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The Charlotte News

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Odyssey takes a neck-scratching break from sheepherding with Philo Ridge Farm livestock manager Isabelle Lourie-Wisbaum. See full story on page 8.

Photo by Matt Zucker



ZBA Chair: Remove Moore

New trouble is brewing at the ZBA.

Mara Brooks
EDITOR

ZBA Chair Lane Morrison asked the Selectboard Monday to remove Ronda Moore from the zoning board citing her failure to disclose a conflict of interest with applicant The Charlotte Family Health Center. Moore, an attorney by trade, was appointed

to the ZBA in May after four former board members resigned following months of public speculation regarding conflicts of interest among town officials.

"I think she's violated the trust that the Selectboard has put in her to represent the community on the ZBA to be fair and open," Morrison said at the Selectboard meeting. "I just want to lay that on the table."

Moore, who is an adjoining property owner to the proposed health center, expressed concerns at a June 3 joint ZBA/Planning Commission meeting that the proposed site at 251 Ferry Road is a wetlands area and that oil, gas, and antifreeze from cars parked in the lot could pollute the wetland.

At a June 17 PC meeting, attorney Jon Anderson introduced a petition opposing the project which Moore had reportedly helped circulate.

"I believe it's irrefutable that many people in town, including myself, perceive her involvement in the process to be a conflict of interest," Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow said. "Ronda's seeming inability to understand the conflict-of-interest policy is unsettling and disappointing."

Moore recused herself from the June 3 vote on

whether the health center required a conditional use permit, but for Krasnow, the gesture was beside the point.

"It's not even about recusing herself or not, it's about purposefully failing to raise the issue when she knew that there may be an actual or perceived conflict of interest with an applicant at the time the application came before the board," Krasnow said. "That's the time to raise it. She didn't follow the policy to raise that issue and discuss it in an open meeting format with the applicants there and with the other zoning board colleagues to talk about that issue before the application moves forward."

Krasnow said that the ZBA's policy includes language about "a perception" of conflict of interest, which "requires each board member to consider how their colleagues on the board and their neighbors in Charlotte would perceive the situation."

As for Moore's concerns about the wetland area, Krasnow said, "while her concerns may be legitimate to her, my layperson's understanding is there's no legal basis for them."

Krasnow said the applicant's "certified and professional engineer" stated at the ZBA hearing "that the site plan and design are complying with all state standards for water quality protection. This is the standard that is expected equally of all applicants in town."

According to Krasnow, ZBA rules of procedure require the board to vote on Morrison's recommendation to remove Moore.

"So, the Selectboard will need to wait before deciding whether or not to remove [Moore] which would happen the next time the ZBA schedules an open meeting to do so," Krasnow said.

What are those red conserved land signs?



Photo by Meg Berlin

Katherine Lampton
CONTRIBUTOR

Every summer the Charlotte Land Trust posts red "This Land is Conserved Forever" signs around almost all of the conserved land in Charlotte. The purpose of this "flagging" of our conserved properties is to give a visual reminder of what properties have been conserved in our town through the years. Residents may notice that some of the land is farmland, while other properties are wildlife habitat, scenic vistas and natural areas. We are fortunate to have a wide

range of properties that are conserved. Some of the conserved land allows public access (such as Raven Ridge, Pease Mountain, Williams Woods and the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge) while others are not open to public access.

As always, thank you so much to this generous community for your support of conservation. Conservation has been a goal in the Town Plan for many years, and we hope that you will enjoy seeing the results of your support as you travel around town for the first 10 days of July!

Commission finds VSP committed racial, gender discrimination against Clemmons Family Farm director

Mara Brooks
EDITOR

Dr. Lydia Clemmons, director of the Clemmons' Family Farm, suffered illegal racial and gender discrimination at the hands of Vermont State police, according to a 5-0 vote by the Vermont Human Rights Commission. The March 25 decision, which was not published until earlier this month, followed a three-year investigation and report compiled by attorney and commission investigator Nelson Campbell. News outlet Seven Days first reported the commission's troubling findings.

The VHRC unanimously agreed that Dr. Clemmons, who is African American and a woman, was discriminated against by state troopers during a four-month period in 2017 when, pursuant to a court order, she requested police protection from Gregory "Grey" Barreda, a tenant she was in the process of evicting. Campbell found the VSP did not take Dr. Clemmons' requests for assistance seriously and at times appeared to side with Barreda, an alleged criminal who fraudulently gained tenancy at the Clemmons' farm by pretending to be a sheep herder.

In her complaint, Dr. Clemmons alleged the VSP's failure to consistently enforce the court's non retaliation and harassment order, a condition of Barreda's release, was based on her race and gender, in violation of Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A. §4502(a).

The Clemmons Family Farm, was founded in the 1960s by Dr. Clemmons' parents Lydia Sr. and Jack Clemmons and is the only Black-owned farm in Charlotte. The family residence, which is leased to a nonprofit, doubles as an African American Heritage and Multicultural Center and often hosts community events.

The investigative report is limited to Dr. Clemmons, and does not include her parents, who reside at the farm, because Dr. Clemmons was the person interacting with the VSP during the time in question and filed the complaint on her own behalf.

According to the report, Dr. Clemmons said she became suspicious of Barreda when he tried to pay his \$1000 security deposit entirely with exotic silver coins. After researching the

SEE **CLEMMONS** PAGE 2

Proposed Charlotte Health Center neighbors threaten to appeal project

Mara Brooks
EDITOR

Jeanne and Rene Kaczka-Valliere said they have signed the petition opposing the proposed Charlotte Health Center and will appeal the project in environmental court should Evergreen Family Health fail to address their concerns regarding their adjacent property.

"I've signed on being a supporter of the party to appealing the decision if it appears that the town has not done what it needs to do to follow the rules regarding the wetlands," Rene Kaczka-Valliere said of the proposed site at 251 Ferry Road.

In an interview with *The News*, the couple admitted their primary concern about the project is not the potential threat to the wetlands but rather to their own peace and enjoyment as "immediate neighbors" of the property.

"I kind of see [the wetlands] as a separate issue to what we are really concerned about," Rene Kaczka-Valliere said. "I'm concerned

with the wetlands, but we are also very concerned about the other issues that are going to be impacting us with the development of this very, very big building and parking lot."

Jeanne Kaczka-Valliere described the project as "frontloaded" onto the couple's property, which they purchased in 2013.

"We've been involved in this process, attended meetings, and we've expressed our concerns about how this project adversely and disproportionately impacts our property and our family in quite a profound way," she said.

Jeanne Kaczka-Valliere said Evergreen has "not once initiated contact" with the couple to discuss their concerns.

"We're talking noise, we're talking privacy, we're talking a 27-space parking lot that goes the whole entire length of our property," she said. "I think we're just at a point where we're feeling at the mercy of the planning commission because we have nothing in writing, and we have had no input or

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Town

CLEMMONS

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coins online and fearing they might have been stolen, Dr. Clemmons contacted law enforcement.

Dr. Clemmons' hunch proved correct. Barreda was detained and charged with grand larceny for stealing \$27,000 in coins from his former landlord in Windsor County. Following Barreda's arraignment in September 2017, Judge Timothy Tomasi granted him conditional release with an order prohibiting any acts of retaliation or harassment against Dr. Clemmons.

Once free, Barreda immediately returned to the Clemmons' farm to continue his tenancy. Dr. Clemmons began eviction proceedings against him, which Barreda fought.

According to Dr. Clemmons, Barreda violated the court's non-retaliation and harassment order multiple times. She accused him of damaging farm property and creating a menacing presence by, among other things, breaking locks, tampering with smoke detectors, and placing guns, knives, and bottled urine in areas he was not authorized to be in. Barreda also allegedly ventured nude into common areas when Dr. Clemmons and others were present.

Barreda told police he felt Dr. Clemmons was the one harassing him.

In the period of September to December 2017, Barreda and Dr. Clemmons called the police on each other a total of 65 times. In redacted, internal emails released by the Vermont Dept. of Public Safety, Lt. Lucas described the situation as "madness" and seemed irritated by Dr. Clemmons' requests for assistance.

Dr. Clemmons said she noticed the VSP became less supportive of her "from the day I complied with the VSP request to report to the Williston barracks with the [stolen] coins and surrender them as evidence." She said the trooper's response was "hostile to say the least" when she asked him for a receipt for the coins, which her brother had estimated to be valued at roughly \$6,000.

VSP released a public statement on June 23 in response to the commission's findings.

"While we respect the Commission and its important work, we disagree with its findings in this case and believe they are unsupported by the facts," the statement read.

"The Department strongly believes that the involved troopers did not discriminate on any basis in the provision of law enforcement



services."

According to the statement, Vermont Dept. of Public Safety Commissioner Schirling contacted the HRC to express concern and disagreement with the legal conclusion of the case and with HRC's decision to withhold their findings from the public.

In defense of their handling of the matter, the VSP claimed the court's conditional release order was unenforceable because 1) there were errors on the initial order, and 2) because Barreda and Dr. Clemmons shared several common areas on the farm. Still, they said they charged Barreda with four violations of conditions of release and one count of unlawful trespass, proving no discrimination took place.

But Campbell found "behind the scenes" statements made by Lt. Robert Lucas of the Williston Barracks supported the existence of discrimination.

"Lt. Lucas could be friendly to Dr. Clemmons in emails ... but internally, to subordinates, he expressed hostility and derision," Campbell wrote.

In his discussions with other law enforcement personnel, Lt. Lucas reportedly portrayed Dr. Clemmons as uncooperative and "commandeering." Campbell concluded Lt. Lucas "set an internal tone and an attitude towards Dr. Clemmons that the rest of the troopers who dealt with Dr. Clemmons and the situation followed."

When *The News* asked Dr. Clemmons if she felt troopers had regarded her as "a hysterical female", Dr. Clemmons said not quite.

"While 'hysterical female' is a sexist trope often used for white women, the more common sexist and racist trope used for Black women is 'mad', 'crazy', and so on," Dr. Clemmons said. "While the Williston barracks troopers never once, to my knowledge, used the word 'hysterical' to describe me, the head of the Williston Barracks did use the phrase 'stop the

madness' in an email he sent out to many of his troopers in reference to my request for a receipt for the estimated \$6,000 worth of coins."

Clemmons described her emails to the troopers as "straightforward, polite and respectful" and suggested it "might be worth some time to just have a look at those emails and juxtapose them against the term 'madness'. It's things like this that will hopefully help readers understand what racism and sexism look like."

On December 28, 2017, Judge Robert Mello ordered Barreda to vacate the Clemmons Family Farm. In February 2019, an anti-stalking order against Barreda was extended for an additional three years.

"This case illustrates why people of color and women fear turning to the police, and distrust government agencies of all kinds," Campbell wrote in the report.

Dr. Clemmons said Barreda has contacted her since leaving the farm but declined to elaborate.

