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The Charlotte News

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Sequin Bridge in East Charlotte
Photo by Wade R. Maki

Planning Commission approves Health Center

Lewack calls residents' environmental concerns "uninformed"

Mara Brooks
EDITOR

The planning commission has conditionally approved Charlotte Family Health Center's controversial application for a mixed-use facility at 251 Ferry Road.

In its July 29 decision and order, the PC outlined several conditions applicant Emerald Green Properties is required to meet, including reducing the parking lot from 27 to 24 spaces, relocating a dumpster, and placing a screening fence along the property's western boundary.

Town Planner Larry Lewack said the conditions are based on a combination of public feedback and strict application of land use regulations.

"We did take all the public feedback into consideration," Lewack said. "We also looked very carefully at the wetlands information and asked for more detailed reports from the applicant."

Some residents expressed concerns that the proposed development would damage existing wetlands and introduce toxic runoff from cars parked in the health center parking lot. Former ZBA member Ronda Moore, whose property adjoins the proposed site, helped circulate a petition seeking to halt the project. Moore resigned from the ZBA last month.

Lewack said environmental concerns regarding the wetlands are largely unfounded and "uninformed".

"One of the things we did pretty early was we pulled up information for the wetlands and soil conditions in the area of this project site," Lewack said. "The data showed pretty clearly that all the significant wetlands are much further to the south than the two acres that border Ferry Road. So, from our perspective, there weren't any important or Class 1 wetlands anywhere near where the health center was going to build."

Lewack said independent consultant Dorie Barton, who was hired by the health center, and the state's wetlands specialist, came to the same conclusion: the site is safe to build on.

"[Barton] did a ground assessment to see if there was any clue that there could be wetlands of concern close to Ferry Road," Lewack said. "That assessment was a key piece of information when we looked at the wetland issues, as well as the report prepared by the state wetlands specialist from the Agency of Natural Resources."

Barton found, and the state agreed, that some areas on the site met the criteria for Class 2 wetlands, "but they were very low-quality wetlands; places where they had been built on and developed before," Lewack said. "It was pretty clear we were not looking at virgin

SEE **HEALTH CENTER** PAGE 2

A sign of the times



Speeders beware on Greenbush Road in the village.

