one thing for sure: Snowflake Bentley was right. You've never seen a snowflake like this f-ing snowflake. The F***flake Ornament, a steal at \$12.50, lovingly arranges the repeated full F word in all of its glory into a

snowflake shape. This carved maple ornament will be fun for early readers and those who are ready for this godforsaken year to be over. Search all you want, but nothing says 2020 more than this. Building Character also has other ornaments, more traditional but equally as thoughtfully crafted, in shapes like the classic round ornament or a regular snowflake that you don't have to take down when grandma comes over.

Here's the Christmas ornament that no one ever thought they would need, but these guys nailed it. Carefully carved in flowing script, it reads "Christmas 2020: Our first pandemic." There are some very sweet pine trees and a couple deer carved in for good measure. At only \$14 each, you can pick up one for everyone you live with, and twenty years from now when you're still not speaking to each other, you can look back fondly on these times and remember why.

If you're looking for something heftier, Building Character has a chic plaid cutting board made from Vermont maple, walnut, and cherry for \$150. It's so pretty, you might not want to cut on it and just leave it out to look like a person who owns cool stuff.

For \$165 a limited-edition snowflake-carved cribbage board of quilted red maple is gorgeous and functional. Cribbage is fun, and in



Above: If you're motivated to move, these Charlotte-made hoodies are perfect. *MoLa photos by Spencer Davis Real Estate Photography.* Top right: This clock is perfect for any Big Poppa fan. Right: Our first pandemic: the ornament you never thought you'd need. *Courtesy photos*



our family, the quarantine boredom has led us to try this and other traditional games like backgammon and poker and where in the house did mommy leave her wine glass.

From \$50 to \$65 there's also an assortment of sweet little maple valet or ring trays with

SEE **SHOPPING** PAGE 9

What's going on with the zoning administrator? Town officials won't say.

Chea Waters Evans
NEWS EDITOR

Since September of this year, town boards and committees have met and discussed personnel issues relating to Zoning Administrator Daniel Morgan and his position 13 times. These meetings included Selectboard executive sessions, including one special meeting at Selectboard member James Faulkner's home, Zoning Board of Adjustment joint meetings with the Selectboard, employment review sessions, and grievance-related sessions. Documents obtained by The Charlotte News reveal that in late September, Morgan filed a grievance against a reprimand issued by the Selectboard through his lawyer, John Franco Jr., who is an employment attorney in Burlington.

In an email, Morgan declined to comment on the matter at this time. Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow, Zoning Board of Adjustment Chair Frank Tenney, Town Administrator Dean Bloch and the remaining ZBA members Matt Zucker, Stuart Bennett, Lane Morrison and Jonathan Fisher all ignored repeated requests for comment and did not respond to questions sent via email regarding the matter.

In an Oct. 1 letter to the Selectboard, Franco requested a grievance on Morgan's behalf

relating to a written reprimand issued by the board to Morgan on Sept. 29. In the letter, he writes that the reprimand was "unlawful in several respects and must be withdrawn by the Town." He said that the Selectboard did not follow existing Town of Charlotte Personnel Policies and that Morgan was not requested at a conference with the board and was given no opportunity to attend the conference at which the Selectboard decided to issue the reprimand, and was not given the opportunity to bring someone with him to that meeting. Those procedures are all required by law through the town's personnel policy.

Franco further stated, "The grounds for disciplinary action must be violations of established Town policies and standards. As Mr. Morgan will set out in a separate document, there are no established standards that he is accused of violating...notice of such standards are required for there to be just cause to reprimand him."

Morgan holds five separate positions as part of his full-time employment with the Town: Zoning Administrator, Sewage Control Officer, Public Health Officer and E-911 coordinator, as well as clerk for the ZBA. His responsibilities as ZA, which include verifying that applications scheduled for hearings

before the ZBA are complete, are his alone, however, and are not overseen by anyone in the town offices. Bloch is Morgan's supervisor for his other duties.

Emails obtained by The Charlotte News from a public records request reveal issues between Morgan and the ZBA throughout the course of the fall since the reprimand and grievance were filed. On Oct. 1, Tenney wrote to Morgan and cc'd the board, his preferred method of Morgan communicating with staff, the ZBA and applicants. "Just trying to keep staff, the ZBA and the Applicant from getting confused, and informed," Tenney wrote.

On Oct. 15, Zucker wrote to Morgan with tips for writing clearer reports, saying that Morgan's work was "confusing."

On Friday, Oct 16, Morgan wrote to the ZBA, "It has recently been brought to my attention from the Vermont Land Use Education & Training Collaborative, as well as the Vermont League of Cities and Town's Municipal and Legal Assistance Center, that in the effort of keeping duty and authority of independent parties clear and separated, the ZA should not write the Board's decision to avoid an unhealthy mixing of roles."

Tenney responded to him, "You should

inform your Supervisor of this situation."

In an Oct. 21 email from Morgan to Bloch and Town Attorney David Rugh, Morgan writes, referring to ZBA Chair Frank Tenney, "Given the Chair of the Zoning Board is also a member of the Selectboard, and has no issue reminding me that he 'hires or fires me,' I would request any kind of clarity you could provide. Acting in good faith. I would request that Board members do the same."

Tenney did not respond to an inquiry as to whether or not he said this to Morgan.

On Oct. 26, the ZBA and the Selectboard held a joint public discussion to talk about the relationship between the ZBA and the ZA.

On Oct. 27, the grievance hearing was held. On Nov. 2, a special Selectboard meeting was held to make changes to the ZA's job description and to address possible reorganization of planning, zoning and other related positions and boards in town. This topic was also addressed at a special meeting held Nov. 12.

The Selectboard also held a special meeting in executive session on Nov. 18 to consider the filed grievance. There is no further scheduled agenda item relating to this matter at press time.

Letters to the Editor

Schools shouldn't ask kids about Thanksgiving dinner

To Whom it May Concern and May it Concern You:

I am appalled that Governor Phil Scott would even consider directing schools to ask children if they joined other households for Thanksgiving. Governor Scott is not asking parents, he is asking children to incriminate their families. He is placing the burden of the parents' decision on the children. This is precisely how Hitler gained inside household information through the Hitler Youth program and it should be clearly unacceptable in a free society, pandemic or not. While I believe the desire of the Governor is to keep the illness at bay, posting children as informers is not an option.

Imagine the embarrassment of the child who slips and says that they ate with Grandma and Grandpa. This child is now pulled from line at school to sit out for 2 weeks—yet these same grandparents have been providing child care all along, but are not “part of the household.” Imagine the fear of the kids whose parents chose to have a get-together but their ability to go to work hinges on the child lying. Do children of divorced families who have 2 households have to lie because they changed households on Thanksgiving? This is unfair to the children, creates a culture of lies, and it too closely resembles other totalitarian regime's efforts of using children to enforce the government's desires. If you want to know if parents took their children to other households for Thanksgiving, then ask the parents directly.

The logic behind this cancelled Thanksgiving assumes that Vermonters cannot assess the warnings and risks for themselves, so the government must tell us how to behave to keep us “safe.” We are told to not gather so that next year we can celebrate twice as much. However, according to the Vermont Vital Statistics Report, 6,027 Vermonters died in 2018, and 6,010 in 2017, from various causes. If we wait until next Thanksgiving, there will be another estimated 6,000 people who will not share our turkey dinner, not because of COVID but because time marches on. And now Governor Scott has decided for us that the 6,000 people who will die from non-COVID causes and will not be with us next year are less important than the 64 we

have lost to COVID. My son had COVID in March and I lost a dear step-grandfather, in a nursing home, this week to COVID. I understand the risks and loss and I am so thankful that we spent last Thanksgiving with him. Each life does matter, but Governor Scott is choosing which lives we will get to celebrate. I am a thinking woman and can decide that for myself and my children, thank you.

Lastly, let us keep perspective that, as of Nov. 17, 2020, there had been 60 COVID deaths and 60 automobile related deaths this year. This is alarming because the automobile deaths have increased significantly in a pandemic year when there should be far fewer people driving compared to last year. According to the Vermont State Police Website, “As of November 17th, there have been 60 fatalities on Vermont's roads in 2020. There were 38 at this point in 2019, and the 10-year average for this date is 54.” While our road death rates are up 22% from last year, and one might argue the epidemic proportions of this increase, no one is asking us to stop driving or asking our children if someone drove them safely to school—or to someone else's house for Thanksgiving!

Today, I am thankful for my family and for all the work our public servants have done through this crazy year. Whether I agree with their methods or not, I appreciate their time and do believe they are trying to do what is best. However, I am also thankful that I live in a country where my voice can be heard. I have the right and the responsibility to speak out and to let my elected officials know when I disagree. Today, I am finally speaking out that I have had enough, and our children are not your pawns. I hope Governor Scott will continue to guide and share good information but will let Vermonters make their own decisions and will not bring our children into this mandate.

Sincerely,

Kendra Bowen, mother of three, concerned citizen, MSPH

Zoning Board of Adjustment letter to the editor

To the editor:

As volunteer members of the Town's Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), we want to thank

everyone involved in recent dialogue around challenges with the Town's zoning process.

The challenges were detailed in the October 29th issue of The Charlotte News regarding a recent application. But it's not an isolated case; as a board we have seen frustration on all sides -- residents, Town officials, ZBA members -- in recent months in a number of proposed zoning proposals and appeals. The frustration has to do with the Town's process and clarity for residents in direction on following the process.

We're pleased the Selectboard has agreed to review our current zoning process and how it is administered in the town.

Charlotte's zoning regulations have been carried over from a major zoning initiative undertaken by the Town over a generation ago. These regulations are known as our Land Use Regulations (LURs), a 144-page document adopted by residents in March 2016 to encourage the orderly and planned development of the Town.

The ZBA's main goal is to ensure those zoning regulations are followed. However, as a board we apply those regulations with enough flexibility for requested projects that sometimes don't fit the regulations completely. That's the purpose of the ZBA: balancing those requests against the LURs.

We are fortunate to live in a town where our residents take these issues seriously, and as a board we are grateful -- as residents, neighbors, volunteer board members -- for the opportunity to help support you in your individual projects and ensure they align with the Town's goals.

We hope all town residents pay attention to zoning issues and feel free to make your voice and opinions heard to the Selectboard as they continually review Charlotte's LURs and endeavor to streamline the zoning administration process. That's our best path to keep our zoning regulations dynamic to reflect the Town's collective point of view.

In particular, we ask new residents to participate. The Town of Charlotte welcomes your input and our goal for the Town's regulations is that they represent all residents' interests.

Frank Tenney

ZBA Chair



The Charlotte News

Mission Statement

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

Editorial independence

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

Letters, Commentaries and Obituaries

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

- Letters to the editor, commentaries and obituaries should be emailed to news@thecharlottenews.org as attachments in .doc format. All letters, commentaries and obituaries must contain the writer's full name, town of residence and, for editing purposes only, phone number.
- Letters may not exceed 300 words, obituaries 500 words and commentaries 750 words.
- 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.