The release of information surrounding the Barreda dispute could help shed new light on another issue involving the Clemmons' farm: the placement of the Town Link Trail.

In a recent Selectboard meeting, Lydia Clemmons expressed opposition to a scoping study that proposed placing the town link trail on the edge of her family's property. She said she feared the trail's proximity to the farm could make it a target for racial hate crimes.

When *The News* asked if her concerns about the Trail were in part related to the Barreda matter, Dr. Clemmons responded: "Yes."

While admitting she had received some "pushback" for her position on the Trail, Dr. Clemmons described Charlotte board members as "polite, respectful, careful in their choice of words, and doing their best to listen" to her concerns. She maintained the segment of trail at issue should be "weighed against the safety and security of an African American heritage site and the only Black-owned farm in the town of Charlotte. A place that offers community programs for children, adults, families in the arts and humanities."

Dr. Clemmons noted the Trail is being built with the tax dollars of Charlotte residents.

"The Clemmons farm, meanwhile, pays annual property taxes and offers mostly free programs, free programs for the community through grants we receive from foundations," she said.

Dr. Clemmons referred to Governor's Scott's "recent proclamation that the entire state – and every town in it – must adapt a welcoming stance for all people, regardless of race, color, national origin."

The town of Charlotte should reflect this sentiment in its priorities, Dr. Clemmons said.

"At the end of the day, if family, staff, artists, volunteers and visitors of the Clemmons farm do not feel safe with a segment of the Town trail running in close proximity to the farm, and if there are viable options to move the Trail further away so that visitors, family, artists, can feel safer – then given all of these things we should be considering – what's the problem?" she said.

VSP Public Information Officer Adam Silverman said the department had no further comment on the investigative report or the commission's findings.

A scheduled press conference called by the Clemmons Family Farm to be held on June 28 was canceled without explanation. No new date has been announced.



The Charlotte News

Mission Statement

The mission of *The Charlotte News* is:

- to publish rigorous, in-depth, fair reporting on town affairs, and,
- to source stories of interest from our neighbors and friends.

The News is a forum for the free exchange of the views of Charlotte residents and community volunteers on matters related to the town and the people who live here.

Editorial independence

The editor makes final decisions on stories that are published 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 are independent of all sources of financial support.

Letters, Opinions and Obituaries

Consistent with our mission *The Charlotte News* publishes letters to the editor, opinion pieces and obituaries submitted by our readers. All such materials are subject to review and approval by the editor in accordance with the following standards and requirements:

- The views expressed in letters or opinion pieces are those of the author, and are not endorsed by either the board or the editorial staff of the paper. Opinion pieces and letters to the editor will be clearly labelled as such.
- The News strives to stay clear of conflicts of interest. If an actual or perceived conflict arises or becomes known at a later date, it will be fully disclosed.
- While letters or opinion pieces may endorse political positions or candidates for public office, the paper always remains objective and impartial in such matters.
- All submissions are strictly monitored for personal attacks, score settling, blatantly false information and inflammatory language. The editor reserves the right to reject any submission that is deemed contrary to the paper's standards.
- All submissions are subject to editing for clarity, factual accuracy, tone, length and consistency with our publishing style.
- Efforts will be made to publish submissions in their entirety and to preserve the original intent and wording, but minor editing may nonetheless be necessary. Contributors will be notified before publishing, if in the editor's judgment, significant changes are required, or the submission is rejected.
- Submission requirements:
- Letters to the editor, opinion pieces and obituaries should be emailed to news@thecharlottenews.org as attachments in .doc format and must contain the writer's full name, town of residence and, for editing purposes only, contact phone number.
- Letters may not exceed 300 words, obituaries 500 words and opinion pieces 750 words.
- All published letters and opinion pieces will include the writer's name and town of residence.
- Before publishing any obituary, we will need proper verification of death.

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HEALTH CENTER

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communication from the applicants.”

Evergreen physician Paul Reiss, who is overseeing the healthcare center project, said he is puzzled by the Kaczka-Vallieres’ opposition and described their accusations as “totally false.”

“We’ve met them multiple times on site, and they were perfectly pleased with what we were recommending,” he said.

Reiss said he proposed “a latticed fence” along the length of the property and some “nice trees” to shield the couple’s view of the health center.

“There are no fences between any of the other properties in this commercial district, we put that in our plans just to appease [the Kaczka-Vallieres],” he said. “Perhaps they don’t recognize that they live in a commercial district.”

Reiss said he believes the Kaczka-Vallieres

“This ground is not considered a wetland of significant value. It’s contained within a roadway. It’s actively managed land – it’s mowed, there are old buildings on it.”

Paul Reiss, Evergreen physician

and other neighbors are asserting baseless environmental claims to mask their own personal interests.

“This ground is not considered a wetland of significant value,” Reiss said of the site. “It’s contained within a roadway. It’s actively

managed land -- it’s mowed, there are old buildings on it.”

He said the site is described as a wetland buffer only “because of the type of plants that are growing in the area. It’s not functioning as a wetland in terms of animal habitat or hatchery or any rare species of animal or plant.”

He added the state gave the health center project the “thumbs up.”

“It’s not a wetland that’s even on the state’s map,” he said.

Reiss said the June 17 planning commission meeting was supposed to “be the last thing that was supposed to happen” for the project to be approved, “but all of a sudden all these people showed up complaining about the health center.”

Reiss said he believed the opposition was led by ZBA member Ronda Moore. On Monday, ZBA Chair Lane Morrison asked the Selectboard to remove Moore from the board citing undisclosed conflicts of interest.

“From everything we know it was purely

Ronda Moore that started this whole thing,” Weiss said. “We’ve been taking steps toward building this health center for the last year, and now all of a sudden there’s this heightened concern about impacts on wetlands.”

Reiss said those who oppose the health center on environmental grounds should come clean about their motives.

“They should just come out and say what they’re angling at, because they’re looking at things around the edges to try to prevent us from doing this,” he said. “Do they just not want a healthcare center in the village?”

He said obstacles to proceeding with the project, which he described as “coming at us from all sides,” could place the Charlotte Health Center in jeopardy.

“We can’t keep going on like this, we don’t have unlimited resources,” he said. “If we miss this building season, it could very much doom the project.”

The application is currently awaiting final approval from the planning commission.

Letters to the Editor

Let’s keep the Charlotte Family Health Center in Charlotte!
I am distressed to see the change from a positive, supportive process to a negative approach that may block the development of a new home for the Charlotte Family Health Center.

What’s going on? Why aren’t our elected and appointed officials doing everything they can to resolve issues that may remain, rather than setting up roadblocks and unnecessarily delaying the process?

Wetlands are important, but there are ways to mitigate impacts on them. We as a community made the decision 30 years ago to establish that section of Ferry Road as the center of town by siting the Town Hall, and then the Library, on even lower ground than the LeBoeuf property under discussion. We made the decision to make that area one of the very few available in town for commercial uses. We should be applauding the effort and investment needed to remove the existing, overgrown building with an attractive new Health Center. We all have a responsibility to make this work for the health of this community.

The history of Charlotte-based health care goes at least as far back as the 1940s, when Dr. Ed Crane’s office was in his home on Greenbush Road. My first summer job in the 50s was cleaning that office! He then moved to a larger space on Old Route 7, where eventually Dr. Richard Bernstein—known

as Bunky to all—established the Charlotte Family Health Center. The center later moved to its more recent site on Depot Hill and now is temporarily located in Shelburne. I am so hopeful that it will soon be permitted to return to a new home in Charlotte and ask all involved to help make this happen.

Respectfully,
Nancy Wood
Charlotte

Dear Editor,
I give strong support for the relocation of Charlotte Family Health Center in the West Village. The Health Center application meets all municipal and state requirements for approval and provides a needed community resource. It seems some would hold them to a standard higher than other applications via a mechanism that has no regulatory foundation.

My family have had the good fortune to be patients at the Charlotte Family Health Center since 1999. Whether by appointment in advance or an emergency visit (which I have heard some call ‘walk in clinic’ using the term pejoratively), we have always been accommodated: The name says it all. Family Health Center: Whether you are young, old or middle-aged the Health Center is there for all Charlotte residents.

The Vermont Brand is compact settlements surrounded by productive open farmland. Charlotte could be the quintessential (picture book) example of that Brand. The Health Center is the sort of land use in our West Village Center that should be given the red-

carpet treatment, once requirements have been met. The regulations are clear cut, there is no room for “may.” Saying something may have a negative impact is not a valid reason for denial. Such statements should hold no weight in any zoning or planning decision. We are all entitled to our own opinions; we are not entitled to our own facts.

The Town Plan states many things. I have pulled out a few that are germane to this application:

- 1. The Town will encourage through its regulations and policies the development of a more economically active town center with business services to fulfill local needs.
- 2. Village Planning Areas are compact areas of mixed-use activities that maintain the character of a Vermont village. This type of Planning Area is intended to serve its local surroundings as a place where people can live, work, shop and recreate.
- 3. The top declared goals of Charlotte citizens for the West Village were to; 1. Maintain historic village character, 2. Minimize traffic impact on safety and quiet, 3. Preserve views, and 4. Encourage multi-use, small-scale commercial/professional development.
- 4. The Town encourages the retention and creation of businesses and non-profit organizations that provide the services and community resources that reflect the values and aspirations of its residents.

- 5. Key Planning Considerations: 1. Charlotte’s population is aging. Additional health care, emergency response, transportation and in-home support services will be needed to assist an aging population.

History tells us that the existence of healers is one of the bellwethers of civilization. Today those healers are called health care professionals. The muddled debate and inaccurate statements by those in opposition to this vital resource is not only embarrassing, it begs the question; is Charlotte civilized enough to welcome the “healers” in their chosen location? Let’s be civilized and get this new facility built and opened as soon as possible! Who wants to adjudicate at the ribbon cutting?

Robin Pierce
Charlotte

Letter to the editor
Nick Bishop’s article on the Charlotte Family Health Center’s move back to Charlotte contains at least one inaccuracy. Because of inadequacies in their former office space, the Health Center decided to move to Shelburne. At that point the building went on the real estate market. They did not decide to move to Shelburne because the building went up for sale.

Richard Bernstein
Charlotte

Summer Fun with Bathing Suits and Sprinklers



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Drawing the line



Although Selectboard chair Matt Krasnow is known for his gift of reaching consensus in Selectboard meetings, sometimes you just gotta draw the line. On Saturday he was doing just that as he spray painted orange lines in the newly configured Town Beach parking lot.

Photo by Janice Heilmann

John Quinney
PUBLISHER AND PRESIDENT

Welcome, Margery

We are delighted to welcome Margery McCracken to our Board of Directors as our treasurer.