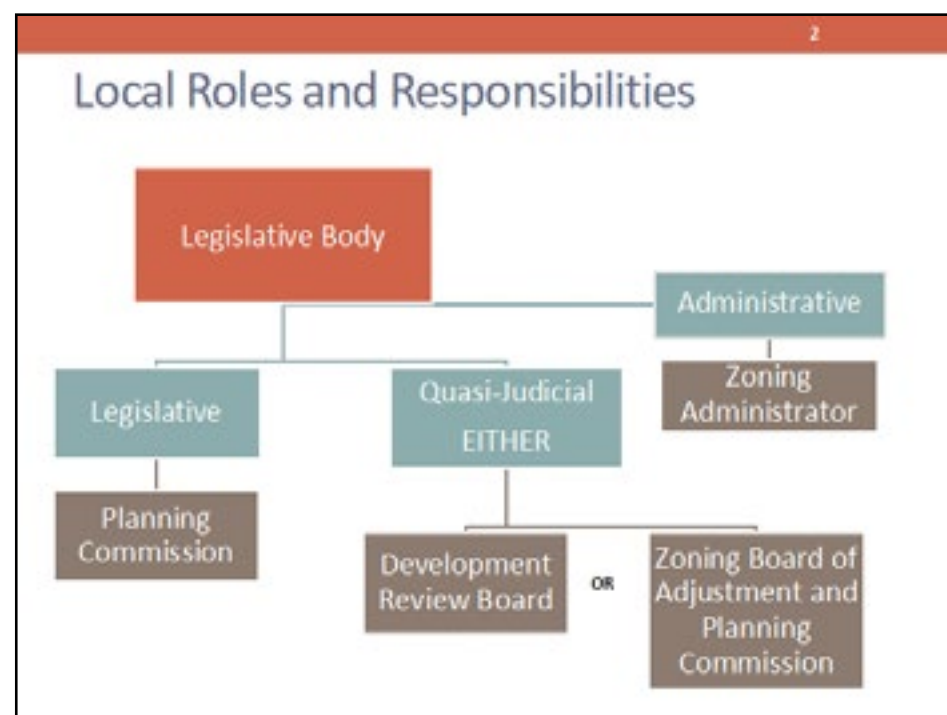
Photo by Lee Krohn

Lively DRB discussion draws mostly town officials

Robert Bloch
CONTRIBUTOR

The Selectboard's community discussion on a potential reorganization of the town's planning and zoning processes was well attended by members of the Selectboard, Planning Commission (PC) and Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), with a few "plain old" citizens attending as well. The meeting, capably moderated by Town Administrator Dean Bloch (no relation), began with a presentation by Taylor Newton, senior planner at the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, who outlined how the roles and responsibilities of the various bodies differed under a PC/DRB (Development Review Board) model versus the town's current PC/ZBA model as well as the pros and cons of each. Then, an open discussion by all those attending brought many of the issues confronting the town to light.

Newton used the familiar three branches/roles model of the U.S. government to help clarify roles and responsibilities under the two models. In this view, the executive function is performed by the zoning administrator, the legislative (rule-making) is done by the planning commission, and the (quasi) judicial function, i.e., making decisions on specific cases and applying the rules, is done by either a DRB or, in the town's current structure, by both the PC and the ZBA. That last point, dual responsibility



for the quasi-judicial piece (reviewing and approving specific projects) was seen by most attending to be the biggest problem with the town's current system. As further background, Taylor stated that about half of Vermont municipalities have moved to a DRB structure with general satisfaction. Most of the municipalities maintaining the PC/ZBA structure were smaller towns of less than 2,000 population,

in either the Northeast Kingdom or southern Vermont.

Much of the remaining discussion focused on Stuart Bennett's question: "What problem are we trying to solve here?" Two primary problems relating to the structure were raised, as well as some related ones:

SEE **DRB** PAGE 12

PC approves VCS outdoor center

Mara Brooks
EDITOR

In a unanimous vote, the Planning Commission conditionally approved the final site plan submitted by the Vermont Commons School to build an outdoor education center at 2369 Spear Street, but forest and wetlands on the 53-acre parcel must remain untouched, the July 29 decision read.

When VCS's application was submitted last November, the zoning administrator determined it required a site plan review and a conditional use review. The VCS pursued the site plan review first with an understanding that the conditional use review and ZBA approval would be required.

The PC told applicants they must submit a note confirming forest and wetlands on the property will remain in their natural state and protected as Significant Forest and Aquatic Habitat. Approved trails and other alterations will be allowed but the PC prohibited the use of fences around the property's boundaries to preserve wildlife connectivity. Signage and paint blazes will instead be used to mark boundaries and to remind students and staff to respect neighbors' privacy. Additional hedgerow plantings will also be required.

VCS must obtain conditional use approval from the ZBA prior to applying for zoning permits or commencing any site preparation, the decision said.

Town

Moore resigns ZBA member accuses chair of “character assassination”

Mara Brooks
EDITOR

After serving less than three months as a member of the ZBA, Ronda Moore has resigned. “Tonight, I am resigning from the zoning board,” Moore read from a prepared statement at the July 28 ZBA meeting. “I do so not easily, but because I believe [ZBA Chair]

Lane [Morrison] and I have differences which cannot be reconciled.”

Her resignation was effective immediately, Moore said.

For the past month, Moore was at the center of the latest conflict-of-interest scandal to rock the ZBA. This time, the alleged conflict involved an application submitted by Emerald Green Properties for its proposed Charlotte Health Center in the West Village commercial district.