Publisher: Claudia Marshall
(claudia@thecharlottenews.org)

Editorial Staff

Managing Editor: Anna Cyr
(anna@thecharlottenews.org)
News Editor: Chea Waters Evans
(chea@thecharlottenews.org)
Contributing Editor: Edd Merritt
Copy editor: Beth Merritt
Proofreaders: Edd Merritt, Mike & Janet Yantackha

Business Staff

Ad manager: Elizabeth Langfeldt
(ads@thecharlottenews.org)
Bookkeeper: Susan Jones
(billing@thecharlottenews.org)

Board Members

President: Claudia Marshall
(claudia@thecharlottenews.org)
Treasurer: Ted leBlanc
(treasurer@thecharlottenews.org)
Board members: Vince Crockenberg, Bob Bloch, Gay Regan, Tom Tiller, John Quinney, Jack Fairweather, Christina Asquith, Ben Miller, Bailey Grattelo, John Hammer (emeritus)
Technical advisor: Melissa Mendelsohn, Orchard Road Computers

Website: thecharlottenews.org

Subscription Information

The Charlotte News is delivered at no cost to all Charlotte residences. Subscriptions are available for first-class delivery at \$60 per calendar year. Want a subscription? Please send a check payable to The Charlotte News, P.O. Box 251, Charlotte, VT 05445.

Postmaster/Send address changes to:

The Charlotte News
P.O. Box 251, Charlotte, VT 05445
Telephone: 425-4949
Circulation: 2,000

Copyright © 2020 The Charlotte News, Inc.
Member of the New England Newspaper and Press Association, LION Publishers and the Vermont Press Association.

School won't ask about Thanksgiving plans

Staff report

Vermont Governor Phil Scott announced last week that schools had leeway to question children regarding their Thanksgiving celebrations in an effort to prevent the spread of the coronavirus in schools. Champlain Valley School District Superintendent Elaine Pinckney send the following letter home to families at the end of the Thanksgiving week break.

November 29, 2020

Dear CVSD Families and Staff,

We hope that you have had a good week and that Thanksgiving provided time for all to ponder the many things for which we are thankful. As you know, on November 20, Governor Scott's Executive Order suspended multi-household social gatherings. The Order prohibits multiple households from participating in the same social gatherings, including group trips, gatherings, related ceremonies, holiday events, parties, celebrations, and sharing accommodations with anyone outside of your household. At a recent press conference, Scott mentioned that a significant number of positive cases can be traced back to social gatherings.

The suspension of multi-household social gatherings acts as an extension of the state's travel guidance in which the Governor asks families to quarantine if they travel out of state or attend or host a multi-household gathering. **We will not be asking students and staff this question upon their return to school.** We do, however, expect families and staff to do the right thing and keep their students home if they have not conformed with the Governor's order. **If we learn that**

your child(ren) did travel or gather with other households, we will call families to come pick them up and keep them home until their quarantine period is complete.

Thank you for being considerate of the health and safety of all members of our school community. We are doing everything we possibly can to maintain in-person instruction for as many students as possible. This can only happen if we all follow the health and safety guidance.

If you traveled or if you participated in multi-household gatherings, please keep your child(ren) home in quarantine, and let the school know what dates your student will be out of school.

If you have any questions, please contact CVSD COVID Coordinator Jocelyn Bouyea (jbouyea@cvsdvt.org) or the school nurse at your child's school. You may also post questions on the form on our Reopening Site and we will respond as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your patience as we continue to navigate these challenging times.

Elaine Pinckney
Superintendent

Know someone interesting in Charlotte?

We want to interview them and share their story.

Email
news@thecharlottenews.org

The Charlotte News



News from *The News* *Town*

Success! With your generosity, we’re getting there.

Dear Reader,

Heading into the final month of 2020, we’re reflecting on what an unprecedented and unpredictable year it has been. From the pandemic, to the election, to civil unrest and wildfires, the impacts of 2020 have been far greater than we could have ever imagined. These impacts have been felt both locally and globally, and also organizationally for us here at *The Charlotte News*. And yet, one thing is certain: your hunger for news is stronger than ever before. And your support is stronger than ever.

Before we even hit the halfway mark of our year-end fund drive, **our readers had donated more than \$10k!** We’re so very grateful. This achievement helps us continue to bring you the news of Charlotte in print and online—for free—like no one else can do. We are even eligible for a major, matching grant. **But we are not done yet.**

In an average year, this fund drive would be important to fulfilling our mission. But in 2020, it’s absolutely critical. Nonprofit news gives power to people, but power doesn’t come for free. It costs, on average, \$4,500 to produce a single issue of *The Charlotte News*, and advertising covers only part of that cost. Still, we mail a copy of each issue to every household in Charlotte—for free. That’s why we’re asking for *your* help today as we charge toward our overall goal of \$20k. Right now, every donation will be matched by our board of directors, so your donation goes twice as far. **Your donation will help ensure that we continue producing the high-quality, independent, local newspaper you’ve come to depend on—especially this year.**

**The time is now. Trusted reporting like ours has never mattered more.
Please give today to double the impact of your donation.**

Please make your check payable to Friends of the Charlotte News, P.O. Box 211, Charlotte, VT 05445 or visit friendsofthecharlottenews.org today to do your part.

With gratitude,

Claudia Marshall

Claudia Marshall, Publisher
The Charlotte News

Around Town

A Charlotte contribution to downtown Burlington
Scott Ireland, owner of S.D. Ireland Concrete Construction Company is providing the construction end of the development and property management of the downtown Burlington development project planned for inclusion in a currently vacant three-acre lot in the center of the city . His partner companies are two other locally based firms, Farrington Construction and Omega Electrical. Ireland grew up in Charlotte, attending CCS and CVU High School. His firm has been involved in Burlington projects previous to this one, having upgraded Schifilliti Field in the New North End and Calahan Park in the South End. One of his most notable and memorable activities is the annual St. Patrick’s Day concrete mixer parade.

Congratulations:
to Charlotte’s contribution to recent Young Writers Project pieces published in the *Burlington Free Press*. The November 20 issue contained a poem by **Ava Rohrbaugh** titled “Rook.” The rook has eyes for the writer in the woods. Climbing up a tree, the bark starts

to crumble and he begins to fall. The author catches him and carries him to a stump where she notices a “single inky tear leaks down his beak.”

November 27 Young Writers Project carried a poem by **Kate Brennan Keech** titled “They say.” What is emotion the author asks. She likes to think it means feelings such as “joy love and pain.” Others, however, tell her that emotion is a weakness, and they say one should hide them. She, though, stops listening to what others say and closes her poem with a suggestion that you do too.

Sympathy:
is extended to family and friends of **Edward Haggerty** who died on October 26 in Bridgeport, Connecticut at the age of 87. Edward was engaged as a Public Relations Specialist and Advertising Executive. Having spent most of his life in the metropolitan New York area, he built a house in Weybridge, VT after retiring and later moved to the Lodge at Otter Creek in Middlebury. His surviving family includes his daughter Elizabeth Beldock and her husband Gregg of Charlotte.

Helping HANDS offer holiday meals



For the 17th year, Helping and Nurturing Diverse Seniors is helping to provide a delivered hot meal on Christmas Day for older adults. “Just like everyone else, we’ve had to shift gears this year because of COVID,” said HANDS Executive Director Megan Humphrey. “We can’t have a gathering so we’re expecting to deliver at least 850 meals and giftbags around the county,” she continued.

To reserve a free hot meal (ham dinner or vegetarian lasagna) delivered to anyone 50 years and older on Christmas Day in Chittenden County, please call Age Well at 865-0360 from Nov. 30 to Dec. 18. From Dec. 19-23, please call Megan Humphrey at 864-7528 or email handsvt@gmail.com. For more information or to donate, please check <https://handsvt.org>.

The project is a collaboration that includes support from Age Well, Burlington School Food Project, HANDS, Penny Cluse Café, Temple Sinai and many other generous people and businesses.



Have a hot news tip?

Call us:
425-4949
or email us at:
news@TheCharlotteNews.org

The **Charlotte News**

Town

Charlotte Holiday Lights Roll: Light up the darkest days with your neighbors

Chea Waters Evans

First, I got a text from my friend and colleague Elizabeth Langfeldt floating the idea of organizing some kind of Charlotte holiday light tour. The next day, I got a text from my friend Carrie Spear suggesting the same thing. A few days later, Governor Phil Scott suggested all of Vermont deck the heck out of their halls. And then my friend Kendra Bowen emailed me asking how we could organize a Charlotte version together. Clearly, the spirit is in the air this year, and an idea was born: the Charlotte Holiday Lights Roll.

It's easy to participate.

Step One: Decorate your house, or ask to borrow your friend's house, or collaborate with a neighbor, and make it nice for the holidays. You can go full Griswold and bedazzle until the circuits blow, or you can do a nice tasteful ribbon on a lamp post and call it a night.

Step Two: Get online and add your address to the Charlotte Holiday Lights Roll list. This community document is easy to navigate even if you're not the most computer savvy. Just go to the Charlotte Holiday Lights Roll Facebook page for the link to the Google map, or go to this web site (it's long but it's worth it): [google.com/maps/d/u/1/edit?mid=1IW_fg6h6gnQSGIwqgAR0nvRSJisKu1qM&usp=sharing](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/1/edit?mid=1IW_fg6h6gnQSGIwqgAR0nvRSJisKu1qM&usp=sharing). You can also access this article on The Charlotte News's web site and click through there.

You can add your address whenever you're ready, check back to see who else is on the list, and drive around and look at all the pretty festive houses when you're in the mood. (I noticed that a lot of families have already gone over the top this year, and it's not even a week after Thanksgiving!)

Step Three (optional): On Monday, Dec. 21, the shortest and darkest day of the year, let's bring some light to the darkness. Leave baskets of



Charlotte holiday trees are beautiful every year, like this one at the Nurczynski's house on Guinea Road. The goal for this year is to kick things up a notch all over town.

Photo by Chea Waters Evans

candy canes at the end of your driveway, dress up and act out a human creche, (at your own risk) stand on your roof dressed like Santa, or sing carols. When you figure out what you want to do that night, if anything, add that to your Google map listing. From 6 to 8 p.m. on Dec. 21, dress in your pajamas, put the kids in theirs, crank up the heat in your car, bring cocoa to go, and drive around the route laid out on the Google map.

This is all voluntary, of course, and you can participate a little or a lot—all that matters is that we're together, even if we're just driving by and waving in the dark on a night full of light.

Sports Report

Many Redhawks make Metro Division All-State field hockey team



Edd Merritt
CONTRIBUTOR

CVU placed ten players and a coach on the Division I level Metro All-State field hockey teams for the 2020 season. First off was the team's head coach, Tucker Pierson who earned Coach of the Year designation, leading the third-ranked Hawks to a close second-place finish to Bellows Falls in the state tournament. Lena Ashooh, Hailey Chase and Sophia Stevens earned first-team; Paige Comeau, Tess Everett and Mankenzie Marcus earned second-team; Madison Peet, Sidney Peet, Ellie Ramirez-Richer and Marina Schmidt gained honorable mention.