Margery is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with Davis & Hodgdon Associates, CPAs in Williston, where she focuses on providing financial audit services to local nonprofit organizations. She grew up in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and lived and worked in Washington, D.C. and New York City prior to her move to Charlotte seeking a change from the pace of city life and in order to enjoy the many recreational opportunities that Vermont offers.

Margery has worked as a financial auditor for over 12 years, starting her career working for the federal government as a financial auditor for the U.S. Government Accountability Office where she audited several federal agencies and continued her career with a CPA firm in New York City specializing in providing services to nonprofit organizations and private clubs. She has lived in Charlotte since 2015 with her husband and two daughters, ages eight and six. They ended up in Charlotte by chance as it was on the edge of the range they set when searching for houses within a certain distance from Burlington, but they feel very fortunate to have settled in this town.

Margery's daughters attend Charlotte Central School and are thrilled with their school experience. They love being so close to the lake in the summer and to the town ice rink in the winter. Margery enjoys running, cross country skiing and swimming in the lake with her family. She has enjoyed getting *The Charlotte News* in her mailbox every other week and is excited to give back to the community in a small way by serving as the treasurer for *The Charlotte News*.

Welcome aboard, Margery.

Thank you, Ted

With Margery's arrival on the board, and her appointment to the treasurer's position, we say goodbye to Ted LeBlanc, who held the position for the past two years.

In her recent article, fellow board member



Margery McCracken

Gay Regan dubbed Ted "an unsung hero." I agree and hope that Gay's piece, and this tribute, convey our heartfelt appreciation to Ted for his selfless and generous contributions to the paper and the organization.

Ted joined the board as our treasurer in March of 2019. Over the following two years, he worked steadily to improve our bookkeeping and accounting practices, to cut expenses, and to secure grants and contributions.

Last year, he invested many hours to learn about several federal loan and grant programs that would help *The Charlotte News* weather the pandemic. Ted prepared and submitted two applications, and soon after, we received two grants from the Small Business Administration. Then, earlier this year, Ted took on reporting and financial management responsibilities for the paper's NewsMatch grant, awarded by the Independent News Network.

Ted recognized that printing the paper and renting office space were, after payroll, our two largest expenses. He found us a new printer and encouraged us to give up our office space and to work remotely. As



Ted LeBlanc our daily operations was minimal.

Earlier this year, Ted worked with Vince Crockenberg and Mike Russell on our IRS application for nonprofit 501(c)3 designation. Once this was achieved, Ted started on the many accounting, reporting and financial tasks that were required to complete the setup of our new nonprofit.

When not busy with his work as treasurer and board member, Ted enjoys playing guitar in a trio with Mike Walker of Charlotte and Patti Shannon of Essex. He has also been known to assume the role of Santa. In a few days, Ted will be travelling north to spend time with grandson, Jack Edward Millar, who he hasn't seen in 18 months.

On behalf of everyone at the paper, staff, volunteers and board, we wish you well, Ted. Many thanks for giving so much of your time and expertise to *The Charlotte News*.

The
Charlotte News

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thank you,
thank you!


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Around Town

Charlotte CVU and collegiate student award recipients

CVU Award winners

Access CVU Scholarship:

Isaac Krementsov

Coach David Bremner Award:

Henry Bijur

Creative Writing Award:

Courtney McDermott

CVU Redhawk Football Award: Seth Boffa

Diligence Award:

Lucy Barringer, Madison Hallock

Excellence in Mathematical Thinking

Award: Ethan Lisle

Excellence in Science Award: Seth Boffa

French V Language Award:

Henry Bijur, Seth Boffa

John Phillip Souza Band Award:

Elyse Martin-Smith

Journalism Award: Brennan Murdock

Kevin Riell Memorial Scholarship:

Seth Boffa

Larry Wagner Math Award:

Skyler Heininger, Isaac Krementsov

Palmer Athletic Award: Seth Boffa

Principal's Leadership Award:

Elyse Martin-Smith

School Director's Award: Isaac Krementsov

Twenty-First Century Social Studies Award:

Elyse Martin-Smith

University of Vermont Green and Gold

Scholarship: Henry Bijur

U.S. Presidential Scholarship Nominee:

Isaac Krementsov, Cooper Whalen

Telecom Eunice B. Farr Incentive Award:

Madison Hallock

Collegiate Award Recipients

Worcester Polytechnic Dean's List:

Isa Kaplan, member of the class of 2024, an Electrical and Computer Engineering major was named to the List for academic excellence, Spring 2021 semester.

University of New Hampshire:

Julie Sulva, a history major, earned Dean's List honors for the Spring 2021 semester.

The VAST Program at Vermont Academy of Science and Technology, Vermont Technical College:

Amelia Anair was among 40 students who graduated from Vermont Tech's VAST Program in Spring 2021. In addition to a high school diploma, they received credits toward their first year of college.

Congratulations:

are extended to **Eva Mazur** for her two poems selected to be published in the Young Writers Project of the *Burlington Free Press*. Her first piece appeared in the June 18 issue, and it was titled "School." In it Eva reflects on the past school year that was unlike any previous one and a year that "no kid will forget." It was the "year every kid was affected in some way by the pandemic."

Her second poem appeared the following week and was titled "Believe in what you write!" She begins by saying "It's hard trying to put all your thoughts onto a blank piece of paper." She says her writing will be judged and criticized by its readers. However, what she says on the page are her thoughts and ideas, and the writer must "believe in what she writes!"

Sympathy:

is extended to family and friends of **Shawn C. Coyle** who died peacefully on June 19 at the McClure Miller Respite House in Colchester, VT. His surviving family includes his wife, Tricia Coyle, of Charlotte.

News from the Charlotte Energy Committee

Rebecca Foster
CEC CHAIR

The Charlotte Energy Committee (CEC) is excited to announce its new website, CharlotteEnergy.org. The new site breaks down a vast amount of information into easy sections, using photos and charts for support. Few people realize what a variety of issues are related to energy—from composting and tedious-sounding policy targets to the better-known energy issues of weatherization and solar power.

The website was a collaborative effort with each of our committee members helping to generate content. Our designers were two students from Oberlin College who were on a "covid semester" doing internships like this one. As environmental studies majors, the students jumped at the internship opportunity, and, perhaps like many their age, they also turned out to be expert at web development. Learning how to communicate concepts around climate change and energy is a fundamental skill that we all practiced together in the months it took to complete the site. Now we have an easy-to-use platform for all of CEC's activities, and the students have a tangible work product they can point to for years to come.

Have you ever wanted to try an e-bike but found the cost out of your range? The CEC is excited to announce an e-bike voucher program that makes e-bike trials accessible

to everyone. Coordinating with the Charlotte Library, the CEC has purchased 20 free 1-4 hour rentals of a Local Motion e-bike that are good through early October. The library is managing reservations, so contact them directly for more information. It's a great opportunity to learn what the e-bike buzz is about and share your experience with the CEC!



Jr Lewis on Ferry Road installing the sign that the CEC got from VTrans to point the way to the electric vehicle charger at Town Hall. VTrans also installed signage on Route 7, so now there's no missing it! *Photo by Rebecca Foster*

Town

Grange on the Green offers fun for everyone



Photo contributed

The second “Grange on the Green” of the summer will take place on Thursday, July 8, from 5 to 7 p.m. on the Town Green. Music on the library porch will be performed by Shades of Blue Vermont, a four-piece band from Burlington playing blues and classic tunes with something for all ages—bring your dancing shoes!

This partnership event between the Charlotte Library and the Grange is being generously sponsored by Birdseye, an architecture and building company established in 1984 and employee owned since 2007. As well as award-winning architectural design, Birdseye offers a full spectrum of building services.

In addition to live music, the evening will also feature ice-cream from LuLu, beverages from Charlotte’s own Yerbery, along with stalls from local farms and information tables from local groups.

Bring along picnic dinner or pick up pizza from Stones Throw or sandwiches and baked goods from the Red Onion and Old Brick Store.

The June concert, which was held under COVID restrictions, was a great success with over 100 people attending, and

it raised almost \$700 for the fund to restore the Lyceum Schoolhouse in East Charlotte.

For July’s event there is no need to book ahead, and everyone is welcome to come along and enjoy the fun!

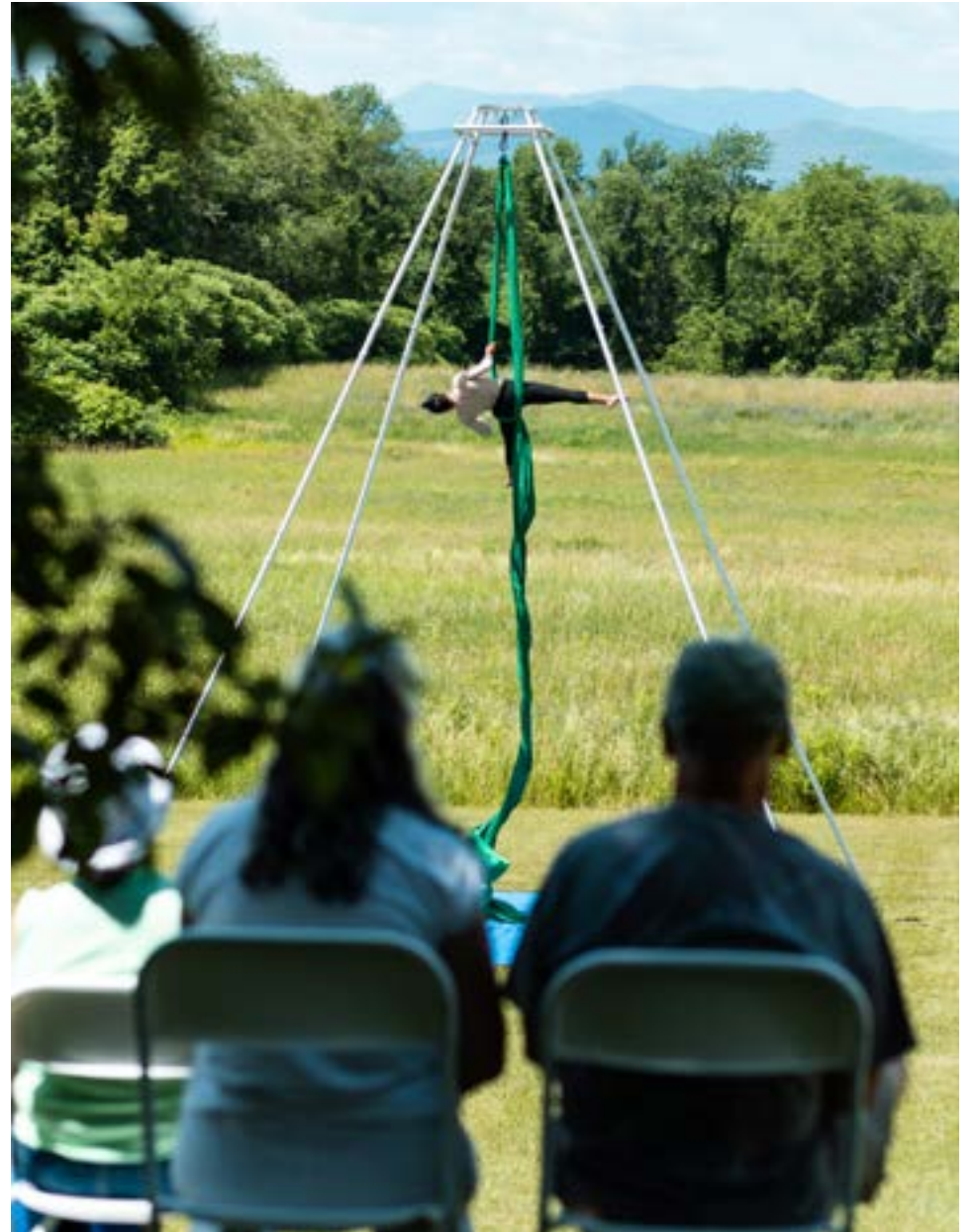
The event will begin at 5 p.m. allowing plenty of time to look around stalls and displays and catch up with friends and neighbors before the music starts around 5.30 p.m.