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 that Moore recused herself from voting on whether the project required a conditional use permit.

In a surprise move, ZBA Chair Lane Morrison showed up at the June 28 Selectboard meeting and requested Moore be removed from the zoning board. Morrison claimed Moore’s alleged failure to disclose a perceived conflict of interest with the health center had compromised her integrity as a town official.

“I think she’s violated the trust that the Selectboard has put in her to represent the community on the ZBA,” Morrison said at the time.

Moore was not present at the meeting to answer Morrison’s accusations because the change to the agenda had not been noticed.

Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow criticized Moore at both at the June 28 meeting and in later statements to *The News*, describing her conduct as “unsettling” and “disappointing.” But Krasnow told Morrison that, in accordance

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HEALTH CENTER

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wetlands but a previous developed site that had very low wetland values.”

Lewack said the depth of information provided by Barton and the state represented “a much higher level of expertise” than the town typically has access to, and they saw no need to dig any deeper.

“We felt we could trust that information, it came from a higher level of expertise and data that what we alone as the town could muster,” he said.

The conditions imposed by the PC were an attempt to balance “a strict application of the rules with whatever is being proposed by the applicant and what we feel is reasonable,” Lewack said.

Finding that sweet spot was not always easy, Lewack said. For example, on the topic of wetlands encroachment, the PC found land use regulations were often less than clear.

“In one place the regulations say no building of any kind on wetland buffers, but in another place is says if you have a detailed assessment by an independent expert, and the state issues a permit allowing the encroachment, the planning commission can go along with that,” Lewack said.

The town opted for the second approach, Lewack said, because the applicants’ plan was “honestly presented” and “shows the parking lot behind the building encroached into the wetland buffer.”

In keeping with a “stricter application” of the rules, the PC also required the health center remove the parking spaces “above the minimum required in the land use regulations,” Lewack said. “It requires the applicant to change the site plan to have a lower impact project.”

Other conditions were added as a result of neighbors’ concerns. Adjoining property owners Jeanne and Rene Kaczka-Valliere publicly opposed the project, citing concerns of noise and light pollution. In an interview with *The News*, the couple promised to appeal the project in environmental court if their concerns were not adequately addressed.

“We felt the neighbors to the west were clearly going to bear the brunt of the impact from the long line of parking and dumpster next to their

“The data showed pretty clearly that all the significant wetlands are much further to the south than the two acres that border Ferry Road. So, from our perspective, there weren’t any important or Class 1 wetlands anywhere near where the health center was going to build.”

Larry Lewack, Town Planner

boundaries,” Lewack said. “So, we insisted on a few things, including that the applicants relocate the dumpsters to the east of the main parking area in back.”

Another condition requires applicants replace the proposed lattice screening with solid fencing.

“Lattice is not effective screening from headlights,” Lewack said. “So, we required a five-foot-high privacy fence so the headlights of passenger vehicles pulling in would not shine onto the neighbor’s property.”

Eliminating parking spaces also reduces light pollution along the western boundary, Lewack said.

“By terminating that long row of parking spaces, the amount of lighting along that boundary is reduced,” he said. “Active areas of parking lot will be lit, but if you’re truncating that parking area, you don’t need lighting along that western boundary.”

Lewack conceded that despite study findings and efforts to reduce the project’s impact, some residents may still oppose the health center on environmental grounds.

“The question is not can you completely eliminate the impact, but are you treating it effectively and responsibly?” Lewack said. “And I think the solution the applicants presented after the PC pushed them to come up with a plan was an appropriate compromise.”

Interested parties who oppose the Charlotte Health Center development have 30 days to appeal the project in environmental court. Environmental surveys and other documents related to the project can be found on the Charlotte Health Center project page at the town website.



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:
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- 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.