All-state, all-league soccer teams have familiar players

Following their pattern in other spring sports, the men's and women's Redhawk soccer teams received the accolades of coaches who named five players to the Division I all-state team: Catherine Gilwee, Jess Klein, Olivia Morton, Josie Pecor and Olivia Zubarik. Josie received "Player-of-the-Year" award and Stan Williams was named "Coach-of-the-Year."

CVU placed ten players and a coach on the Division I level Metro All-State field hockey teams for the 2020 season. First off was the team's head coach, Tucker Pierson who earned Coach of the Year designation, leading the third-ranked Hawks to a close second-place finish to Bellows Falls in the state tournament. Lena Ashooh, Hailey Chase and Sophia Stevens earned first-team; Paige Comeau, Tess Everett and Mankenzie Marcus earned second-team; Madison Peet, Sidney Peet, Ellie Ramirez-Richer and Marina Schmidt gained honorable mention.

The same five players earned Metro Division all-star status.

CVU all-staters on the men's side of the fence

The coaches voted three Redhawk men to their all-state roster: Holden Batchelder, Henry Bijur and Chance Therrien, with again those three making the Metro Division all-stars.

Winter high school sports schedules will be reviewed weekly

Governor Phil Scott announced recently that winter schedules for high school sports should be delayed due to coronavirus conditions in the state. He was quoted in the *Free Press* as saying, "Like recreational sports, (school sports) are paused until further notice. We will review it again each week." Hockey and basketball will not see any basic changes to the sport, such as happened in football with seven-man touch, but the winter games will be reviewed for their COVID safety practices such as space on the benches and the impact of a weekly two-game schedule. Indoor track and wrestling will not happen this winter because of the indoor confinement and the physical contact of these sports.

Town

Annual CCS PTO Holiday Craft Fair is virtual this year

Chea Waters Evans

Close your eyes, and imagine you're in the Charlotte Central School MPR. Tables are set up by local artisans and entrepreneurs selling everything from calendars to face lotion to knitwear to Christmas ornaments. Now open your eyes and realize you can't go there this year, but you can still get the same cool stuff, with the added bonus of being able to shop in your pajamas. The CCS PTO Holiday Craft Fair is all online this year from Dec. 10 to Dec. 13.

PTO President Jen Novak said that like much of 2020, it's not what they planned for, but it's going to be a success nonetheless. "Because of COVID, it's particularly important to support small business and shopping local this year," she said. "We are happy to give vendors a space to share their stuff, and we're really appreciative that in turn they're giving back and supporting the PTO." All vendors will donate a portion of their proceeds to the CCS PTO.

So far the online craft fair and holiday market includes jewelry, art, makeup and skincare products, kids' clothing, home goods, photographs, holiday crafts, knitwear, calendars and books, and food and beverage items; this includes local favorites Yerbar



Marcia Vogler's original bird collages, blank cards and blank card sets will be for sale at the CCS PTO virtual craft fair.

Master Tonic, Ellie Parr jewelry, Rodan and Fields, Beautycounter, and Sweet Bug boutique.

Anyone interested in selling their goods at the virtual craft fair can email ccspto@cvsdvt.org for information about how to participate.

To shop, follow the CCS PTO on Facebook; there's an event page there that will guide you on how to shop.

For vendors who don't ship or people who are in a hurry to get their loot, the PTO is organizing a block of time at school when vendors will drop off items in advance of the holidays so shoppers can pick up their goodies.

Charlotte Farm Study goes out to farmers

Kate Lampton
CHARLOTTE LAND TRUST

The story has been told more and more often as the years go by: dairy farms are closing across the state at a rapid rate, and Charlotte dairy farms are no exception. There are still almost three dozen farms in town, and though most aren't dairy-focused any longer, farming is still a vital part of the town's character and economy. The Charlotte Land Trust is working with the University of Vermont's Center for Rural Studies to conduct a Charlotte Farm Study in order to understand the current state of farming in town and to look through a conservation lens to identify challenges and opportunities in the future.

Charlotte has long been defined in large part by its farms and farmland. However, consistent with national and statewide trends, Charlotte dairy farms, for many years the predominant form of agriculture in town, are declining. A preliminary list of the estimated 34 farms now in Charlotte shows that agriculture in town is diversifying and becoming more innovative, but there is no recent study to confirm and describe those changes.

Support for land conservation has been strong in Charlotte for many years. Since 1992, the town's Conservation Fund has provided grants for purchase of conservation easements, and through that conservation has also played a major role in promoting the local and regional agriculture economy. The Charlotte Farm Study will provide useful information to quantify the impact of the fund on farming in Charlotte.

The Charlotte Land Trust was founded in

1986 and has worked to conserve the best of Charlotte's agricultural, natural and scenic resources. From our earliest years, farmland has been a focus. As the nature of farming has changed, our farm conservation projects have become more varied. CLT recognizes that a more thorough understanding of Charlotte's farms, as well as the associated regional market and support network, will help to inform CLT conservation priorities and efforts going forward and to promote the viability of local farm operations into the future.

In the first phase of the study, the Center for Rural Studies conducted background research on Charlotte and regional agriculture. The second phase, collecting farm operations data, will consist of a survey, focus groups and individual interviews. CRS has just distributed the survey to farms for which we have contact information. We are also encouraging farmers in Charlotte who have not received a survey to go to the CLT website at charlottelandtrust.org and click on the survey link to access it.

This winter CRS will conduct focus group discussions and interviews with individual farmers to delve deeper into topics such as community connections, collaborations with other farms, farm viability and the strengths and opportunities for agriculture in Charlotte. The focus groups, interviews and survey will provide a thorough look at the state of farming in Charlotte.

The Charlotte Farm Study will conclude in Spring 2021. If possible, CLT will host a presentation of the results at a meeting open to the public.

Obituary

Elaine (Laberge) Place

Elaine L. Place, 83, loving wife, mother and grandmother, died peacefully at home on Nov. 20, 2020, surrounded by her family after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease.

Elaine is survived by her husband, Hilton F. Place, their children, Louise and Bill Gregorek, Suzanne and Jim Sitek, Lynn and Leigh, Jr. Lacaillade, Michael and Mary Place, and Allison Place Adams; her grandchildren, Kari, Heather, Eric, Veronica, Evan, Chad, Victoria, Sarah, Valerie, Amanda, Rachel, Brittany, Matthew, John, Julia; and 14 great-grandchildren. Also surviving are Elaine's siblings, Albert and Donna Laberge, Jeanne and Norman Leduc, Paul and Diane Laberge, Maurice and Mindy Laberge, Lucille and Art Desilets, Peter and Lori Laberge, Gerald Laberge, Amie Laberge, Mark and Terri Laberge, Denis Laberge, and sister-in-law Judy Laberge, as well as many cousins, nieces, nephews and friends. She was predeceased by her brother Louis Laberge and sister-in-law Yvonne Laberge.

Elaine, the oldest of 12 children, was born in Burlington to Raymond and Marie (Aube) Laberge. She grew up on the family farm in Charlotte. She graduated from Mt. St. Mary's Academy and attended Becker College in Worcester, MA.

Elaine's family was her pride and joy. Each of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as her nieces and nephews held a special place in her heart.

Shortly after entering college, she met the love of her life, Hilton, while working at a summer home at Thompson's Point in 1956. They were married soon thereafter in Charlotte and lived in Hinesburg where they raised their family.

Elaine started her career in bookkeeping with McGraw Edison in Burlington and continued working at several local companies including the Hinesburg Town Clerk's Office and Ethan Allen Furniture, as well as her husband's excavating business. She was also a seamstress for many years at College Formals and Bridal Lane.

Mom enjoyed sewing, cake decorating, reading, crafting, crossword puzzles, and cooking. She baked and decorated wedding cakes for each of her children and was famous for the diaper bags she made for expectant mothers, as well as for her



Elaine (Laberge) Place

homemade cheese ball and caramel for the holidays. Whenever something needed hemming or patching, Mom was there to fix it. She provided rides to or from school to many of her grandchildren and was always available without hesitation whenever she was called upon. She was affectionately known as "Grandma Next Door" by many.

To celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary, Mom and Dad went on an Alaskan cruise, a trip they thoroughly enjoyed and shared many memories of with family and friends.

From planning and cooking family meals, making birthdays special for every member of the family, and decorating for the holidays, Mom was the glue that tied our family together.

We would like to extend special thanks to "Mum's" caregivers, Holly, Gloria, and Susan, among others. Your loving care of our mother during the past year did not go unnoticed and was so appreciated. Special thanks also to the Newport Ambulance crew for transporting Mom home to be with her family during her final hours.

Due to COVID restrictions, a memorial service will be held at a later date. An announcement will appear in the *Burlington Free Press*.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations in Elaine's memory to the Hinesburg Fireman's Association, P.O. Box 12, Hinesburg, VT 05461 to benefit the new Hinesburg Ambulance Service.

Town

Another Grange milestone reached



Mike Walker
CONTRIBUTOR

The Charlotte Grange Hall marked its 150th anniversary this year. Of course, no celebrations were possible, as the Hall has been closed since March. The last event held was a popular afternoon concert featuring a group of young musicians taught by Pete Sutherland and Oliver Scanlon.

Now the venue for occasional discussion groups, movies and a regular music series, the little white Hall on Spear Street just south of the Hinesburg Road intersection (and part of the Baptist Corners Historic District) started life as a "Lyceum" built by the Charlotte Young Men's Literary Club.

The 19th Century Lyceum movement was an early form of organized adult education, led by voluntary local associations that gave people an opportunity to hear debates and lectures on topics of current interest. It was extremely popular, and in its heyday numbered over 3,000 local Lyceums. In Charlotte this use was short-lived, as the Literary Club didn't own the land, and so it began service as one of Charlotte's schoolhouses—known as The Lyceum School—until Charlotte Central School was built in 1949. Despite being a very active organization in the town since 1908, the Charlotte Grange had a series of temporary homes for its first 50 years until it moved into the Hall in 1958.

Despite having no formal celebration for the anniversary, much has been accomplished. This summer saw the complete refurbishment of the large windows on the first floor, funded in part with Vermont Historic Preservation Grant Program Funds along with generous donations from Charlotte community members. Grange member and treasurer Trina Bianchi, along with members Jim Donovan and Margaret Woodruff, have been instrumental in seeking and obtaining funding and managing this process and deserve the community's wholehearted thanks for their work. Slater Construction managed the work, and Brian Slater and David Owen did the painting.

And earlier in the year the Grange hosted the Window Dressers project. This Maine-based



Over the course of its 150 years, the Grange Hall has hosted many a memorable Charlotte event.

Photos by Meg Berlin

project was brought to the town by Transition Town Charlotte, and over the space of three days, volunteer Window Dressers made 68 insulating window inserts for ten homes along with six inserts for the Grange's large windows.

We have also secured a 1772 Foundation Grant from the Preservation Trust of Vermont for repainting the remaining three sides of the Hall, and work is slated to begin in 2021. (The south side was already tackled in 2019, with associated earth work carried out by Ward Preston in 2020.) The grant will match the funds we raise toward this project—our next goal is to raise \$20k to carry out this work! To help us achieve this, a new body has been set up. Reflecting the history of the Hall, the Friends of the Lyceum Schoolhouse (which has applied for 501(c)(3) status) has the single purpose of raising and disbursing funds for the maintenance and restoration of the building.