We are especially grateful to our two season sponsors who make the whole series of events possible:

The “Mow Electric! campaign” is a grass-roots initiative to encourage the transition to electric lawn care equipment within the public and private sectors in Vermont. More information’s available at mowelectric.org.

Talk with Margo Bartsch, a College Essay Coach with 17 years’ experience working with Charlotte families on the college application process and providing one-on-one guidance with a fresh, professional perspective to help organize student’s thoughts in writing college essays (collegeessaycoach.com).

Juneteenth in the air at Clemmons Family Farm



Above: Attendees watch as renowned aerialist and choreographer Pamela Donohoo performs at the Juneteenth festivities at the Clemmons Family Farm on June 21.

Below: Black eyed peas and collard greens were the theme of the event.

Photos courtesy of Clemmons Family Farm

Mara Brooks
EDITOR

Renowned aerialist and choreographer Pamela Donohoo headlined Juneteenth festivities at the Clemmons Family Farm on June 21. The family-friendly event featured a “black eyed peas and collard greens” theme, with Donohoo performing an aerial version of a story of a black-eyed pea who befriends a collard green leaf. Prior to the performance, Clemmons Family Farm Director Lydia Clemmons entranced the audience with the story of her great grandmother Margie, who continued to live as a slave even after the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation because her white slave owners did not want her to know she was free. Margie ultimately escaped, married, and became a successful farmer until she and her family were

chased from their oil-bearing land by angry white neighbors. Margie and her family started over in a new state, building a successful plumbing company.

Lydia Sr., 98, who founded the farm in the 1960s with husband Jack Clemmons, sat in an air-conditioned car to watch the festivities. “Please stop by and say hello to my mother,” Lydia Clemmons told attendees.



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Hi, Neighbor!

Bill Regan: A Passion for teaching in a multitude of fields



Phyl Newbeck
CONTRIBUTOR

Bill Regan is a firm believer in community. He and his wife, Nina, moved to Charlotte in the summer of 2019 and, looking for ways to get involved, he joined the Trails Committee. “I was very interested in getting to know Charlotte and doing what I could,” he said. “I love to hike and bike, so the Trails Committee seemed like something that would promote those activities, increase community spirit, and be environmentally responsible.” This spring, Regan was appointed chair of the group.

Regan reported the committee just gave the Selectboard their scoping study for the final piece of the Town Link Trail, which would go from West Village to the Town Beach. The trail currently connects Mt. Philo to the Cohousing project on Greenbush Road, and the hope is to extend it north through West Village to the Town Beach.

Trail planning is quite a departure from Regan’s previous work as a counterterrorism expert for the federal government. “As a young person, I got exposed to the world beyond the town where I grew up in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania,” he said. “I knew I wanted to work in international relations.” Regan studied abroad twice and earned a B.A. his B.A. in International Relations and French, followed by a master’s in National Security Studies, European Diplomatic History, and International Negotiations. During his three-decade long career, Regan lived in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. He rose through the ranks and became Senior Reviewer of the President’s Daily Brief and then Chief of Counterterrorism Analysis.

After retiring from the federal government, Regan launched Leadership, LLC. “The roots of it are that for my whole life I’ve been interested in outdoor activity,” he said. “All along I did as much cycling, hiking, kayaking and cross-country skiing as I could, though not as much as I would have liked since I was living in the DC area. Once my federal career was over I wanted to marry my love for the outdoors with my passion for teaching.”

One of the components of Regan Leadership is Regan’s work as a certified cycling instructor for the League of American Bicyclists. “Most people know how to bicycle,” he said “although I have been asked to teach kids to ride and to help adults who haven’t been on a bike since they were kids.” The majority of Regan’s clients are adults who are reasonably proficient cyclists but aren’t comfortable



Regan, a certified cycling instructor for the League of American Bicyclists, teaches adults who are reasonably proficient cyclists but aren’t comfortable riding in traffic or groups as well as instructions on fixing flat tires and other roadside repairs. *Photos contributed*

riding in traffic or groups. He provides instruction on fixing flat tires and other roadside repairs and recently helped a client who wanted assistance in becoming a four-season cyclist.

In addition to teaching cyclists, Regan has worked with Local Motion on including instructions about dealing with cyclists and pedestrians in driver education programs. Pre-pandemic, he taught high school classes on the subject. “I’d like to think the state is moving in the right direction,” Regan said. “When I’m alone on the bike, 99% of the time, motorists are considerate.”

In addition to his cycling instruction, Regan has taught cross-country skiing at Trapp Family Lodge and Catamount Family Center. He also teaches kayaking courses, helping those who know how to kayak learn how to paddle more efficiently and how to judge the weather, as well as providing safety instructions, including single and two-person rescues.

Teaching has been a constant in Regan’s life. Last semester he taught a graduate seminar at Tufts, and he has done some guest lecturing at UVM and Middlebury College on international terrorism. “I love being in the classroom and encouraging students to consider public service,” he said.

Regan’s volunteerism extends to a number of fields, including racial justice advocacy and mentoring troubled youth through Spectrum Youth and Family Services. He



also performs a combination of pro bono and paid work for Vermont environmental organizations and what he describes as socially responsible nonprofits. “These organizations may not have the resources for a management consultant,” he said “so I can provide some assistance.”

For Regan, it all boils down to trying to make a contribution to society. “Every

citizen who enjoys any privilege has an obligation to contribute and make our little corner of the world slightly better,” he said. “That weaves through my career, volunteer work and teaching. I believe in the sense of community. We’re all in it together and need to come together to help each other and our communities.”



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Town

Celebrity interview with Odyssey the Llama

Exclusive to The Charlotte News: We ask the questions on Charlotte residents' minds

Matt Zucker
CONTRIBUTOR

He's nearly six feet tall, 400 pounds and covered in soft wool. He's got big, dark eyes the color of a deep Andean mountain lake. And he spits when he's mad.

He's Odyssey the Llama—the Charlotte celebrity and shepherd *extraordinaire* who attracts fans and admirers from near and far. *The Charlotte News* was able to obtain—at great expense and investment of unflagging journalistic time and effort—an exclusive interview with the captivating camelid. (Yes, the domesticated llamas raised here in the U.S. of the genus *lama glama* are directly related to the dromedary native to Northern Africa and the camel of Asia.)

Despite his busy schedule—his day (and night) job is to stand guard over a herd of 40 ewes and their lambs in the pastures of Philo Ridge Farm—Odyssey consented to answer all our questions and held nothing back.

With the support of Philo Ridge Farm, land and livestock manager Ed Pitcavage and livestock manager Isabelle Lourie-Wisbaum, Odyssey shared his deepest ruminations on life here in Vermont, a hemisphere away from his native species' natural habitat in South America, in a revealing question and answer session held on a sunny June day in a fenced pasture surrounded by grazing sheep.

The Charlotte News: Odyssey, it's been three years now since you settled here in Charlotte from Mystic Moon Farm in Middletown Springs, VT, where you were raised. You obviously spend a lot of your time at Philo Ridge Farm hard at work. Ed Pitcavage describes you as a "world-class livestock guardian" and says you're on the job 24/7. Pitcavage says you replaced Aldo, a fine shepherding dog who could unfortunately get "a little over-protective." Your record is spotless. No coyotes or loose-running dogs have gotten by you. But what about your feelings? How do you like the job? Do you feel fulfilled and that you're working at the top of your game?

Odyssey: [munches grass]



Odyssey the Llama

The Charlotte News: You're an attention magnet at the farm. We've all seen cars pulled over on Mt. Philo Road for rubberneckers and picture-takers. Cars slow down when drivers see you poke your head up out of the grazing field. But you have a job to do. Isabelle Lourie-Wisbaum says you're all business. "He's a working animal," she says. "He guards, naps and eats. That's about it." Lourie-Wisbaum goes on to say the farm has never had an "incident" on your watch. Our question: How do you handle the pace and the grueling schedule? Do you ever have moments where you just want to take a spa day or indulge in some self-care?

Odyssey: [munches grass]

The Charlotte News: Let's talk about the sheep. The farm's herd—a mix of Romney and Border Leicester breeds, producing 40-80 lambs a year—relies on your watchful eye. Forty ewes—that's a lot of livestock to guard and an awesome responsibility. Your job is to ensure that nearly 3,000 pounds of meat and 600 pounds of wool get safely into the Philo Ridge Farm Market. If you fall asleep on the job and a coyote were to escape your notice, that puts a lot of the farm's business at risk. Does the responsibility and pressure that comes with the herd's safekeeping ever get to you?



Despite the demands of his job, Odyssey still finds time to be fashion-forward. Here he sports his new summer haircut.

Photo by Ed Pitcavage

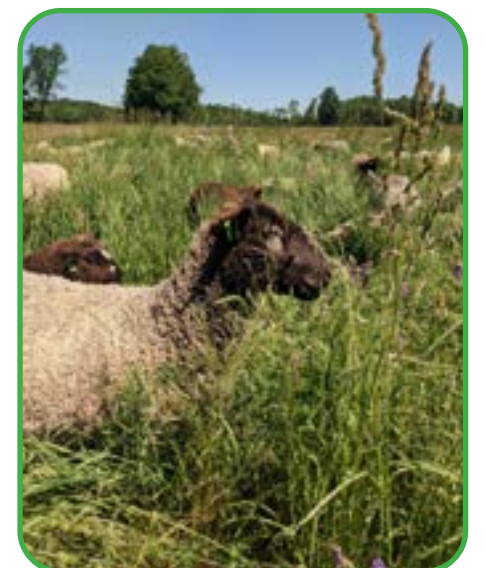
Odyssey: [munches grass]

The Charlotte News: It must get lonely sometimes. While there are more than seven million llamas in South America, estimates are that there are less than 200,000 here in the U.S., most of them raised as livestock guardians like you. But you're the only llama on this farm and you basically cohabitate with the sheep. According to Ed Pitcavage, you're with the herd all the time ... you eat the same food as the sheep, you have the same schedule. "They think of you as one of them," he says. Pitcavage says even the baby lambs within days of being born are jumping all over you when you lie down. But, still, when you look out at Camel's Hump across the valley do you ever feel a pang of longing to join the herds of llamas climbing the snow-covered Andes that is your heritage?