Editorial Staff

Editor: Mara Brooks

(mara@thecharlottenews.org)

Managing Editor: Anna Cyr

(anna@thecharlottenews.org)

Contributing Editor: Edd Merritt

Copy editors: Beth Merritt, Katherine Arthaud

Proofreaders: Edd Merritt, Mike & Janet

Yantacka

Business Staff

Ad manager: Christy Hagios

(ads@thecharlottenews.org)

Bookkeeper: Susan Jones

(billing@thecharlottenews.org)

Board Members

President & Publisher: John Quinney

(john@thecharlottenews.org)

Treasurer: Margery McCracken

(treasurer@thecharlottenews.org)

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Heard on the street

News develops quickly in Charlotte and in many cases, stories have been whispered about for some time before the story officially breaks. In more than one case we’ve struggled to find the balance between holding stories that aren’t yet ripe and alerting the community to issues we know are of interest.

To strike that balance we’ve created “Heard on the Street”. While not a gossip column, HOS serves to alert readers to smaller news items, developing stories, and issues brewing in the community. It’s a way to share what we can, when we can, about stories we feel confident are developing into News with a capital N. Tipsters please note: all items must be newsworthy and sources must be willing to identify themselves to us, even if they wish to remain an “anonymous source.” (That is, we won’t reveal your name, quote you in the story, or share with anyone that the tip came from you.)

We hope you’ll find Heard on the Street to be a welcome addition to *The News*, and we look forward to your contributions.

Mara

Settlement Agreement Imminent in Spear, Tenney Dispute

A settlement agreement may be coming in the legal dispute between neighbors Richard Tenney and Carrie Spear.

A clerk with the Chittenden County Superior Court told *The News* parties stated at their July 26 status conference they have reached an agreement. Attorney Liam Murphy said he was waiting to hear back from an adjoining landowner before filing a settlement with the court.

On March 9, Carrie Spear and co-Appellants Michael Spear and 2877 Spear Street Associates, LLC, filed a Notice of Appeal to block Tenney from installing a well on his property at 76 Jackson Hill Road. In the filing, Spear claims Tenney’s permit was “improperly obtained for numerous reasons” and “directly impacts” Spear’s adjacent property.

Tenney’s permit, which was approved on February 12, detailed a plan to disconnect the building on his property from an off-site water supply to a new drilled well.

The next status conference is scheduled for August 30, but parties may file an agreement with the court before that date.

Trouble may be brewing for Vermont Commons project

Not all Charlotte residents are celebrating the PC’s decision to grant conditional approval to the Vermont Commons development. Concerns reportedly include increased traffic on Spear Street, the safety of the proposed driveway, wetlands and wildlife corridor impacts, and more. While neighbors are not yet ready to discuss these matters in the public sphere, sources say they will be soon. Story developing.

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Around Town

Congratulations

to **Matt Bonoma** of Charlotte who bought the Vermont Cookie Love creemee and cookie stand on Route 7 from Paul Seyler and Suzanna Miller, who had owned it since 2008. Matt looks forward to continuing its successful business, and according to an article in *Seven Days* of August 4, he plans to be a “hands-on owner.” Matt is quoted as saying, “You’re doing something right when you’re 42 and come home covered in hot fudge.”

to **Alex Paton** of Charlotte who earned placement on the Bates College dean’s list for the winter semester 2021. This means his grade point average was greater than 3.88. He is majoring in art and visual culture with a geology minor. Alex is the son of John and Virginia Paton. Bates, located in Lewiston, Maine, is a private liberal arts college, founded in 1855. Along with Colby and Bowdoin Colleges, Bates is one of the “Maine Big Three” and competes in the “New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC).”

to Charlotte **Greg Cluff** who was inducted into the St. Michael’s College Hall of Fame for his successful tenure as the school’s women’s tennis program coach. Over his 13-year tenure on the coaching staff (10 as head coach), his teams qualified for the NCAA tournament from 2008 to 2010. Greg also served as the college’s coordinator of athletic admissions for his last six years. Prior to his college positions, Greg spent more than 30 years as the CVU High School boys tennis coach and a social studies teacher. In the early 1970s and 1980s he was also the teaching professional at the Burlington Tennis Club.