We have great hopes that the new organization will be able to build on the past fundraising success and garner further support from organizations and individuals alike for this often-overlooked historic building and help keep it as a community resource for the future.

Donations can be sent to Friends of the Lyceum Schoolhouse Ltd., P.O. Box 54, Charlotte, VT 05445.

Hi, Neighbor!

Sara Nelson: Finding her artistic passion



Phyl Newbeck
CONTRIBUTOR

Sara Nelson hoped 2020 would be her breakout year. She was making jewelry as a side business, and in 2019 she left the corporate world to make it a full-time occupation. She was booked at trade shows in New York, Atlanta and Florida, but then COVID struck and the shows were cancelled. Nevertheless, Nelson is confident that Elli Parr Jewelry business will survive the pandemic.

“As a kid I was very artistic,” Nelson recalls. “I painted with acrylics, made pottery, and then dabbled in interior design projects in high school and college.” Nelson wasn’t sure what career path to take so she majored in business management. “I didn’t know what I wanted to do,” she said “so I went to work for a global marketing company. The company was great, and it was a wonderful pay check and stability, but it wasn’t the path I wanted.”

After the birth of her first daughter in 2014, Nelson began to embark on creative projects. “I fell into jewelry making,” she said “because it didn’t take that much space and I could pick it up in my free time. It soon became apparent that it was my passion and I wanted to do more.” In 2016, Nelson began Sara Marie Jewelry as a side busi-

ness. She stayed at the corporate job after the birth of her second daughter in 2017. “I thought I had to,” she said, “but by 2019 I felt like I wasn’t being present in anything because I was pulled in different directions. My priority was being a good mom, but I also wanted to do something I loved, and I decided to see how this would unfold.”

What started as a hobby has taken on a life of its own. “I learned by reading books, searching on-line and experimenting with different metals,” Nelson said. “It was a creative outlet.” Initially, she thought friends and family were just being supportive when they requested her pieces. But when they began purchasing jewelry for others, she realized she might have a viable business. “It just grew organically,” she said. These days, roughly three-fourths of her business is local, but she has customers across New England. “Every once in a while,” she said “I’ll get an order from Hawaii or California.”

In 2019, Nelson took a leap of faith and left her corporate position, renaming her company Elli Parr Jewelry. The name comes from her childhood home on Elliot Street and her current one on Partridge Lane. Nelson’s initial projects were beaded bracelets. “I made them one at a time,” she said “and I still do that today. It’s time consuming, but those are the pieces that are closest to my heart.” Although she describes bracelets

as the “bread and butter” of her business, Nelson also handcrafts earrings, necklaces and rings. “My jewelry is a middle market between fashion and fine,” she said. “I use ethically sourced semi-precious stones and fine metals.”

Nelson’s favorite stones are labradorite, black onyx and rainbow moonstone. “They are the most versatile and also the most popular,” she said. In the summer she works with brighter stones like turquoise. Initially, all her sales were via her website, but she has branched out into retail stores like Jess Boutique, Mendy’s, Mysa, and Green Envy in Stowe. After years of making everything at home, she opened a small studio in January. Although it’s more workshop than retail space, she does have some open hours and sees people by appointment.

A lot of Nelson’s inspiration comes from the drawings of her three- and six-year-old daughters. She will soon have additional stimulation since she is close to the due date for her third child. “Vermont has also been a massive inspiration to me,” she said. “We’re outside all the time in nature and I’m inspired by flowers and trees, not by the latest trend.”

Things will be a little different this year, but they are still good. “I was looking forward to getting to know people who



Sara Nelson has always been creative, but found her calling in jewelry making.
Courtesy photo

have been my customers for years,” Nelson said, “but that dream was shattered.” Still, she is confident she will continue to find ways to introduce others to her wearable art. “I’m hopeful,” she said. “I have faith in the brand. There were definitely some roadblocks this year, but we are all healthy, and that’s what matters the most.”

Town

Selectboard roundup: New canine control officer, progress on West Village Wastewater

Chea Waters Evans

Selectboard and all other town board and committee meetings will be held on Zoom indefinitely due to the Vermont state directive that persons from different households not gather together in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Charlotte Selectboard meetings are available to stream or watch any time after at www.vermontcam.org; meeting sections

are marked on the recording to make it easy to watch only the parts of the meeting that are of interest to you.

Canine Control Officer

Dale Knowles, local business owner and Charlotte resident, was approved at the Nov. 30 Selectboard meeting as the new canine control officer; the previous officer is moving. One priority for the Selectboard for the new CCO is the ability to give extra

attention to the Thompson's Point area when seasonal residents are in town—controversy continued throughout this summer over leash laws and poop pickup. Knowles said that he has the availability to patrol that area regularly, which Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow said he thought would greatly improve the problem of out-of-control canines and owners who are less than diligent about waste pickup.

West Village Wastewater

During work sessions over the course of two meetings on Nov. 23 and Nov. 30, West Charlotte Village Wastewater Committee Chair Dave Marshall outlined the recommendations the committee developed regarding potential private use of the municipal wastewater system. The issue came about initially because the Charlotte Family Health Center is interested in building a facility nearby that would need to use the town's wastewater capacity since there is none on the property where they would construct their new building.

Among the many details that emerged over the course of his presentation, Marshall pointed out that a main priority for the committee was that any potential use of the system would not cost the town or taxpayers any money, and that enough capacity was reserved for potential future projects, such as a recreation center, which would need to use town septic.

Marshall also address potential connection and usage and how they would be calculated and applied. The discussion will continue for another hour on Dec. 7.

Budgets

Town entities continued to present their preliminary FY21-22 budgets to the Selectboard with the understanding in mind that due to economic uncertainties relating to the coronavirus pandemic, the board suggested lowering expenses town-wide for the coming fiscal year.

During the Nov. 23 and Nov. 30 meetings, the Selectboard heard from Charlotte Little League, the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge Oversight Committee, Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service, the Energy Committee, Lewis Creek Association, the Conservation Commission, Town Constable Josh Flore, the Cemetery Commission, and the Trails Committee.

After they receive all the budget requests, the Selectboard will tally up the total amount requested across all departments and figure out from that point what, if anything, will need an adjustment.

Two facts of note to come out of the budget presentations: Constable Flore has only one item in his budget—the Halloween floodlights on Ferry and Greenbush Roads. Of his own design, he does not accept any payment from the town for his services as constable.

Jim Laberge, the newest member of the Cemetery Commission, presented their budget. He said he has limited experience with technology but extensive experience working with cemetery stones, which he said need constant care. He once worked on the gravestone of Winston Churchill's grandfather in southern Vermont.

On the rocks



In early November, the lake isn't frozen yet, but it sure looks like it's on its way.

Photo by Quinn Sunderland

The Charlotte News Seeks an Advertising Manager

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

Responsibilities:

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

Requirements:

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

Compensation:

- Part time position, compensation negotiable.

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

To Advertise in
The Charlotte News
 Contact ads@TheCharlotteNews.org

Town

SHOPPING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

details from purple hart and walnut.

They also make a carved maple Biggie Smalls portrait clock for \$95 that'll just hypnotize you. It's amazing.

Their web site is www.buildingcharacter.vt.com, and Rich said that if you enter the promo code LOCALYOKEL when you check out, you'll get free local delivery.

MoLa Hoods

I heard a really strange rumor earlier this year that there are people who are still exercising right now, and that they are going outdoors. I didn't even realize that people were getting up off their couches at this point, but if you're one of them, you're going to need the second most popular garment of 2020 (after the sweatpant, of course): the hoodie. MoLa Hoods, which is located in Charlotte and owned by Caroline Patterson, makes hoodies that are colorful, comfortable, and made for motion. (It's disappointing to hear that they're not specifically designed for lying around watching *The Undoing*, but I guess that's what bathrobes are for.)

Patterson made the most of her time at home this spring and said that during "COVID craziness" she decided to use her extra hours and her government stimulus check to start her own business, which, in retrospect, is something a lot of us could have done. Regrets. She created the hoodies for motion—they're lightweight (only 12.5 ounces each!) and moisture wicking for comfort and cuteness without dampness.

MoLa Hoods are available online at [lahoods.com and are shipped out of Charlotte so shouldn't take too long to arrive. Patterson suggests checking out the sizing chart and taking measurements for the best fit. All hoodies are handmade and sell from \\$69 to \\$74 and come in really cute bright colors.](http://www.mo-</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=)

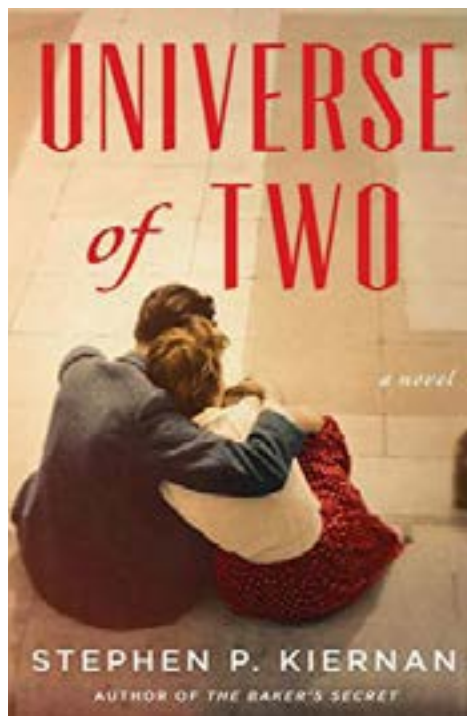
Other fun things

Charlotte novelist Stephen Kiernan has a new book out this year, "**Universe of Two**," signed copies of which are available at The Flying Pig in Shelburne. The work is a fictionalized account of mathematician Charlie Fish, who worked on the Manhattan Project. Deciding whether or not to eat the last cookie in the box or save it for your children is one kind of moral dilemma; pondering your role as the person who creates the detonator for an atomic bomb is another.

Artist **Katherine Carleton** paints birds, flowers, leaves, mermaids, fairies, and other flights of fancy. She varies in style from realistic to whimsical and her work can be purchased as prints or cards. Check it out at www.katherine-carletonartstudio.com.

The Yerbary Master Tonic is a fire cider with an apple cider vinegar base that promotes healing, health, detox, cleansing, and energizing. The company is based in Charlotte and owned by Michaela Grubbs. During the course of my research, I wondered, "Can I mix this into alcohol?" To be honest, I wonder this any time I come across any new liquid of any kind, so imagine my delight when yerbary.com suggested mixing it with a hot toddy, a margarita, or a bloody mary.

There's more to come in our next issue; if you have suggestions for fun cool stuff made in or



Top Right: Seriously, 2020, what the f?

Right: This plaid cutting board is perfect for a Vermont kitchen.

Courtesy photos

for sale in Charlotte, email me at chea@thecharlottenews.org.



Have you completed the resilience survey?