Odyssey: [munches grass]

The Charlotte News: Let's lighten the mood, a bit. You've come to call Charlotte your home. You're a grown-up—eleven years old. I'm sure you have opinions you'd like to share with our readers. What do you like best about Charlotte? What can be improved? What are your favorite nightspots?

Odyssey: [munches grass]



Top: Peaceful grazing at Philo Ridge Farm.

Above: One of the 40 ewes leading a safe and peaceful life under Odyssey the Llama's watchful eye.

Photos by Matt Zucker

The Charlotte News: Thank you so much for relating your experience and your candor in sharing your point of view. Speaking for the town's residents, we're happy to have you here and wish you great success in your career here in Charlotte. We look forward to seeing you in Philo Ridge Farm's fields this summer and in the years to come.

Odyssey: [munches grass]

Sweet Roots taking ground in Charlotte



Jane MacLean

Photo contributed

Olivia Carolyn Hagios
CONTRIBUTOR

Perched on a hill off Route 7 in Charlotte sits Sweet Roots Farm & Market, the former Charlotte Berry Farm, operated by Jane and Dan MacLean. The couple began renting the berry farm from the Vermont Land Trust in late March. On the sprawling 57 acres of farmland, fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers flourish. The farm is known for the rows upon rows of blueberry bushes planted 40 years ago in 1981 and 1982. The market will continue to offer pick-your-own blueberries and pre-picked berries in the farm market where Sweet Roots' vegetables, herbs and cut flowers, alongside meat, dairy products, bread, pastries, cold-brew and much more are sold and provided by local artisans. While walking around the farm with Jane, it was evident how excited she was to partner

with local producers to collaborate in a way that will highlight what Sweet Roots is doing and how they are doing it. Sweet Roots features the provisions for Charlotte families to stop by and grab whatever they may need to create a wholesome dinner plate. By branching out to craftspeople and local artisans, Sweet Roots will be different from other diversified farms while focusing on their roots of growing berries.

Another aspect of the farm that Jane highlighted is how they want Sweet Roots to be a space for everyone by offering many career and learning opportunities. Above all is the outstanding and unexpected aspect of Sweet Roots having a women-run operation and leadership team alongside Dan, who is essential to the operation. Jane speaks with pride of the women she works with on the farm and in the market and hopes that Sweet

Roots will become known for their remarkably strong, capable and welcoming team.

Sweet Roots opened their doors this past weekend and are open this summer on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and on Sundays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. More information and a pick-your-own schedule can be found on their website sweetrootsvt.com and social media @sweetrootsvt. The team is very excited to see what this summer holds and to become a local resource to the Charlotte community.



Sports

Lots of activity despite COVID



Edd Merritt
CONTRIBUTOR

Redhawks, have been some of the busier ones.

Things began in early June when CVU’s Josie Pecor was named Vermont’s top women’s soccer player by Gatorade. She hit the net for 21 goals and assisted four times in her senior year. She was also a United Soccer Coaches’ All – New England selection. In addition to her own soccer playing, Josie served on CVU’s Athletic Leadership Council and volunteered for Special Olympians while maintaining a 4.24 grade point average. Josie is off to St. Anselm College in the fall.

Redhawk men’s lacrosse took the Division 1 state championship gaining Tom Garvey Coach-of-the-Year honors in his first season at CVU. Redhawk scorer Alex Leonard was named a U.S. Lacrosse All-American. He and Cam Saia made the first team all-state roster with Shane Gorman second team.

Women’s lacrosse saw three Redhawks on the coaches’ first all-state team; midfielder Petra Kapsalis, defender Lena Kerest and another midfielder Chloe Snipes. Defender Maddie Bunting and midfielder Gretta White earned second-team honors. Midfielder Ava Bartlett, attackers Lily Ledak and Sydney Peet joined Sydney’s sister, defender Madison Peet on the honorable- mention roster.

Between the playing of Twin State and North-South All Star Classics, plus the naming by the coaches of the players to participate, Vermont High School athletes have been kept busy. In fact, the CVU

In what has become fairly standard procedure, the Twin-State Lacrosse Byrne Cup in Hanover, NH went once again to the Granite Staters. The N.H. women won 19-5 and the men 16-10. On the women’s side, Vergennes’ Sydney Weber led Vermont scorers with two goals. CVU’s Shane Gorman, however, scored twice for Vermont men, and Woodstock’s Field Willis collected a hat-trick.

Hockey in June saw New Hampshire and Vermont split the Make-a-Wish Tournament in Stowe with the Green Mountain women winning 4-2 and the men being shut out by the Granite Staters 3-0 for Vermont’s first loss in the last three games.

In the women’s game, Mississiquoi’s Breezy Parent and Harwood’s Clara Griffin scored goals a minute apart from each other to give Vermont a lead they never relinquished.

The Vermont North-South baseball double-header went the north’s way in both games. CVU’s Ryan Eaton was a leading hitter in the first game, and in the second he pounded a long RBI double to put the top on a seven - run fifth inning.

The coaches’ Ultimate Frisbee Team was named with Redhawks Max Opton and Alex Spitznagle on the first team roster.

CVU placed a number of Redhawks in the 45th state decathlon championships. Emma Crum was fifth overall among women. She won the 1,500 meter run.

Drew Buley was sixth overall among men. His teammate Mathew Servin duplicated Emma’s win in the 1,500 meter run.



All-star long stick Cam Saia does in B & B attacker.

Photo by Al Frey

Town

Raap plans expansive changes at Nordic Farms



Nordic Farms

Photos by Gail Callahan

Gail Callahan
CONTRIBUTOR

Will Raap’s purchase of Charlotte’s Nordic Farm is about to become a reality, and the local entrepreneur is eager to take the reins. “I bought it because I had nothing better to do with my time,” Raap said.

Raap, who lives in Shelburne, has a longtime interest in local agriculture and restoration projects. In 1983, he founded Gardener’s Supply Company in Burlington. Three years later, Raap spearheaded the Intervale Center, a clean-up effort to restore the Intervale—700 acres of bottomland in Burlington—to its agricultural roots.

Raap said he anticipates the sale of the Nordic Farms property, which was listed at \$4.4 million, will be finalized shortly.

“My guess is that that will happen in the next two to three weeks,” Rapp said.

Andrew Peterson, who co-owns the farm with Jay Canning, confirmed the impending sale.

“We’re hoping it will be done soon, but I haven’t been given a timeline” he said.

Peterson said Yankee Farm Credit, his financial institution, had advised him to sell the property.

“I had no interest in selling,” Peterson said. “I’m only speaking for myself and for my

family, and I can’t answer for Jay. This has been a really difficult process for me.”

Peterson expanded on his mixed emotions about the sale.

“This was my life’s work, my ideas, my vision and I’m losing all of it, right on the brink of a new level of success,” he said. “The process has shown me how amazing my family is; reaffirming something I already knew. It has also shown me who my actual friends are, so there is something of value I take away from this.”

As Raap waits for the sale to be finalized, title and soil contamination searches are taking place on the U.S. 7 property. BHB Engineering is coordinating the site plan, Raap said, and he hopes to submit the document to Charlotte town officials by early fall. A review by Act 250, the state’s land-use law, is not necessary, Raap said.

“We may have a meeting next week with engineers to document what the site plans will look like,” he said.

Raap said he plans to turn the farmland, most of which is grain, into an agricultural center featuring Vermont grains, botanicals, drinks and a “few acres of hemp.”

The farm went into bankruptcy four years ago. At the time it was owned by Michael LaClair. Peterson purchased Nordic Farms from Clark Hinsdale in late October 2018 for \$2.4 million.

Town

And the survey says...



Trina Bianchi
CONTRIBUTOR

Mud season in our town of Charlotte is a thing of the past! As Road Commissioner Jr Lewis explained, substantial upgrades have been completed over the years to improve the longevity of all the miles of dirt roads in our town. Now,

when we do experience severe weather, the damage incurred on these roads has been minimal and readily repaired—when other dirt roads in Vermont turn into muddy quagmires, the ones in Charlotte are the same as in the summer!

Physical infrastructure can run the gambit from roads and transportation to emergency shelters to cell service to stormwater and waste management, and the survey covered all of that and more. At this community discussion, hosted by Jim Hyde and Chris Davis, Jr also explained how partnering with Chittenden Regional Planning has provided engineering expertise, some funding, and we now have accurate mapping of all the culverts in Charlotte. Asked whether the roads could be widened providing a bike/pedestrian lane, he indicated that many of our roads could be widened...with funding. New regulations require that any new project has to accommodate bicycles and walkers; all the work done on the dirt roads was done prior to this regulation.

Much discussion ensued around the speeding problem within the town and the acknowledgment that many, if not most, of us tend to drive faster than we need to in town. The lack of any enforcement to stay within the limits within Charlotte was cited, using the example of following people from Charlotte into Shelburne and seeing brake lights as soon as folks hit the Shelburne town line. One suggestion was to have the Vermont State Police sit at a known



place where people tend to speed and write tickets—no warnings, just tickets—with the thought that once people realized that there was some level of enforcement in town, that driving speeds might start to slow down. My understanding from the discussion is that there is a formula that has to be used in order to lower speed limits and it's based on how fast people currently drive. So, if many or most of us are continually exceeding the current posted speed limit when the data is collected, those limits cannot be lowered. Having read the recent FPF post about the vehicle that ignored the four-way stop sign, the bottom line is that we might all want to take a deep breath and decide to leave our house a bit earlier so that we can all take our time getting to wherever we are going, making our roads safer for all.

As the largest vote getter in town, Jr gave credit to his spouse, Leslie, and his crew for doing a great job each and every day, resulting in his receiving the votes! We can all hope that he is willing to continue to tackle this responsibility for many more years. If Charlotte needs to go the route of having our own municipal road department, we are looking at finding a location for a building and making a huge investment in equipment. We, in Charlotte, are very fortunate that Jr and Leslie have made their home here.

The next topic addressed was that of public

facilities. Carolyn Kulik, Director of the Charlotte Senior Center, addressed the issue of emergency shelters in town and noted that the center is designated as an emergency center but is currently not equipped to serve in that capacity. The Senior Center does have a generator, but does not have a great WIFI connection and has no equipment—no beds, no bedding, no extra water. In order for the center to be a shelter in an emergency, they need a support structure to be able to serve in that capacity. It was suggested that the town needs a listing of potential disaster scenarios with specific needs attached to each; included in this listing should be where could people be sheltered, how many people could be sheltered at each place, and what support structures are in place at each location.