to **Christina Asquith** of Charlotte who is the chief operating officer of the Hack Club, a Shelburne-based nonprofit organization that oversees a network of student-operated coding clubs. A cross-country trip to Los Angeles by club members and guests was featured in a *Seven Days* article on July 28. On the trip, the Hack students created code for computer applications and built a network of them. With several hundred schools with Hack programs across the country, there are approximately 13,000 youth involved in them. Woody Keppel of Charlotte provided entertainment on the train ride, saying, “It’s the craziest thing I’ve ever done.” Woody believes computer coding is the world of the future and the Hackers are at its forefront.

Sympathies

are extended to family and friends of **Robin Mayo** of Vergennes, who passed away July 24 at the age of 57. Born in Monkton, she spent her childhood there. Her surviving family includes her sister, Susan Mayo, and Susan’s partner, Richard Tenney, of Charlotte.

are extended to the family and friends of **Phyllis Deming** of Shelburne, who died July 19 at the age of 92. Among other ventures that she believed were valuable to her town of Shelburne, she started the *Shelburne News*, then a newsletter, that later became a small-town newspaper. She served as a volunteer at the Charlotte Senior Center and was a certified ombudsman for Vermont Legal Aid. The family asks that those who wish to make donations in Phyllis’ memory consider doing so to the Charlotte Senior Center, P.O. Box 207, Charlotte, VT 05445.

are extended to family and friends of **Jeanette Baker** of Charlotte and Evanston, Illinois, who passed away Aug. 4 at the age of 89 while a patient at the UVM Medical Center. A memorial service in recognition of her life’s accomplishments occurred on Aug. 9.

Ron “Pete” Purdum

It is with equal measures of grace and sadness that the Purdum family announces the passing of their beloved “Pete” Purdum. Ronald Wade Purdum, “Pete”, 87, died peacefully surrounded by his family on Aug. 5, after being diagnosed with aggressive lung cancer. He was born May 7, 1934 in Queens, NY. Eventually he made his home in Charlotte where he lived for over 53 years.

Pete served overseas in the army for three years and returned to Vermont where he graduated from UVM. While in Germany he met his first wife Liesel. They married and lived in their Charlotte home which Pete built. Their union brought two lovely daughters, Kim and Karen, into the world. He spent most of his professional career as a computer programmer for the Accounting Department at UVM, retiring in 1995.

He married his second wife Waverly E. Pratt in 1997. In Pete’s golden years, he loved his John Deere tractor almost as much as his beloved Waverly. Together, he and Waverly loved working on their property, clearing land, gardening and planting trees which brought them both much joy. They were fortunate to have loyal, long-standing friendships that spanned decades. As a group they enjoyed travel, gathering together to celebrate special moments in life and always were available for a robust, competitive game of cards.

Those who knew Pete were often recipients of his generous helping hands; for many years he was an active member of the Charlotte Rescue Squad, the American Red Cross, Meals on Wheels and the Charlotte Food Shelf. He was



Ron “Pete” Purdum

an avid reader, loved travel, a giver of “giant affectionate” hugs and most especially loved the camaraderie of others.

On Jan. 12, 1971, Pete was raised as a Master Mason under the tutelage of Brother Richard Preston at Friendship Lodge #24 in Charlotte. Throughout Pete’s life he maintained a commitment to freemasonry and the Lodge of Masons. He mentored young masons according to the sacred rules of Masonry: educating, motivating and inspiring them to seek wisdom and learn the meaning of service to others. With remarkable honor, grace and humility Pete received his 50-year pin in January 2021. He employed its tenets in everything he undertook; the sacred teachings guided him in all his actions and in the spirit of service.