Trina Bianchi
CONTRIBUTOR

The Community Resilience Survey is out there, and we hope that you have either completed it already or are ready to take a few minutes to do it now. You can access it from your home computer at this link: tools.gocros.org/charlotte. A link is also available on the Town of Charlotte and Charlotte Library websites.

If you would rather do it on paper, you can pick up a paper copy at the library, at Spear's Store, Town Hall, Charlotte Children's Center, Charlotte Congregational Church or at the Charlotte Food Shelf. Green boxes are available at each location to return the survey.

Are you not sure why it's important for you to do this? You can watch a short video about it: youtu.be/CILFslzPZSg. This video link is also on the Charlotte Library website.

If you have questions about the survey or if you would like some assistance in completing the survey, there are two scheduled Q & A sessions:

Wednesday, Dec. 9, 6–7 p.m. (hosted by Kevin Goldenbogen)

Thursday, Dec. 10, 10–11 a.m. (hosted by Mike Yantachka)

Zoom login information is the same for both sessions noted:

us02web.zoom.us/j/86584571730?pwd=V29UNWdKK1FzSU00a3JjZklkdHo4UT09
Meeting ID: 865 8457 1730
Passcode: 925288

Charlotte Community Partners, consisting of folks coming from various organizations in town, decided to take up the mission to evaluate community preparedness,

emergency readiness and resilience as a way to learn whether or not our town is ready, in various areas, to handle a crisis in the future.

The assessment looks at areas that are critical to each and every one of us: availability of food and housing; the environment; roads and bridges; natural resources; availability of health services; land use; emergency services and shelters; internet/broadband service; community connections and more. You will be asked to rate how you feel Charlotte ranks with the option to say you don't know.

The assessment is available until Dec. 11, giving everyone ample opportunity to complete it. All paper assessments will be co-mingled and there is zero identifying information on the assessment, making your responses to the questions totally anonymous.

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

As for resources available now:

Food and meals

Available to Charlotte school age kids: The school lunch program continues whether your students are in school or learning from home. Access the website cvsvdt.org, click on "District Resources," click on "Menus" or call Scott Wagner at 802-871-6198.

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

Emotional and mental health

Vermont 211: available for referrals and questions.

Pathways Vermont: 888-888-2557 is free and available 24/7 to call or text. Talk with a peer who has dealt with mental health issues in the past.

NFI Vermont: access through nfvrmont.org. Serves Vermont families whose children are struggling with emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges.

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

Financial assistance

Emergency financial assistance is available through the Food Shelf, Charlotte Congregational Church and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Requests can be made by calling

425-3252 or 425-3130.

Department of Health information

Stay abreast of the ongoing COVID-19 news in Vermont. Check on what is open, travel regulations and where to get a test if you need one: healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19.

Know someone interesting in Charlotte?
We want to interview them and share their story.
Email news@thecharlottenews.org
The **Charlotte News**

KLC
KILEY LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION

Full Service Landscape Installation

Stone Work—
Walls, Steps, Walks & Patios

Plantings

Tree Spade

Excavation—
Ponds, Waterlines,
Grading, Land Clearing,
Mini-Excavation on Call

Est. 1993
Deedle Kiley • 425-2882

Amaryllis: A gift that keeps on giving

Nadie VanZandt

Amaryllis, a popular holiday plant, is cherished for its showy flowers in hues ranging from stark white to dazzling red. This species was discovered in 1828 by a German botanist in Chile and classified as *Hippeastrum*, a genus of the *Amaryllidaceae* family. Growers hybridized them over the years into more than 300 cultivars.

As natives of South America, these perennial herbaceous bulbs thrive in a warm and humid environment. Although they bloom in spring in their natural habitat, in our northern climate, amaryllis bulbs are grown as indoor plants, offering welcome cheer during the dreary days of winter.

With the holidays fast approaching, many of us may have received or even purchased an amaryllis as a gift. But did you know that you don't need to throw out the plant when it stops flowering?

Your amaryllis will bloom in the next few weeks and grace your home with its spectacular blooms for several days. Watching the flowers emerge and the petals unfold is fascinating.

But don't discard the plant when its last petals wither and fall. This stunning specimen deserves another chance at showcasing its lasting beauty. Like most perennials, it can reward you for many years to come with proper care and attention.

The leaves of the amaryllis play an important role in generating food for its storage organ, its bulb. So, once the



Amaryllis, with its stunning, trumpet-shaped flowers, is a popular indoor plant that will brighten any home for the holidays. Photo by Nadie VanZandt

flowers have faded, the plant needs time to rebuild its energy.

Cutting the flower stalk at the top of the bulb after it turns yellow expedites this process. It ensures that the plant does not spend its energy developing seeds.

With the flowers removed, your job is to help the plant grow leaves. These tall, thick and glossy leaves make the amaryllis an attractive houseplant even without flowers.

First, ensure that your pot has a drainage hole. You may need to repot the plant if it does not.

Place the potted bulb indoors in a sunny location that gets at least four hours of sunlight daily. A window with southern exposure is ideal.

When the top inch of soil is dry, water to keep the soil slightly moist, taking care not to wet the crown. In addition, you will need to fertilize your plant twice a month with a general-purpose indoor plant fertilizer.

In the spring after the danger of frost has passed, move your amaryllis outside, taking time to slowly acclimate it to a location in full sun. Start by placing the

bulb in a shady spot, gradually increasing its exposure to more sunlight each day for a week. Continue to water and fertilize.

Next—and this is critical to reblooming—give your amaryllis a period of dormancy. To do this, you will need to stop watering and feeding it in late summer. Once the leaves have withered and died, you can cut them off.

Move your potted amaryllis (or just the bare-root bulb) to a cool, dark location away from freezing temperatures for 8 to 10 weeks. Leave it until you are ready for another show.

To break its dormancy period, place in a sunny, indoor location and begin watering again to encourage your plant to repeat its growth cycle and bloom again.

Members of the *Amaryllidaceae* family are not only stunning but are widely used for their medicinal benefits. According to scientists, their leaves and bulb contain an alkaloid, a chemical known to exhibit antitumoral, antiviral, antiparasitic and other healing properties.

As a note of caution to pet owners, ingesting amaryllis leaves may cause your pet to have mild indigestion. Nibbling on the bulb may have more severe consequences.

This winter, why not save your amaryllis to rebloom next year? With little effort, you will get much reward.

Nadie VanZandt is a UVM Extension master gardener intern.

Local Junior League reaches 450,000-diaper milestone

Staff report

The Junior League of Champlain Valley distributed its Diaper Bank's 450,000th diaper to partner agencies statewide this week, and raised just over \$5,800 in its JLCV Community Challenge in this week alone.

In fall 2018, the JLCV established Chittenden County's first Diaper Bank and began distributing diapers on a bi-monthly basis to local food shelves in Chittenden, Franklin, and Grand Isle Counties from its South Burlington headquarters. In 2019, the Diaper Bank became Vermont's first National Diaper Bank Network affiliate and fulfilled its goal to distribute 100,000 diapers annually.

Since March 2020 and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Diaper Bank has more than quadrupled its annual distributions with 450,000 diapers (and counting) and increased its distribution footprint to 13 of the state's 14 counties. The Diaper Bank has been able to meet this need thanks in part to \$50,000 in CARESAct funding from the state.

"We are thrilled that as a 100% volunteer-based organization, the JLCV has been able to provide an essential service like diapers during these challenging times"

said Amanda Herzberger, chair of the JLCV Diaper Bank. Before COVID-19, 1 in 3 U.S. families struggled with diaper need. Now that many parents can't go to work or school, and in many cases earn an income, there is increased demand for diapers across the state.

It can cost approximately \$75 per month to diaper a child, and no state or federal subsidy program currently allocates dollars specifically for the purchase of diapers. In fact, many programs prohibit spending money on diapers. Without diapers, infants and toddlers cannot attend childcare or participate in early childhood education. Without childcare, parents cannot go to work or school. "We are grateful to our lead donors BARE Medical Spa + Laser Center and Heritage Toyota for collectively pledging \$1,500 toward our goal, and the many individuals and businesses who have already responded to this Community Challenge. It is truly remarkable how Vermonters can come together in times of need, and diaper need is no exception," Herzberger said.

The JLCV has begun working with agencies across the state, as well as legislative partners, to devise a sustainable long-term solution to diaper need in Vermont so no parent should have to delay a diaper change for want of a clean diaper.

Into The Woods

The benefits of diversity

Ethan Tapper
CONTRIBUTOR

I often talk about encouraging diversity in our forests. The reaction of most people is that they want their forest to be diverse, but they might not know what that actually means or why it's important.

In an ecological context, *diversity* means several different things. The term is usually used to describe *species diversity*, the number of different species of trees in a forest. In this sense, a forest with a lot of different species of trees is very diverse.

A lesser-known type of diversity is *structural diversity*, which I think of as the way that the forest is growing. Structural diversity can be defined as the arrangement of different ages and sizes of trees in a forest; a forest with patches of young trees, old trees and middle-aged trees—and all ages and sizes of trees growing together—is structurally diverse.

Structural diversity can also refer to the presence of different types of dead trees—dead-standing trees (snags) and dead wood on the forest floor of all different shapes and sizes. While it may seem counter-intuitive, dead wood in the forest is incredibly important (arguably as important as living trees) for a ton of different ecological functions. These range from providing habitat for everything from birds and mammals to the tiny bugs and fungi that make our forests work, to influencing forest hydrology and forming rich soils for future generations of trees.

Readers of this column know that I advocate for both species diversity and structural



Photo by thiago japyassu from Pexels

diversity constantly. I do this because diversity supports everything that we want to manage forests for. Diverse forests store more carbon, and we expect them to be better suited to a changing climate. They provide habitat for a wide range of Vermont's wildlife. Studying old growth forests also shows us that species and structural diversity are important parts of how forests naturally grow and develop, which we want to emulate in any management that we do.

Think about the importance of diversity as a forest having more tools in its toolkit. Forests with a lot of species and structural diversity are more *resilient*—able to remain healthy and productive amidst great stress and change—and *adaptive*—able to respond differently to the varied forms that disturbance and stressors take. Diversity protects forests from stressors that target

a single species of tree—like the emerald ash borer—or a single size of tree—like a windstorm that wipes out a forest's overstory but leaves the understory intact. These qualities are important to any forest, but are especially crucial in a changing climate, when we expect natural disturbances to increase in intensity and frequency and for climatic changes to impact different tree species differently.

We want to cultivate diversity both within our forests and across the landscape. When managing for diverse forests, most people encourage *Alpha diversity*, the sheer number of different species and conditions in their forest. Looking solely at Alpha diversity, edges—where forests meet non-forested areas—are some of our most diverse habitats, used by huge numbers of tree, plant and animal species.