Chris Davis, Emergency Management Director for our town, talked about working with Emergency Management at the state level and how they will work with the local team to get equipment if and when a disaster occurs. If the disaster is widespread, the emergency shelter could be designated in Burlington or another location. Currently, people could be sheltered, if necessary, at the Town Hall, the Senior Center and possibly the Charlotte Library under certain conditions; it was noted that all of these are located in the West Village. Chris said it would be helpful to have a listing of folks in town who could assist with sheltering folks in their own home if necessary. It was suggested that various neighborhoods could initiate their own emergency management plans, talking with each other and noting resources available in their own neighborhoods.

The other question posed was the future of the Senior Center and how a potential new Community Center could affect that. Noted were the facts that currently a high percentage of the people accessing the Senior Center are from surrounding neighboring towns as opposed to all Charlotte residents, that people are now retiring later, that the number of people willing to volunteer is decreasing and volunteers are crucial to the operation of the center, and the acceptance, especially since the pandemic, of people willing to use Zoom to connect. One could ponder what all that means for the center down the road.

Peter Joslin, Planning Commission Chair,

addressed his concerns about a total power outage in our town, referring back to what happened after the ice storm. This led to the concern about how dependent we are on good communication, especially in a disaster situation. Chris Davis explained how Fire and Rescue are totally dependent on new age technology for all communication, including the locating of various properties. So when cell towers are overburdened or totally fail, which is what occurred during the ice storm, all their modes of communication fail—no GPS, pull out the paper map! The survey did show that close to 40% of the respondents indicated that cell service and/or broadband accessibility was not up to par. This writer knows this for a fact as I don't have reliable cell service at my home and I know there are other dead areas in our town. The bottom line is that Vermont as a state is 47th out of 50 in terms of broadband accessibility. Mike Yantachka reported that Vermont has funding to address the broadband issue and that the Department of Public Service is establishing a new board to allocate these monies.

Public transportation was discussed briefly. There used to be a CCTA and VT Transit bus that stopped at the garage at the intersection of Route 7 and Ferry Road. Even if that were to be re-established, our park and ride area is at the old train station, more than a little jaunt from Route 7. The question then arose: "If it were provided, would people actually come?" More than one individual questioned whether or not people would even use public transportation. Culturally, for whatever reason, in Vermont we are not mass transit users. A case in point: how many of our school-age kids ride the school bus? I know when I drive by CCS before or after school, I see an endless line of cars picking up or dropping off kids and near empty buses—not sure when that changed as in the 'dark ages' when I was in school, everyone rode the bus. Times do change!

The discussion was informative and covered a lot of territory. Kevin Goldenbogen, one of the leaders of CCP, indicated that the goal, once all the community discussions on the survey were completed, was to produce a report summarizing what we've learned from both the survey itself and the ensuing discussions to share with the various organizations in town. Hopefully, that will lead to more discussion and action being taken to make us more resilient.

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On Books

Summertime...and the reading is breezy (for the most part)

Katherine Arthaud
CONTRIBUTOR

It is officially summer, I heard someone say the other day. Summer—a time to swim and walk, sit on the back porch, boat, play tennis, recline in shade-dappled hammocks, paddleboard, read... Plus, the world is opening up, and there's a lot of joy in all of that. I hope you are all enjoying yourselves.

I don't know about you, but in the summer months I tend to gravitate to books that are a little lighter, a little less demanding. The books I am going to tell about today are largely like that. Summer reads. Beach reads. With one exception.

I will begin with the exception. *Want* by Lynn Steger Strong is not exactly a lighthearted read, and though I would not have a problem reading it on a beach (I can read anything on a beach), I would not categorize it as a "beach" read.



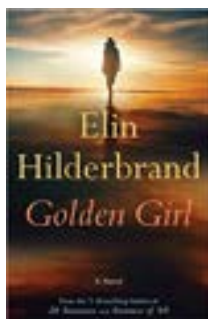
Because for narrator Elizabeth, life is not easy. Mother, daughter, wife, teacher of under-served kids in an under-served school, stealth Instagram stalker, intellectual, depressive, runner, reader, clandestine eater of gummy worms, city-dweller, soon to be bankrupt person, Elizabeth is in the process of...well, of surviving, mostly. We get to know Elizabeth by being party to the mundanities, observances, emotions and anxieties of her day-to-day life: her 4:45 a.m. runs along the water in the freezing rain (the occasional rat running across her sneakers), riding the subway, dealing with co-workers and workplace disappointment, wrangling kids, making love to her husband, counseling students. But the theme that stands out among other themes—the thread that is most noticeable among all the other threads here—is her friendship with Sasha, whom she has lost touch with over the years but with whom she becomes, over the course of the novel, reconnected. "I was thirteen and she was fourteen and we were high school freshmen. A boy I thought I loved loved her, and I stayed on the phone with him sometimes late at night discussing her. I think I thought that if I listened hard or well or long enough he'd love me instead. Instead, they broke up, and he stopped calling. And then there she was. I knew everything about her that any breathing person would love, the way

she felt and talked as if she were a grown-up; the way she was smart but also pretty but also didn't care enough about being cool to use the power that she should have had to have more friends. Whether I wanted to love or have or just to be her never felt as easily discernible as this or that, one of the other—more like all of it, and then more, at once."

"We felt so much aligned," Elizabeth muses, "during the day, at home, alone, walking down the street. We were the same age, from the same place, equally unrelenting, depressive, bookish. But the shape of her face, the way clothes hung on her body, her perfect skin, the largeness of her eyes: we were such completely separate things."

Elizabeth's life is largely a struggle. Her mother is a piece of work ("She's the only person in the world who can say my name and make it mean."), her job is difficult and pretty much thankless (though she really loves her students), and a lot of her memories and flashbacks regarding Sasha are painful and humiliating. Yet there is a depth, honesty and groundedness about Elizabeth. She is doggedly loyal, intelligent and engaging, and (not to spoil the adventure of reading this for yourself) her story ends rather unexpectedly on a note of hope. I remember my own best friend in elementary school tattooing on her denim spiral notebook in ballpoint pen: "Life is a bitch and then you die." Sometimes it seemed this book is heading in that direction. But in the end, I did not find that to be the final takeaway. After all, there is something rich, honest and deeply engaging about listening to someone tell it like is, even when life is a bitch. Elizabeth loves who she loves, and she lets herself be loved, and she keeps it real. Yes, we can be "awful and ungrateful," as Elizabeth admits she feels at times. But there's more to the story. There is the courage of getting up in the morning and lacing up our sneakers even when it's raining and there are rats skittering about on the sidewalk. There is motherhood, marriage, connection, friendships, work, family, hardship and sometimes, however improbably and unanticipated, genuine human connection. There is grace. *Want* might not be a beach read, but I highly recommend checking it out and spending some time with Elizabeth.

On a lighter, airier note, we have Elin Hilderbrand's newest Nantucket novel,



Golden Girl. Many know that I'm a fan of this author, and of this island, so as you might imagine, I snatched this one up as soon as I heard it had hit the shelves. Okay, okay, so Hilderbrand is not Dostoevsky, but hey, her books are summery and light and fun and very hard to put down. This one begins on a most unusual note in a most unusual place, which (I might as well tell you like it is—I don't think it will ruin anything, as it is something one discovers on page one) is: heaven. And though most of the novel takes place on Nantucket, it does return now and again to heaven, which in this case is a boho-chic, striped green room with one wall missing (for viewing), layered rugs on the floor, and a Moroccan lantern casting dancing lace patterns of light on the ceiling.

One might accuse this author of being a tad self-indulgent in this, her 27th novel, as the main character, Vivi—beloved, amazing mother of three; beloved, amazing author of multiple beach novels—bears more than a rough resemblance to Hilderbrand herself, but I forgive her everything. She has never let me down, never failed to transport and entertain me and animate the island I love with characters who are lovable, imperfect, colorful and pretty much believable most of the time. Hail to Hilderbrand, queen of the beach read!



Also on the lighter side of things is Jennifer Weiner's *That Summer*, in which we encounter Mainline Philadelphia's Daisy Shoemaker, whose life is pretty satisfactory and unextraordinary, but she isn't sleeping well, and something is definitely off. Things begin heating up when she starts receiving emails meant for another person whose address is uncannily similar to her own. While Daisy is cooking meals for her family and driving her daughter hither and yon, Diana is jetting around the world and reorganizing corporations. Eventually the two women connect, and that is when the drama begins to sizzle in the pan. Weiner takes us back in time, to events that occurred in both Diana and Daisy's pasts: painful, unfinished things...broken dreams, unforeseen twists in the road, etc. Some heavy themes here, but there is always something breezy and wholesome in Jennifer Weiner's storytelling. Definitely recommend this one for hammock, beach or any old place.

Lightest but not least is Taylor Jenkins Reid's

Malibu Rising, which I coincidentally read recently on a trip to California. This book is somewhat preposterous at times and a tad cliché, but (don't judge me) I really enjoyed it. It begins in August of 1983 on the day of gorgeous surfer/super-model Nina Riva's annual end-of-summer party. (Are you still with me?) Beautiful Nina—daughter of legendary star crooner Mick Riva and sister of Jay, Hud and Kit—has just been very publicly abandoned by her pro tennis-player husband, so rather understandably she isn't much looking forward to the upcoming soiree at her swanky modern mansion by the sea. No surprise, the party turns out to be a rager, with people literally swinging on a crystal chandelier in the wee hours, a gunshot or two, and a lot of broken plates. Not to mention some surprise appearances and a host of secrets and interpersonal dramas to stir up the plot and keep things hopping. Taylor takes us back in time to Nina's parents' growing-up years, back before anyone was rich or famous, before Malibu was a celebrity hotspot, back to when Nina's innocent, hardworking mother and young Mick fell in love and decided to create a life together. Lots of acting out and skeletons in the closet in this one, but in the end, there is some pretty serious coming to terms with what is authentic and what is not. I guess that's around when the house bursts into flames. Gotta be honest, I did enjoy this one. Light, yet compelling. Great book for the beach and turbulent and amusing enough for the airplane ride there.



Happy Summer!