Pete leaves the earth a better place through his wife, children and stepchildren. He will be missed by his wife, Waverly, his daughters and their husbands, Kim and Greg Swinhart of South Carolina, Karen and Steven Reinecke of California, and grandchildren Lauren and (Ryan) Sawyer, Micah and (Sabrina) Swinhart and great granddaughter Willow Jo, and Tristan and Tyler Reinecke; stepchildren from the Pratt family: Donald, Candace, Roberta, Angela and Chuck; grandchildren Jamie, Justin, Jordan, Taylor, Jesus, Rozlyn, Yohanna, Lauren, Kylie and in loving memory Mackenzie; and great grandchildren Paige, PJ, Jayden, Jordyn, Estella, Mackinley and Arlo.

The family wishes to thank Dr. Fink, Dr. Unger, Dr. Li and staff, the Visiting Nurse Association and the wonderful staff at the McClure Miller Respite House. In lieu of flowers, we invite you to make a donation to McClure Miller Respite House, 3113 Roosevelt Hwy, Colchester, VT 05446 in memory of Ronald (Pete) W. Purdum.

The celebration of Pete’s life will be held on Saturday, Aug. 14, at 2 p.m at the Friendship Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons located at 1453 Church Hill Road in Charlotte. At the family’s request, please wear a mask and as difficult as it may be, please avoid physical contact and maintain social distance.

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ZBA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

with ZBA rules of procedure, the zoning board, not the Selectboard, needed to vote on whether Moore should be removed.

The ZBA met in a closed session on July 14 and decided no action would be taken to remove Moore. Moore said she requested an open meeting, but Morrison denied her request.

In her resignation letter, Moore said Morrison’s failure to recuse himself from the July 14 session was in violation of the board’s conflict of interest policy. She offered a searing critique of Morrison’s and Krasnow’s leadership on the matter.

“There is a disturbing double standard in the town,” she said. “Lane’s June 28 public character assassination during a Selectboard meeting wasn’t even on the Selectboard agenda. Nevertheless, Lane was given all the respect and time he needed... to make his public mischaracterization of me and what he felt the outcome should be.”

Moore stated although she was “not given notice or an opportunity to be heard” at the June 28 meeting, that when she later requested time from the Selectboard to respond to the accusations, Krasnow refused to accommodate her.

“How is it that a request from the chair of one board is granted by another board while a

similar request by a voter who is not a chair... is turned down?” Moore asked. “What the heck has happened to the transparency, fair play, and the truth so passionately discussed in Charlotte this spring?”

In recent weeks, former ZBA Vice Chair Stuart Bennett has been a vocal critic of the town’s handling of the Moore controversy. During public comments at two recent Selectboard meetings, Bennett encouraged Krasnow to apologize to Moore. Krasnow declined, citing the advice of general counsel.

Selectboard Chair Frank Tenney, who attended the July 28 ZBA meeting, was less hesitant to offer Moore an apology. “Ronda... I don’t know about the rest of the ZBA or the rest of the Selectboard, but me personally, I would like to apologize for what you had to go through,” Tenney said. “I feel it was unfair.”

As she ended her resignation statement, Moore urged Charlotte voters to elect and appoint new leadership in order to “realign” their understanding of “fair play, truth and due process.” She also said her resignation should not be mistaken for a desire to remain silent on issues affecting the town.

“Do not count me out in making my voice heard as private citizen Ronda Moore,” she said.

Moore was appointed to the ZBA on May 10.

Ronda Moore could not be reached for comment.

Commentary

Has Charlotte become Sturgis, South Dakota, East?

Edd Merritt

We were sitting on our front lawn with some friends, sipping cool liquids, when a motor cyclist came blasting up Hinesburg Road from Spear Street, exhaust plugs wide open, speed in the range of 60 miles per hour by the time he hit the half-mile climb past us, and looking as though his next stop might be Sturgis, South Dakota, to join his cronies where speed and sound and hundreds of cycles count above all else on the face of the planet.