If you managed a forest for maximum Alpha diversity by creating a ton of edges, you would help some wildlife species but neglect those that need something different, like wildlife that require large, unbroken forest blocks. You might create great foraging habitat for a species, but nowhere for them to breed, nest, or rear their young. You would also be encouraging a habitat type that we already have in abundance—as our landscape becomes more developed and fragmented, there are plenty of edges and comparatively little unbroken interior forest. For these reasons, in addition to Alpha diversity you should consider *Beta Diversity*—the uniqueness of a site. While a forest or habitat may not support a lot of different species, it might provide something unique—a critical habitat for a few species—and so be worth protecting.

When species diversity, structural diversity, Alpha diversity and Beta diversity combine, they form complex, resilient and ecologically functional landscapes. These are landscapes that are *beautiful*—supporting our quality of life and the character of our communities, *functional*—providing clean air, clean water, and many other benefits that make our world work, and *productive*—producing local renewable resources and other economic and cultural opportunities like forest-based recreation—into the indefinite future.

Ethan Tapper is the Chittenden County Forester for the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. He can be reached at his office at 111 West Street, Essex Junction, at (802)-585-9099, or at ethan.tapper@vermont.gov.

Caught in the act of making things pretty



Beth and Ted Roberts were discovered cleaning up the garden area around the monument outside the Old Brick Store on the corner of Greenbush and Ferry Roads last week. Ted is the magician who regularly transforms the center of that intersection into beautiful expressions of color and theme depending on the season.

Photo by Chea Waters Evans

Charlotte Crossings moves forward with new site plan

Chea Waters Evans

Charlotte Crossings was back in front of the Planning Commission on Nov. 19 for a site plan review/amendment for the property on Route 7 south of the Ferry Road intersection. Property owners Mike Dunbar and Debra Kassabian, through their business Gemini Properties, LLC, have been trying for months to create an acceptable parking lot for the building.

Kassabian and Dunbar have maintained throughout their process that some parking for the building needs to be in the front, on the Route 7-facing side, in order to comply with American with Disabilities Act requirements. Current Charlotte Land Use Regulations prohibit road-facing parking lots in the interest of maintaining a rural aesthetic. Kassabian and Dunbar currently have a petition in front of the Selectboard to amend those regulations; both the Planning Commission and the Selectboard have expressed reluctance to continue that petition to a town meeting vote but no final decision has yet been made on the matter.

The PC appearance on Nov. 19 covered fencing around a dumpster and utility area, landscaping and landscape lighting, sign location, parking lot expansion, ADA parking, and stormwater runoff. Dunbar

said all current site plan amendments were made to comply with current LURs.

In his staff report written prior to the meeting, Town Planner Larry Lewack wrote, "Zoning Board of Adjustment Chair Frank Tenney has advised this week that he believes the relocated placement of the business sign and relocation of the walk-in cooler to the outdoor patio are in violation of the conditions for their CU approval ZBA-17-172-CU. I do not concur and believe the table of tenant uses provided by the applicant satisfies the remaining CU conditions as enumerated therein. Zoning Administrator Daniel Morgan concurs with that view.

The sign location was grandfathered in, Dunbar said, and was approved in the early 1990s. PC member Charlie Pugh said during the meeting that the sign is not where it was originally placed on the site plan.

Dunbar said he will address any concerns remaining from the PC and Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services' requirements for an impervious area in the front of the building which would allow emergency services to access the building easily.

Kassabian and Dunbar will present their final site plan at a future PC meeting.

Town

Just in time for the holidays, it's *Once Upon a Winter Day*

A Q&A with local illustrator and author Liza Woodruff

Her children's book just came out to starred reviews, and her clever, sweet characters and pictures appeal just as much to older readers as young ones. *Once Upon a Winter Day* illustrator and author Liza Woodruff gives us a peek into what it's like to create a book for kids.

When you're writing a book, do you come up with a story first or your illustration ideas first?

I have worked as an illustrator for 24 years compared to my 5 years writing picture books. Since writing is still the hard part for me, I always start with the story. I write and rewrite until the manuscript works. When the story is mostly complete, I start sketching. At that point, I can go back and forth, adjusting the images and text until they work well together.

What do you do when you get stuck in your writing? Is there such a thing as an illustrator's block and what do you do about that, too?

I have found that what most often gets my writing unblocked is more writing. I just need to keep working. Sometimes, when I'm stuck on dialog or plot, I read what I have written right before going on a walk. While walking, my mind wanders, often solving the problem by the time I get home.

Illustrators block is a bit different. I have creative dry spells at times. I find sometimes that working with a new medium can be helpful. Without the skills acquired from regular practice, I can let go of my expectations and work more experimentally. I get a lot of new ideas this way.

Do you test-drive your books with kids before you send them off to your agent/publisher?

Sometimes I do, but more often I test them out on my writer friends and my family. Multiple readers can give me insight into things I have



missed or mistakes I have made. I like to have things pretty polished by the time I send my work to my agent. I need to convince her that what I am working on will be worth sharing with an editor.

What are your inspirations for your work—seems like our beautiful Vermont outdoors might have a hand? How did you come upon the idea for *Once Upon a Winter Day*?

I am always inspired by our beautiful landscape and the wildlife here in Vermont. As for what inspired *Once Upon a Winter Day*, there was a program at Charlotte Central School when our kids were little called Four Winds. I volunteered with other parents to learn and then teach science units to the kids. Two units that particularly interested me were about deer and animal tracks. These lessons inspired me to look closely at the stories found in the snow. Now, I always look for tracks while I'm outside and wonder what has happened before I arrived.

Do you do a lot of snacking while you're working and if so, what snacks?

I do lots of snacking. Sometimes it's because I am hungry and sometimes I am just procrastinating. I snack on anything from popcorn to cookies to fruits and veggies.

People frequently say things like, "I could write a children's book, it seems pretty



Charlotte author and illustrator (you might also recognize her from *The Flying Pig*) Liza Woodruff wrote and drew a lovely new book for kids.

Courtesy photos

easy," and I know this is the opposite of true. What are some of the challenges of this work?

I think people think that with the low word count of a picture book and the young audience, writing a picture book should be easy. The thing is, all the elements of longer stories must go into a picture book in fewer words. Plot, tension, conflict, character development, resolution. . . all these things need to be present in a successful picture book.

In addition to the task of writing a concise book, children's book authors need to come up with original and interesting stories. Children are smart and discriminating. It can be tempting for an author to write didactic stories, but kids can sniff out tales laced with moral lessons. Because their lives are filled with instruction coming from adults, those stories don't appeal much. They prefer relatable stories that provide escape, comfort, a view into other experiences or a reflection of their own.

What are your favorite children's books?

I have so many favorite children's books, but here are a few: *Harry the Dirty Dog*, *Officer Buckle and Gloria*, *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*, and *George and Martha*.

What do you do when you're not working?

When not working, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. I love to be outdoors, hiking, biking, skiing, sailing or walking my dogs, and, of course, I love to read.

What are you working on now, if you're okay to share that? Right now, I am working on a story about a vernal pool told from the perspective of a wood frog tadpole.

What books do you like to read for fun?

I love to read all kinds of books, but generally I read adult fiction with some middle grade and young adult books mixed in. My favorite book of 2020 is *Deacon King Kong*.

What do you think about when you think about connecting with kids through your work—what are the elements of story and drawing that help you make that connection?

I try to remember how it felt to be a child.

For example, I remember being too small to help, but really wanting to, or trying to communicate something that felt really important to me but being dismissed because I was just a kid. Since these themes are universal to most children, they are a good way to connect.

I also remember the books that my children loved. They poured over illustrations with lots of details and subplots (remember Richard Scarry's Goldbug?). Before they are able to read independently, kids love to enjoy books through these kinds of details.

I think about all these things when I am coming up with my own stories.

SUPPORT LOCAL

AS VERMONTERS WE KNOW HOW
TO SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY.

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON
STAY LOCAL
AND SHOP LOCAL.

NOW IS THE TIME TO HELP
OUR NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS,
AND LOCAL BUSINESSES.

The Facts

BUYING AT LOCALLY-OWNED
BUSINESSES KEEPS
MONEY CLOSE TO HOME.



For every
\$1 SPENT
at local
business,

67¢
in reinvested
locally

For every
\$1 SPENT
at an online
retailer, only

6¢
in reinvested
locally

SPENDING LOCALLY **MORE THAN
DOUBLES THE VALUE** IN YOUR
COMMUNITY FROM \$200 TO \$500!

IF 10% OF THE FOOD PURCHASED
IN VERMONT WAS LOCALLY
PRODUCED, IT WOULD MEAN

**\$300
MILLION**

IN THE VERMONT ECONOMY
CREATING JOBS, SUPPORTING
FAMILY FARMS, AND MAKING
LOCAL FOOD ACCESSIBLE TO
MORE VERMONTERS.

SHOP LOCAL

Sponsored by:

POMERLEAU
— REAL ESTATE —



Town Food Shelf news

Susan Ohanian

VERY IMPORTANT: Note the new time. Starting Dec. 2, the Food Shelf will be open every Wednesday from **4–6 p.m.** This new time will allow for some daylight.

Note: If severe weather prevents Wednesday distribution, this distribution will take place on Thursday, 4–6 p.m.

Whenever you need to add a little sunshine to your day, just take a look at these imaginative turkeys that graced the Thanksgiving bags. The work is by children at Charlotte Central School, under the direction of art teacher Lisa Bresler.

Thank you to all the families shopping for the Giving Tree Children’s Wish. Please remember to bring your wrapped gift and ornament back to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church (OLMC) or the Charlotte Congregational Church (CCC) by Dec. 13. We thank you!

This month, we send a special thank you to SCHIP’s Treasure Resale Shop for awarding the Food Shelf a grant. We would remind readers that SCHIP is a nonprofit store in Shelburne that has made grants of over \$750,000 to other nonprofits while also providing money for emergency situations.

Remember: SCHIP welcomes donations of clean, gently used items including clothing, shoes, handbags, jewelry, small housewares and decorative items, and art. Go to their website for information on what they do and do not accept: schipstreasure.org/donate-volunteer/. Take note that they make a special plea for jewelry.

This is a fine example of what we give away coming back to benefit our community.

A bountiful thank you to Woody’s Eggs for the 12 dozen eggs each week. Besides being organic, these eggs come in beautiful colors. And thank you to Kristin Najarian for that special turkey. Special thanks to Jason Hackerman, who works for Gordini USA and who for the second year has been able to secure a donation of beautiful gloves for all our school-age kids. It’s all in the family. Jason is married to Anne Marie Andriola, a Food Shelf volunteer.

We are very grateful for financial support from Shelburne Wine & Coffee, Champlain Valley Telecom, Rice Lumber and the Tiller Family Foundation.

Thank you to Jeffrey & Irene Horbar for a generous gift in honor of Greg Cluff’s 38 years of outstanding service as a teacher at Champlain Valley Union High School.