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Into The Garden

The native garden and the ecosystem we are part of



Joan Weed
CONTRIBUTOR

It occurred to me as I’ve read about the dedicated volunteers working at Charlotte’s Park (formerly Demeter) and the Library’s rain garden that I’ve neglected the cause of “native plants.” I belong to a group on Facebook called Native Plants of New England. The learned participants have taught me so much. You might wonder what the big deal is encouraging natives. The group’s “About” information defines a native this way. A native is anything that was growing in New England before European settlers arrived. You might ask why does it matter as long as you have a well-groomed garden, with colorful flowers filled with nectar and vigorous plantings? Well, if you are a bee or butterfly, wasp, moth, bat and certain birds, you’d understand. Different species are attracted to and indeed often need specific plants not only for food but for nesting, raising young and feeding them. Many flowers and plants have clues for the right pollinator to find its food source. If you add a second set of ruffly petals, or a new color, though beautiful, it will throw them off.

One example we’ve heard a lot about is the common milkweed and monarch butterfly relationship. The mature butterfly uses the leaves as a host for laying its eggs and also a source of nutrition for its young. Meanwhile we get to enjoy beautiful aromatic blossoms while we wait. There are many subtler combinations like this, and I am learning about them every day.

One thing that perplexes me is which plants are truly native by the above definition. There are myriad sources

online to answer this question. Some plants that are so common and seem like they would be natives turn out to be introduced.

I asked my friends in the group which were their favorite resources for this info. Wow! I got so many answers that I had to do some research myself to find the easiest to navigate. The one most often mentioned is Go Botany. This site is associated with the Native Plant Trust. Others that seem valuable and not too complicated or scholarly are Picture This (an app), USDA database. In William Cullina’s book *Growing and Propagating Wildflowers*, he assiduously mentions where each is native to. He also includes sources to buy natives and a list of native plant societies. Good reference book. Vermont Fish and Wildlife has a site of Terrestrial Invasive Plants. (vtfishandwildlife.com). The Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center and Audubon Society are good references. There are so many more and I intend to become familiar with them.

Some of the introduced species that have tried to take over our public lands, parks and gardens are buckthorn, barberry, winged euonymous (burning bush), lily of the valley, purple loosestrife, Japanese honeysuckle, Norway Maple and multiflora rose. Some of these are beautiful plants, and one can see the attraction to them. However, we must be strong and resist all urges to include them on our property. Even confining them won’t work. Birds and rodents will move the seeds around and all our best intents are done for. Because their natural enemies may be missing, they run rampant and crowd out our native and useful plants and clog our waterways.

There are many native specimens with equal beauty and value to put in in



Lobelia silphilitica

their stead. Here are a few suggestions of native shrubs: Clethra alnifolia (summersweet), various willows, Vaccinium (high and low bush blueberry), Viburnum acerifolium. Some herbaceous varieties to look for are Baptisia, Aster nova anglia, Cornus Canadensis, Camassia, Syrsinchium augustifolia, Solidago flexicaulis and so many others. Remember too, that different cultivars of the above may not be native. This is where a good reference will help you.

Through the millennia, plants and animals have adapted and learned to depend on each other. This symbiosis has formed the ecosystem we are part of. By changing it up, we interrupt the process. I will probably never have a purely native garden. Because we inherited many well-grown, established plants, they remain. Other specimens are just gotta-haves. Many we couldn’t do without. But we can at least eliminate the most noxious



Aster novae-angliae



Lobelia cardinalis

Photos contributed

and choose natives when replacing plants, learning as we go and helping the earth survive while we do it. There is so much to learn. And a big thank you to those volunteers who maintain our common lands here in town.

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Out Takes

Music of the spheres



Edd Merritt
CONTRIBUTOR

Sweet music
Sweet music
Why does my heart skip
a beat?
Pretty music
What makes the soul
come out of me?
“Sweet, sweet music” –
The Yardbirds

Well, I guess as I started reading the recent biography of Bob Dylan I consciously reflected on the prominence of music, not only in my time, but in the universal realm. The human brain forms around it. Is it safe to say that our DNA carries a tune? That Bruce Springsteen’s “Promise” points to important elements of life and death? That Miles Davis touches on “Sketches of Spain” in ways which, when put together, paint a country’s culture?

Music sits on my virtual mantelpiece. I pick it off whenever I need to add flavor to the food of my life. It has been one of my favorite meals since I was a youngster. The first bite came along with the strings of a cello, and to this day, I remember that my string fever came out as “Row, row, row your boat.” I even believe I might remember the fingering.

Then, false boyhood entered the picture. In the 1950s stringed instruments were for girls. Boys moved to the male dominance of brass, along with marching bands that accompanied the glory of sports. In uniforms, mimicking soldiers, we marched to the beat of whatever sport happened to be on the playing field. Football and trumpets and trombones collaborated. Drums told running backs and wide receivers how to move around opposing players. Cymbals crashed the glory of a touchdown. I was jealous of Joey, first chair trumpet, who could hit high notes without flinching.

Even war brought music to the forefront. On an aircraft carrier off the coast of North Vietnam, we sent pilots to bomb Hanoi while listening to Hanoi Hannah play our favorite American music. Aah, if only we were going to San Francisco with flowers in our hair. We knew Scott McKenzie was right in saying we would “meet some gentle people there.”

Once back from the Gulf of Tonkin, through California where I heard the Dead give a free concert in San Francisco, I headed east and settled in the “Big Apple” where one could say that it was music, me and New York meshing like a pod of peas. The Village was my home, and the musicians that congregated in the bars there, read like a gallery of those on the cusp of the 1960s whose songs and lifestyles played against what was happening in the Mekong Delta. What was even more enticing to the neighborhood was that a person could catch these people live easily, on the spur of the moment. Simply decide you wanted to see Lou Reed, Janis Joplin, the Grateful Dead, Eric



Photo by Ena Marinkovic from Pexels

von Schmidt, Ian and Sylvia, you could walk a couple of blocks to the gathering spot in which they were playing.

Music became the hub of my life. Even Woodstock became my watering hole.

As a native of Bob Dylan country in northern Minnesota and hanging around his friends Snaker, Spider and Little Sun playing blues, rags and hollers at the Triangle Bar on the “west bank” of the Mississippi in St. Paul, I felt the scene to be a central feature of my life.

My early life, followed by recording devices, helped. My father, although a physician by trade, was fond of the music of his era. As an only child, I thought Bing Crosby should not “fence me in” and that Frankie Carle, who played one of his boogies on the piano in our basement once he had tuned it correctly, was a hit-maker.

I really did not know then, however, that music would become such a central thought-provoking entity for me. As an English major in college, I found language to be either a great clarifying agent or a solace if and when dissolution attacks your life. But, then again, if that does happen, I turn to the verbalists of that genre—the Springsteens and Colin Melloys and, yes, Bob. Don’t forget that his Nobel Prize was for literature carried out through his music.

Too often Johnny is “in the basement mixing up your medicine” and I am “on the pavement thinkin’ about the government;” so, you better “look out kid, it’s somethin’ you did, God knows when but you’re doin’ it again.”

And I don’t mind saying that multiplicity brings harmony—in life and on the CD, whether that group of voices and instruments forms Union Station or The Band. Oh yes, it’s the “shape we’re in,” surrounded by the music of the spheres. The universe is vast, but harmonious.

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Town

Charlotte Senior Center news



Carolyn Kulik
SENIOR CENTER DIRECTOR

I can see clearly now the rain is gone
I can see all obstacles in my way
Gone are the dark clouds that had me blind
It's gonna be a bright (bright)
Bright (bright) sunshiny day
It's gonna be a bright (bright)
Bright (bright) sunshiny day

I think I can make it now the pain is gone
All of the bad feelings have disappeared
Here is that rainbow I've been praying for
It's gonna be a bright (bright)
Bright (bright) sunshiny day

*"I Can See Clearly Now,"
Johnny Nash, 1972*

Aren't we all hoping that these lyrics are true
at this point in time? To get the full calypso
effect, tune into YouTube to watch the Jimmy
Cliff cover. Dancing is good.

Welcome

On another positive note, as we begin to
open our doors and start offering in-person
classes again, we are pleased to announce
that Lori York has joined the Senior Center
in a part-time position as Assistant to the
Director. Lori has a wealth of experience and
is looking forward to meeting participants and
welcoming volunteers back to the Center.

Mask notes

Here is where things stand for the moment at
the Senior Center.

If you are . . .

Fully Vaccinated –

No mask required.

No social distancing required.

Not Vaccinated –

Mask required.

(This would also apply to exercise classes.)

Social distancing required

*(6 feet). (This would also apply to exercise
classes.)*

Not Vaccinated & Not Wearing a Mask

(for any reason) Kindly do not

plan to visit at this time. We ask that you come
back when the mask guidance for the Senior
Center is updated. We want to keep everyone
safe and comfortable.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Lunches begin

At long last, we are getting back to our famous
lunches. Not sure when we will return to the
regular, weekly M/W schedule of the Before
Times, but this is a good start. Yippee!

7/12, Monday

No reservations are needed for Mondays, and
the serving time is 11:30-12:30—just like
before. First come, first served.

Menu for 7/12:

Green salad

Vegetable soup

Bread

Ice cream with strawberry sauce

Iced tea and lemonade

7/14, Wednesday

On Wednesday, we are fortunate to have a
meal prepared by Chef Arnd of The Residence
at Shelburne Bay. Meal is served at noon.
Reservations are required (425-6345); please
be sure to call in yours after July 8.

Menu for 7/14:

Chilled banana and blueberry soup

Green bean Ssalad with red onions

in a white balsamic dressing

topped with seared Arctic char

-or-

Turkey and grape salad with cheese crostini

and baby greens

Blueberry trifle

Iced tea and lemonade

Dates for the next lunches will be announced.

Courses returning to in-person

7/6 – PILATES PLUS at 8:30 a.m.

7/8 – PILATES at 8:30 a.m.

7/14 - ESSETRICS at 8:30 a.m.

7/16 – ESSETRICS at 9:30 a.m.

7/19 – CHAIR YOGA at 9:30 a.m.

Courses/activities in July

These two art classes are both in person; one
is in the Senior Center, and the other one is
outdoors.

See how to register at the end of this article.



PAINTING in SCENIC PLACES with Linda Reynolds

Register by 7/15. Fee \$100 for the series of
four. Outdoors.

Four 3-hour classes, 10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Dates: 7/21 or 7/22; 7/28 or 7/29; 8/4 or 8/5;
and 8/11 or 8/12.

(The better weather report for
either Wednesday or Thursday decides
the day; rain dates, if necessary.) Bring
your watercolors or pastels for painting
outdoors in beautiful, inspiring spots. With
demonstrations, exercises, encouragement and
gentle advice, learn new ways of observing
and using alternative drawing/painting tools
and techniques. Limited to 6 participants.
After registration, you will receive a list of
locations and what to bring. Registration and
payment are due by 7/15 to hold your spot.

WATERCOLOR – SUMMER SPLASH! with Lynn Cummings

Register by 7/20. Fee \$77. In person at the
Senior Center

Tuesday, 7/27. All-day workshop from 9 a.m.
to 3 p.m.