Recently, our Front Porch Forum has contained a number of individuals’ thoughts about road speed in town. Several have wanted to see the limit raised to 30 miles per

hour, since that is closer to the speed people drive anyway. Why not be realistic, they ask?

So, I decided to take a somewhat strange bent toward comparing Charlotte with other places and what they set as an urban limit.

This begins with a piece of bizarre history of my own piece of property. My late next-door neighbor, John Sheehan, had been cleaning his storeroom and came across a photo of our lot as a softball diamond. Now, is our house third base or the pitcher’s mound? It beats me because I think foliage has impinged on the outfield since the picture was taken. The base paths became vegetable gardens. However, yesterday I saw one of our state animals, a bobtail cat, scouring our back yard, apparently

looking for a short route to second base.

Locals, mostly farmers, traded milk buckets for bats, gloves and leather balls to take on their compatriots from Hinesburg, Vergennes and Monkton in local softball battles. (Were they the Hinesburg Hiccups? And was our crew the East Charlotte Endians?)

In those days, would the street speed of passing traffic endanger ballplayers? Yes, in all likelihood. So, I decided to check out similar situations in other towns – well, places like Chicago, for example. My sons lived in the Wrigley Field section of Chicago’s North Side, and I looked up the speed limit around Cub Town. Low and behold it turned out to be 30 miles per hour. We live in the Chicago of

Vermont apparently.

So, let’s take advantage of that fact and raise the town limit to 30, putting up speed signs and placing healthy fines on the backs of motorcyclists who think the faster one goes, the greater the wisdom gained. My thought about this is that if you can’t abide by the rules, at least cover your plugs before going up our hill so we won’t hear your turbo-charged Harley. And by the way, people do turn out of driveways in the village and cannot be expected to see you cruising either direction at 60 mph. Even with an attempt at a quick slowdown, somebody is liable to become dead meat (and not a Philo Ridge Beefer). We’re a village. Let’s act like one.

A modest proposal: A floating restaurant for the Charlotte Ferry landing

Hans Ohanian

The old retired ferryboat Champlain is now tied up at the south side of the Charlotte ferry landing, its engine yanked out and weeds growing along its gunnels. The old lady deserves a better end than this. Built in 1930, she crisscrossed the lake for almost 100 years and occasionally served as a charter cruise boat.

The Lake Champlain Transportation Company is eager to be rid of the hulk but has run out of ideas of what to do. Last year there was a proposal to sink the hulk at the Burlington waterfront, outside the harbor, to serve as a playground for scuba divers. By scattering 40 silver dollars in and around the hulk, you could probably attract scuba divers in droves. But this plan fell through over protests that the wreck would cause pollution of the water (a somewhat odd concern, given that the outlet for all the sewage produced by Burlington is not far from the harbor).

So, how about leaving the hulk where it is and converting it into a floating restaurant at the Charlotte ferry landing? Vermont is surprisingly deficient in sites for waterfront

dining, and the large car deck of the Champlain, fully covered by the upper deck, but with large picture windows at both sides, seems custom-made as a splendid site for sunset dining, with the lake and the Adirondacks as a backdrop.

A kitchen could be installed in the empty engine room (no risk of kitchen fires, the walls are all steel). The fuel tank could serve as a holding tank for kitchen and other sewage, to be transferred once a week to a barge and taken to the sewage treatment plant at the Burlington waterfront. Potable water from the water plant in Shelburne Bay could be brought in by another barge. And the suite of rooms on the upper level of the Champlain could be converted into a luxurious waterfront apartment for short or long-term rental, which would create a nice cash flow to cover the docking fees that would have to be paid to LCTC.

The ferry-landing location, with a steady stream of cars arriving and departing, would provide a steady stream of restaurant patrons. Parking for diners might be a problem, but perhaps the existing ferry parking lot could be expanded and some nearby field could

be converted for parking. No problem with wetlands.