Many thanks: Alexandra Lehmann, William & Emily Kallock, Catherine Hughes, Katherine Lampton, Benjamin & Anne Mason, LT & GB Cluff, Carl & Carlanne Herzog, Meg Smith, Donna Wark, Judith Carpenter, Ken French, Susan & James Hyde, Wendy Trono, Evan Metropoulos, Deborah Cook, Dean Leary & Donna Fraser-Leary, Robert & Marjorie Archer, Eva & William Fraser-Harris, Kathleen Reo, Tom & Lorna Bates, Gertrude Gecewicz Jordan, Abigail Foulk & Richard Wasserman, Cynthia Marshall, Thomas Hengelsberg & Linda Samter, William & Karen Bruett, Laura Cahners-Ford, Kathleen Nolan, Daniel Raabe & Rachel Destito, Linda Kelsey from Connecticut, “on behalf of two Charlotte residents,” and to Louise McCarren, in honor of her sister Mollie Moroney’s birthday.

Thank you to Sanctuary Lane Contributors: Scott & Lynne Jaunich, Kirk & Loretta Walters, Tom Cosinuke, Annie Kelton.

Thank you to Crosswind Road Contributors: Kathleen & William Posey, Myron & Lenore Sopher, Karen & David Hurwitt, Heather & John Dwight, Lell & Rex Forehand, Mark & Eleanor Capeless, Jan & Larry Sudbay, John & Carolyn Kovac.

No one needs a reminder than we live in perilous times, and we are grateful for all the people who realize that food assistance and other financial support is especially vital as a pandemic mitigation measure.

Thank you to the people donating free items through Front Porch Forum, asking that recipients make a donation to the Food Shelf.



Under the guidance of art teacher Lisa Bresler, students at Charlotte Central School made these wonderful turkeys to decorate the Thanksgiving bags. *Photos contributed*

Town

Charlotte Energy Committee: A year in review

Ciara McEneaney
COMMUNITY NEWS GROUP

With 2020 nearing its end, we look back in remembrance of one of the most challenging years to date. Though, with all these struggles, the Charlotte Energy Committee is confident they remained strong in serving the public and making positive strides in terms of weatherization, transportation, education and renewable energy.

“The year opened on a high note having secured overwhelming support from the town for energy upgrades to the Charlotte Town Plan with 82% of the votes cast in November 2019. The Charlotte Energy Committee had worked with the Planning Commission and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission for a few years to bring the Town Plan into compliance with Act 174,” Rebecca Foster, chair of the Energy Committee, wrote in an email to *The Charlotte News*.

In terms of weatherization, the CEC took on revisiting what Foster called a successful Food Shelf program from 2015. “[The] CEC purchased weatherization materials for use in Charlotte houses that need buttoning up. CEC is doing outreach to find the houses most in need of assistance and is helping connect them to Efficiency Vermont’s free home energy audits and will work to match the materials where they are needed,” wrote Foster.

She made a point to emphasize how big an im-

pact this will have on the Charlotte community. The committee is still reaching out to find the households that require the most assistance and took on a college intern, University of Vermont senior Teddy Turnau, to help with this project.

“Although due to COVID we had to cancel the Climate Action Film Festival, which was to happen in partnership with SunCommon and the Charlotte Congregational Church, as well as a carbon sequestration home building talk by New Frameworks, we were able to slip in a forest carbon storage talk outside by Chittenden County Forester Ethan Tapper *just* under the wire on March 14,” Foster wrote.

Considering many events having to be postponed or even cancelled altogether, the CEC was still able to hold seven “Think Resilience” sessions created by the Post Carbon Institute.

“The timely initiative was co-sponsored by the library and Transition Town Charlotte. We also worked with the library to create a Conservation Corner, selecting a variety of resources to purchase, and including an infrared thermal camera and Kill A Watt, which can be checked out for use at home,” Foster stated.

Due to the success of this project, the Charlotte Library was able to gain access to Vermont’s free distribution of firewood moisture meters. Before, the library was not on the list to receive one.

SEE **ENERGY COMMITTEE** PAGE 19

FOOD SHELF

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Here in Charlotte, we are fortunate to live in a very special place, and if we have failed to thank anyone for their contribution to the Food Shelf mission, we apologize. Please know that every gift is deeply appreciated.

When you think about shopping, please remember our local merchants, the people who are such an intricate part of our community, the people who support so many of our local non-profit efforts.

Important notice

If someone can’t get to the Food Shelf, please call (802) 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. 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 (800) 622-4496 or via email: 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.

The Food Shelf is open Wednesdays from 4 to 6 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 (802) 425-3252.

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

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 (802) 425-3252 and leave your name and number. You will receive a call back to come up with a plan. We need to help everyone stay safe.

Financial assistance

Reminder: The Food Shelf has some funds available for emergency assistance with fuel and electric bills. Call (802) 425-3252 if you need assistance. For emergency food call John at (802) 425-3130.

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 at (802) 425-3252 for a recording of the distribution times.

Town

It’s really only a stone’s throw away

Chea Waters Evans

Their motto is, “Great pizza should always be just a stone’s throw away,” and Charlotte is now within range. Stone’s Throw Pizza is just a couple months out from opening on Ferry Road near the Route 7 traffic light. This is the third location for the popular Vermont pizza place.

Co-owner Allison Stratton, who owns the pizza restaurants with her husband Tyler Stratton and his childhood pal Silas Pollitt, said, “We have lofty goals... We want to bring awesome pizza to underserved areas... Charlotte is a beautiful area,” Allison said. The first two Stone’s Throw locations are in Fairfax and Richmond.

The idea for the third pizza place started during quarantine, Allison said, when they were talking about their business growth and plans for the future. “We don’t want to lose momentum,” she said, so they decided to forge ahead despite the uncertainties of opening a restaurant during a pandemic.

The key, Allison said, is to “start small and be flexible.” She said that the forced slower pace of uncertainty from suppliers and materials helps to keep the stress away—though they’re aiming to open in January, Allison said that they’re keeping their expectations pretty chill. “We open when we open,” she said. “There’s so much that’s not in anybody’s control right now.” She did note that though progress is slower, “We have the same excitement and enthusiasm.”

At the moment, drywall is going up and painting is on the schedule soon. “It’s beautiful inside,” Allison said. “We’re getting really excited.”

The menu will be the same as the other locations and features classic options as well as some more adventurous ones, like the



Stone’s Throw Pizza is coming to Ferry Road. They will serve classic as well as eclectic pies. The owners are Silas Pollitt, Tyler Stratton, and Allison Stratton. *Courtesy photos*



Polpettina, which has white sauce, venison sausage, roasted pear, alpine cheddar, and fresh arugula, or the Myco Miso that comes with white sauce, a mushroom blend, shishito peppers, ginger miso glaze, and togarashi, which is a Japanese spice and pepper blend. They also serve salads, desserts, and will have some retail items like their house-made flavored salts and pickled items, plus retail wine, beer, and ciders.



BUSINESS DIRECTORY

To advertise your business contact
ads@TheCharlotteNews.org

www.DeepT.com
23 San Remo Drive
SOUTH BURLINGTON | 865.0010
166 Athletic Drive
SHELBURNE | 985.4445
52 Farmall Drive
HINESBURG | 482.3333

feel good again!

BRUSHHOGGING
by Adam

- BACKHOE
- CHAIN SAWING
- DELIVERY
- FIELD MOWING
- HAUL AWAY
- LAWN MOWING

(802) 578-8347

Town

Library news

Margaret Woodruff
DIRECTOR

What a soothing pastime, to watch birds fly in to the bird feeders each morning. Many of us share the interest in identifying who shows up each year at this time. If you're just getting started with

this hobby, check out one of the many bird books available in our collection. Margaret features these and other winter nature titles in the debut of her "Book Meanderings" this Friday at 10 a.m. In addition, join in one of these fun activities:



Window Bird Ornament

December Book Art: Window Bird Ornament

Vermont Bird Feeding Season begins Dec. 1. Celebrate our feathered friends with this simple and whimsical bird for your window. We supply the materials and pattern; you supply the creativity and fun. Share your bird creations with us when you're done!

Become a Winter Bird Watcher

Do you know how bird population numbers are gathered? Do you want to assist in the counting? Cold-weather birds are very hardy. By fluffing up their feathers and tucking their legs underneath, birds can stay warm when temperatures plummet, but their preferred food is often absent. This is where you can make a difference.

One way is through Project FeederWatch, a program run by Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology. Your family will receive a package of colorful, useful charts and detailed directions. There is a fee which helps cover research, education and the annual winter-bird report.

To get your family started on winter bird watching, stop and pick up a simple bird feeding kit and recipes for an easy bird "cookie" on the Charlotte Library vestibule during porch pickup hours.

New Library Card Benefit: Kanopy!

Kanopy—Stream Classic Cinema, Indie Film and Top Documentaries, including children's selections with Kanopy Kids. All you need is your library card and password to set up an account (password hint: your last name with standard capitalization, e.g. Smith, McCord-Ball). Visit charlottevt.kanopy.com/ to get started.

DIY Recipe Packets

Pick up a bag from the library vestibule to get started! Packet choices include: herbal tea, hot cocoa, mulled cider, turmeric chicken, dukka and more!

"Get Cozy Raffle" sponsored by the Friends of the Library: The 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 are \$5 each, or 5 for \$20. Raffle tickets available through Dec. 15. To enter: <https://go.rallyup.com/8a580c>

Community Resilience Assessment

Due by Dec. 11: 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 porch, 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>.

Upcoming Programs at the Charlotte Library: Please contact the library at info@charlottepubliclibrary.org for the Zoom registration links to our programs.

Using the Libby App to Borrow Audiobooks & eBooks for Beginners
Wednesday, Dec. 9, 10 a.m. via Zoom

Library closed? Check out your next read on Libby! Learn how to use your library card to read and listen to books on your computer or device with



the Libby app in a live, hands-on Zoom session.

Coding Club: Hour of Code x 2

Wednesday, Dec. 9 & 16, 3 p.m. via Zoom

Join Susanna and coding mentor Charlie on Zoom for two weeks of an Hour of Code. All levels are welcome to learn Scratch or hone their Scratch skills. Ready to take your coding know-how to the next level? We will have a breakout room for kids with more experience to explore Python, a text-based coding language. 4th grade and up. This session we will meet twice. Registration is required.

Craft & Chat

Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2 p.m. via Zoom

Grab a cup of tea and your latest project and meet up with Susanna and fellow crafters for a relaxing hour of conversation and inspiration.

Mystery Book Group:

Black Raven by Anne Cleaves

Monday, Dec. 21, 10 a.m. via Zoom

Raven Black begins on New Year's Eve with a lonely outcast named Magnus Tait, who stays home waiting for visitors who never come. The next morning the body of a murdered teenage girl is

discovered nearby, and suspicion falls on Magnus. Inspector Jimmy Perez enters an investigative maze that leads deeper into the past of the Shetland Islands than anyone wants to go. The audiobook is available on Hoopla and hard copies are available at the library.

How to Hoopla for Beginners

Wednesday, Dec. 23, 10 a.m. via Zoom

Learn how to use Hoopla to read and listen to books and watch tv shows and movies at home for free with your library card. Susanna will get you started with Hoopla on your device and share some tips and favorites.

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

The library building is closed to the public but books and other materials available for porch pickup.

Porch pickup hours:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday:
11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Tuesday and Thursday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Please call or email to let us know what we can set out for you! Not sure what to read? We're happy to help select books for readers of all ages!