Get your creative juices flowing in a 1-day
workshop where we'll explore a few non-
traditional methods of painting summer
flowers with interesting backgrounds. Some
experience with watercolor helpful. Please
register and pay by July 20 so you have
time to get materials—the materials list
will be sent to you upon completion of
your registration. Questions? Email:
lynn.cummings@uvm.edu. Minimum 6.
Registration and payment must be received by
7/20 to hold your spot.

7/9 – KAYAKING for WOMEN

Destination: Winooski River (Richmond
area)—Kate Mesaros and Laura Cahners-Ford.
For more information, please email Susan
Hyde directly at susanfosterhyde@gmail.com.
Registration required. Maximum is determined
by leaders. Paddlers need to provide their own
boats for all trips. No fee.

For expanded course descriptions see the
printed **SUMMER SCHEDULE**, or visit
CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. The mission
of the Senior Center is to serve those 50 and
up; some course enrollments are limited, and
if a course is not full, younger participants
are welcome to enroll. Feel free to leave a
message anytime at 425-6345.

Talks at 1 p.m. – Wednesdays

These free talks are continuing online
throughout the summer. They do *not* require
advance registration and closed captioning is
included. The Zoom invitation/link to each
talk is posted on the website the day before at:

CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. // Can't make
it? Talks are recorded and posted for 2 weeks
afterward on the website.

7/7: KOLYMA – SIBERIAN ROAD of BONES with Louise McCarren

Located in the Russian Far East, this 1,300-
mile dirt road from Magadan to Yakutsk was
built to deliver prisoners to the infamous
Gulag. Come along to see and hear Louise's
impressions of this remote area: the cities,
both thriving and abandoned, and the resilient
residents managing to live in this desolate
area.

7/14: SOUTH AFRICA BEFORE MANDELA with Mark Williams

For age 10-18 in Johannesburg, Mark
attended all-white schools, going into the city
in all-white train cars. He traveled as well
to nearby Soweto, home of a million black
Africans, who all carried passports to live and
work in a white area. What is the emotional,
psychic and moral cost of apartheid?

7/21: WHO WAS MARK ROTHKO? with Linda Finkelstein

7/28: COVID: WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED & LESSONS for the FUTURE with Jim Hyde

How to register for a course

To register, email your name, mailing address,
and phone number to: CSCZoom@gmavt.net.
(Note: this is an email address, not a website.)
Be sure to type in the title of the course in the
subject line of your email. You will receive
confirmation that you are registered. The
invitation/link for the course will be sent to
you by the instructor the week the class starts.

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

- 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 per class hour. (This price will
continue through the summer months.)
- For all courses with specific starting and
ending dates, please pay at the start, and note
the fee listed in the course description.

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

Charlotte Senior Center
425-6345
CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org

Town Library news



Margaret Woodruff
DIRECTOR

Please note the Charlotte Library will be closed on Saturday, July 3, and Monday, July 5, for the Independence Day holiday.

New guidelines from the Library Board

With the increase in vaccination rate and decline in COVID cases in our area, the Charlotte Library Board of Trustees voted Monday, June 21, to move the library to the next phase of reopening. The new guidelines:

- Masks are required only for people who are not vaccinated or who have other health concerns.
- 25 people may visit the library at one time.
- Visitors may stay for up to one hour.
- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the library.
- Masks will be available in the library entryway for patrons' use.
- Please do not visit the library if you feel ill.

Please contact the library if you have any questions. We hope to see you soon!

At the Library in July

Vermont Astronomical Society Library Lending Telescope Program. Thanks to VAS and the Friends of the Charlotte Library, an Orion Starblast 4.5 inch Astro Reflector telescope with a Celestron 8 to 24 mm zoom eyepiece is available for Charlotte families to check out. Enjoy the summer night sky! There are some exciting events approaching—Comet Finlay and a Moon, Venus & Mars Conjunction, to name a few.

Local Motion E-bike rental pass: Try out this new trend in cycling from the Trailside Bike Center in Burlington. Thanks to the Charlotte Energy Committee for making this program possible.

Lawn Games: Check out at the circulation

desk and try your hand at bocce or corn hole on the Town Green.

Plastic-Free July: In 2020, 300+ million people stopped 900 million kilograms of plastic from ending up in landfill and the environment. We can do our part in 2021! Join us at the library and take the pledge to go plastic free. Try out our plastic-free beeswax wrap kit, too.

Take & Make for July: Beeswax Wrap Wrap your sandwiches, protect your cheese, and cover your bowls in beeswax wrap instead of single-use plastic. We'll supply all you need to make one yourself. Available for pickup in the vestibule in July, while supplies last.

Communities Responding to Extreme Weather: The Charlotte Library now joins libraries and other community as part of a nationwide effort to build "grassroots climate resilience through inclusive and hands-on education, service, and planning. Together, we are working to equip families and communities with the resources and capacity to prepare for and respond to local climate changes equitably, sustainably, and collaboratively." We look forward to working with others in our community on these key issues.

On the Library Calendar:

Summer Reading Program: Tales & Tails Thanks to the Vermont Institute of Natural Science for an animal-filled kick-off to summer reading. All summer reading materials are available in the library entryway. Pick up a calendar, reading log or craft kit when you visit.

Join us for fun-filled activity throughout the summer.

Tales & Tails Story Time
Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m., through July 28

Join Cheryl on the Charlotte Library porch for story time fun. Listen to great books and leave with a craft project. All ages welcome.

Cooking Adventures on the Charlie Cart
Thursday, July 8, 10:30 a.m.

Join Cheryl on the Charlotte Library porch for cooking adventures on the Charlie Cart. This week we're making dog biscuits for our favorite canine pals.

Other sessions:
July 15, Foods from Your Favorite Books (*Blueberries for Sal, If you Give a Mouse a Cookie, The Very Hungry Caterpillar*)
July 22, Vermont Seasonal Taste Testing and Herb Butter
July 29, Blender Favorites—Take a spin with the blender to create hummus and milk shakes!
Ages 7 and up. Registration required due to space restriction: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/161493388071>.

Project Micro
Monday, July 12, 2 p.m.

Join Jan Schwarz on the Charlotte Library porch for Project MICRO. Investigate sand, fingerprints, pond life, bugs and crystals using hand lenses and microscopes. Ages 7 and up.

Registration required: www.eventbrite.com/e/project-micr-at-the-charlotte-library-tickets-155830582467.

Bee the Change: Pollinator Promotion and Protection
Wednesday, July 14, 7 p.m.

Join us for an evening with Michael Kiernan from Bee the Change who shares the motivation and inspiration for his landmark pollinator projects. He is joined by pollinator partners Deirdre Holmes from the Charlotte Central School garden project and Julia

Parker-Dickerson, Charlotte Pollinator Pathways coordinator, for a panel discussion.

In closing, we tour the Library's newly installed gardens with an eye to pollinator potential. Field trips to visit Michael's demonstration Pollinator field in New Haven, the Charlotte Central School Pollinator garden project, the Pollinator garden at Lewis Creek will be arranged to follow this presentation at a later date.

Mystery Book Group:
Wife of the Gods by Kwei Quartey
Monday, July 19, 10 a.m.

Introducing Detective Inspector Darko Dawson—dedicated family man, rebel in the office, ace in the field—and one of the most appealing sleuths to come along in years. When we first meet Dawson, he's been ordered by his cantankerous boss to leave behind his loving wife and young son in Ghana's capital city to lead a murder investigation. In a shady grove outside the small town of Ketanu, a young woman—a promising medical student—has been found dead under suspicious circumstances. Dawson is fluent in Ketanu's indigenous language, so he's the right man for the job, but the local police are less than thrilled with an outsider's interference. Copies of the book available at the library circulation desk.

Waterwise vegetable gardening

Nadie VanZandt
EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Conserving water is always a good idea, and if the dry weather of the last two summers is any indication, such practice should become habit.

Fortunately, you can learn from gardeners in dry climates how to successfully grow plants during droughts. These tried-and-true sustainable practices protect and insulate your plants to yield a bumper crop.

A healthy soil amended with compost is your first defense against drought. Besides nourishing your plants, compost enables water retention. You can work the compost into the soil around established plants.

A good second defense is to adopt companion planting, the practice of growing plants together that physically and chemically complement each other. This improves productivity, discourages diseases and pests and maintains a healthy soil.

The best-known example of companion planting is the clever use of corn, pole beans and winter squash by Native Americans. They called this trio the Three Sisters, and it has many benefits.

The corn stalks support the pole beans, which in turn, fixate the nitrogen in the air to the soil. The large squash leaves shade the soil and act as mulch while their prickly edges discourage weeds and pests.

When using companion planting, consider spacing plants so their leaves barely touch when full-grown. This keeps the soil surface cool.

A third defense against drought is to use hydrozoning, the method of grouping plants with similar watering needs to conserve water. For example, deep-rooted vegetables, such as asparagus and tomato, should be placed together to benefit from deep, but less frequent, watering.

Similarly, shallow-rooted plants, such as strawberries and bush beans, planted together benefit from shallow, but frequent, watering.

Even sun lovers appreciate a little shade. In an established garden you can spread a shade cloth over vulnerable



Targeting the base of garden plants using a watering wand attached to a hose saves water and prevents fungal diseases. *Photo by Lynn Ketchum/Oregon State University*

plants. Some gardeners even use patio umbrellas.

Heavy mulching is another way to keep the soil moist and cool. About two or three inches of organic mulch such as straw or grass clippings will do the trick. Avoid hay as it may contain weed seeds.

Most importantly, water wisely and with the right tools. Water early in the morning before the heat of the day. Avoid overhead sprinklers because most of the water is wasted through evaporation.

Targeting the base of the plants saves water and prevents fungal diseases. A simple watering wand attached to your hose will do the job. Less frequent and deep watering will benefit deep-rooted plants, such as tomatoes, pumpkins, parsnips, artichokes and watermelon.

To make a deep-root irrigator you can use a simple PVC pipe. Cut a two-inch-diameter PVC pipe in two-foot lengths. Starting eight inches from one end, drill one-quarter-inch holes every two inches along the rest of the pipe for drainage.

Cover the pipe with a piece of open-weave shade cloth tied securely to one end of the pipe with a plastic tie. The shade cloth prevents debris and rodents from entering the pipe.

Dig a hole next to the plant and bury the pipe, open end down, with the holes facing the plant. For easy access, leave three to four inches of pipe above ground. Place your hose over the shade

cloth to water the deep roots through the pipe. For plants with shallower roots, use soaker hoses.

Reduce watering after the plants are established and resume when flowering and fruit setting begins.

Finally, control weeds to ensure your plants do not compete for nutrients and water. Make a ritual of removing weeds before they flower and make seeds.

Waterwise practices make sense in a changing climate. With a few changes, you can still reap a bountiful harvest, protect a precious resource, and save money in the process.

Nadie VanZandt is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from Panton.

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