Library Contact Information

Margaret Woodruff, Director
Cheryl Sloan, Youth Services Librarian
Susanna Kahn, Tech Librarian
Phone: 802-425-3864
Email: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org

Town

Charlotte Senior Center news



Carolyn Kulik
SENIOR CENTER
DIRECTOR

“Yes, I’ve made a great deal of dough from my fiction, but I never set a single word down on paper with the thought of being paid for it...I have written because it fulfilled me. ... I did it for the pure joy of the things. And if you can do it for joy, you can do it forever.”

~ Stephen King

“So, I’m on ‘Sesame Street,’ walking around with all these monsters, Elmo and his buddies, a whole bunch of chickens, a whole bunch of penguins and a number four dancing about. It was just pure joy, simple, ridiculous fun, stupid joy.”

~ Feist

Have you noticed that this issue of *The Charlotte News* has the new CSC Winter Schedule? Once you have a chance to take a look, it may be a little misleading as to what is actually taking place in the Center building these days. Just as the Winter Schedule was sent off to the printer, Gov. Scott issued new restrictions because of the rise in COVID-19 cases. These restrictions mean that activities (even outdoor ones) or indoor gatherings are not allowed with any individuals you do not live with. So, that put an end to Mary Morrissey’s very small T’ai Chi Advanced Practice group that had been meeting in person. (And it would have ended Birding Expeditions, also if the weather had not already gotten too cold.) We shall see what happens in the coming weeks and months. Online courses and talks were not impacted at all and are (very happily) continuing.

Courses starting soon

12/10 - Screen Writing for Fun, Part II with Mark Williams
Thursday evenings, 6:30–7:45 p.m.
Dates: 12/10, 12/17, 1/7 & 1/14.

Each participant will be creating the beats or turning points in their movie’s story that propels the main character into action. Everyone’s movie is discussed supportively in class each week, and this helps to build the creative energy. Newcomers welcome. Please register by 12/08. Fee: \$48 for the series of 75-min. classes. (Note that the correct fee for this course is \$48, not \$58.)

12/11 - Writing Your Life Story with Laurie McMillan

Fridays mornings, 11–12:30.

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

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

12/16 - Coping with COVID with Karen Chatfield

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

Join your peers to discuss coping strategies and share methods you have used to deal with life during the pandemic. This group is designed to provide connections and support as we navigate “the new normal” together. Please note that this group is not intended to be a substitute for therapy or professional mental health treatment. Karen Chatfield, M.A., is a trained spiritual director and energy healer with extensive experience facilitating meetings and providing training in the non-profit sector. Registration is required, but one need not attend every meeting. No fee.

How to Register for a Course

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

To register, send your name, mailing address and phone number to: CSCZoom@gmavt.net. Be sure to note the title of the course in the subject line of the email. You will receive confirmation that you are registered. Please send a separate email for each course.

Payment – If there is a fee, kindly pay by check (made out to CSC) and send to: P.O. Box 207, Charlotte, VT 05445. Be sure to note the title of the course in the memo line.

- For ongoing exercise courses, please pay at the *end* of each month for the classes attended. Unless otherwise stated, tally your attendance and figure \$5/class.
- For courses with limited dates, kindly pay *prior* to the start of the course. Fees vary. Please check the course description for the fee in the printed schedule or on



the website: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org.

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

Questions? Need help with Zooming? Please email: CSCZoom@gmavt.net, or leave a message at (802) 425-6345.

Talks on Wednesday at 1 p.m.

These free events are via Zoom.

Please note that they do not require registration. You will find the Zoom invitation/link to the talks posted on the website the day before: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. The link also appears in Front Porch Forum for that week.

Have to miss a talk? Visit the website to find a recording of the event. It usually stays up about 2 weeks, so if there is something that you would like to watch, don’t waste any time—or it will soon be gone.

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

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

12/16: Curbing Across America with Norm Riggs

Take a break from seriousness, and come hear about Norm’s adventures in the summer of ‘64—when he was painting house numbers on curbs across the USA. “Seeing new places, meeting new people, fascinating the neighborhood kids, earning spending money for the fall. Perfect. No competition. Americans were friendly, trusting, and generous (weren’t they?) What could go wrong?” ~ Norm retired in 2006 from Iowa State University, where he worked as a rural community development specialist.

12/23: Shakespeare: Myths & Mysteries with Brian Bock

How well do we really know the Bard of Avon, and why is he so popular now? At the time of his death in 1616, three other

playwrights were arguably more esteemed and popular. Many of his plays were cobbled together when the First Folio was printed in 1623, which incorporated incomplete scripts from actors and notes scribbled by audience members. We’ll explore Shakespeare’s life and works, exploring the myths and falsehoods. ~ Brian prefers comedies over tragedies—and loves the Utah Shakespeare Festival in Cedar City. Alas, he cannot recite soliloquies when asked, but he can strike an impressive pose with sword (imaginary) when challenged to a duel.

1/6: Mystical Myanmar with Carl Herzog

Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) is still “quite unlike any land you know about.” We’ll visit the highlights of this relatively unknown and politically isolated nation: the huge, gold-covered Shwedagon Paya Buddhist temple in Yangon—the most sacred Buddhist pagoda in the country, the Golden Rock atop Mt. Kyaiktiyo, the royal palace at Mandalay, the unique floating gardens at Inle Lake, to the thousands of temples at Bagan—and much more. ~ Carl, a retired petroleum engineer, and Carlanne lived overseas for 20 years and have travelled in about 100 countries.

Art exhibits

The Senior Center’s monthly art exhibits are suspended until February when Windsong Kervick’s images of her compost compositions will be on display in the Great Room. More about that in January.

Blood Drive

12/10: A friendly reminder that the Red Cross Blood Drive is Thursday, Dec. 10, from 2 to 7 p.m. at the Senior Center, although the building is closed for other activities. If you wish to donate urgently needed blood, please go to RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS to make an appointment. Strict health protocols will be followed for the safety of those participating in this event.

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

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

“You have to create little pockets of joy in your life to take care of yourself.”

~ Jonathan Van Ness

Charlotte Senior Center
802-425-6345
CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org



*Providing Repair, Refinishing,
Restoration and Transport*

George & Pam Darling

P.O. Box 32

Ferry Road, Charlotte, VT

gdarling@gmavt.net

Town

Champlain Area Trails taking shape across the lake

Staff report

Champlain Area Trails hosted a volunteer trail project at their new Essex Quarry Nature Preserve on Friday, Nov. 20. Volunteers helped staff cut brush and fallen trees along two separate paths that are part of a network of trails going in around the quarry.

The day brought in 16 volunteers, along with three staff members. To follow with New York State's COVID-19 guidelines, volunteers were split into two groups and worked on different trails while staying socially distant.

"It was fantastic to see such a great turnout on a Friday afternoon, especially during a pandemic," said CATS Executive Director Chris Maron. "We had a great time getting out on the trails, making new ones, and having everyone get a chance to see the quarry."

CATS purchased the 35-acre Essex Quarry property in Essex, N.Y. in December 2019 to create a nature preserve that features 400-million-year-old fossils, a globally rare forest type called a Limestone Woodland, and a historic rock quarry. Stone carved from

the Essex Quarry walls was used in many of the buildings in Essex. It was also reportedly used for the construction of the State House in Albany N.Y. as well as the Brooklyn Bridge.

The nature preserve will feature a network of hiking trails with interpretive signs, which can be used for walking or cross-country skiing. It advances CATS mission of saving land, making trails, connecting people with nature, and promoting economic vitality.

"It was exciting having everyone out for our first volunteer day in a long time due to COVID. We take for granted the simple things--doing trail work, socializing in our community, and meeting new people. We had a great turnout of board members and community members, all of which were so enthusiastic about the quarry and what we are doing with the preserve," said CATS Operations & Communications Manager Emily Segada.

The Essex Quarry Nature Preserve is set to officially open Saturday, June 26th, 2021. It is easily accessible once disembarking from the Charlotte-Essex ferry.



Judith Murphy and Colin Thoman pruned trees back to cross-country-ski height.

Courtesy photo

ENERGY COMMITTEE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

"I called the Vermont Department of Conservation and requested they add Charlotte—and they did! That's the beauty of a small state, things happen fairly easily," Foster wrote.

When it comes to transportation, the Charlotte Energy Committee was able to secure its first electric car charging station. "Charlotte received the funds and installed the approximately \$18,000 charger in the Town Hall parking lot in early July." This achievement, Foster said, "is an example of how we seek to leverage opportunities from state programs on behalf of the town—in this case extremely high value."

One of the biggest tasks for the Charlotte Energy Committee as set forth in the Town Plan is to increase the amount of renewable energy generation in town.

"Charlotte is getting left behind by dozens of towns around the state that have taken advantage of solar technology—reducing both costs and pollution. Time and again, Charlotters have made it clear that they want to see more solar in town, so that's an area we really have

to come together on," Foster wrote.

Despite all this year has thrown at the CEC, they did not miss a single meeting since having to start meeting remotely in April. Current members include Chair Rebecca Foster, Matt Burke, Jacqui DeMent, Suzy Hodgson, Deirdre Holmes, Doug Paton and two student members Carolina Sicotte and Chloe Silverman.

"As a volunteer group it's important to me that the people on the committee are pursuing their interests and strengths and are happy and excited to come to meetings. The topic of energy contains multitudes, so there's something for everyone, and more left over! I would love to develop more capacity in the committee to work in carbon sequestration in agricultural soils, for example. We do have one vacancy on the committee if anyone is interested!" Foster wrote.

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.

Classifieds

Reach your friends and neighbors for only \$12 per issue. (Payment must be sent before issue date.) Please limit your ad to 35 words or fewer and send it to The Charlotte News Classifieds, P.O. Box 251, Charlotte, VT 05445 or email ads@thecharlottenews.org.

Since 1977, **LAFAYETTE PAINTING** has provided top quality painting services. Our experts will complete your job quickly and the finished work is guaranteed to look great. Learn more about us at LafayettePaintingInc.com or call 863-5397

MT. PHILO INN - A unique hotel with panoramic views of Lake Champlain and private road to Mt. Philo. 1800 sq. ft., 3-bedroom suites with 2 bathrooms and a complete kitchen. By the day, week and month. Privacy, space, tranquility. Bigger on the inside. MtPhilolnn.com, 425-3335.

MCCAFFREY'S SHAMROCK PAINTING Interior and exterior work, lift certified, clean, neat work, decent rates, 35+ years experience. If you are serious about wanting paint work done, call us for an estimate. 802-877-2172

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS: FOR THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE.

In addition to our professional staff of three, as many as 170 people provide stories, photos and commentaries to *The Charlotte News* each year. Join us! Send your story ideas, commentaries and great photos of Charlotte to news@thecharlottenews.org Let your voice be heard.

Support nonprofit reporting
that works for you.

The **Charlotte News**

Your nonprofit community news source since 1958

DONATE TODAY! Your Donation Is DOUBLED.

FriendsOfTheCharlotteNews.org

U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MAILED FROM
ZIP CODE 05482
PERMIT NO. 9

PRESORTED STANDARD