So what are we waiting for? All we need is an investor, or a consortium of investors, with vision and a bit of ready money. Senator Leahy would probably be willing to contribute a million or two of federal grants for the laudable purpose of preserving the Champlain as a historical artifact (after his F-35 fiasco he might well feel he owes Vermonters something; and we can offer to

rename the Champlain the Leahy Culinary Welcome Center).

Or maybe we could exploit the coming windfall of federal COVID grants. Better than spending this windfall on another underpass extravaganza for wayward chickens to cross the road.

Hope to see you for sunset dinner at the ferry landing in Spring 2022, after COVID is really, really over.

Calendar Events

We welcome appropriate community event listings with a maximum of 100 words. Print fees may apply to community events outside of Charlotte. Email your events to ads@thecharlottenews.org.

Aug. 12 Grange on The Green 5 p.m., with music from 5.30 p.m.
A community get together on the Town Green and Library porch features Va et Vient, playing French, Quebecois, Cajun and Creole songs and tunes. Va-et-Vient includes Carol Reed on voice, guitar and mandolin, Suzanne Germain on voice and percussion, and Lausanne Allen on voice, fiddle, flute, harmonica and mandolin.

Also featuring Ice cream from Lulu, locally crafted beverages from SobraMesa and opportunities to meet local food producers and farmers. This is a free event and sponsored by Charlotte-based Cumbancha, an acclaimed record label, and generously supported by our season sponsors College Essay Coach, and Mow Electric!”

Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 14 and 15 Celebrating the lives of Marty Illick and Terry Dinnan
Saturday: An outdoor event at 10 a.m. at the Breeding Barn at Shelburne Farms. Please RSVP. An accurate estimate of attendees is needed for event planners. To RSVP go to illickdinnan.wixsite.com/my-site/rsvp. Bring what you need for seating on the lawn. The event will take place inside the Breeding Barn if rain is predicted.
Sunday: Visiting hours and music from 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Marty and Terry’s family will be at their house, 442 Lewis Creek Rd. in Charlotte, for visiting hours. Visitors can talk with family, walk through the yard and gardens, enjoy a line-up of musicians on the lawn by the river and spend time in Marty and Terry’s special place. Parking

instructions (in various neighbors’ lawns and fields) will be posted closer to the event.

Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 14 and 15 Diamond Island Regatta and Split Rock Race
Diamond Island Yacht Club (formerly the Royal Savage Yacht Club) and Point Bay Marina in Charlotte host the ninth annual Diamond Island Regatta on Aug. 14, followed by an awards dinner under the DIYC tent at Point Bay. Pre-race breakfast begins at 8, race starts at 11, and post-race festivities at 4:30. The next day, DIYC hosts the inaugural Split Rock Race, with the race start at 10:30 a.m. Both sailing races are part of the Lake Champlain Championship Series, a summer-long competition. The events benefit the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum in Ferrisburgh. More information: diamondislandyc.org/diamond-island-regatta-2021/

Friday, Aug. 20 Raw Milk Celebration party 6–8 p.m. at Donegan Family Farm in Charlotte
1506 Carpenter Road, Charlotte. We did it! On May 12, 2021 Governor Scott signed H.218 into law. The new law, Act 22, expands raw milk sales for tier-two producers to other farmstands and CSAs in Vermont and went into effect on July 1, 2021. Now we celebrate! Join us at Donegan Family Farm for (raw!) milk and cookies, talking ag policy, and catching up with the raw milk community. P.S. Please BYO blanket or chair!

Town

Bristol Solar Co-op aims to assist Clemmons Family Farm

Nick Bishop
COMMUNITY NEWS SERVICE

The Bristol Community Solar Co-op is coming to fruition with a little added benefit to support the Clemmons Family Farm in Charlotte. Vermont Interfaith Power and Light (VTIPL) and the Addison County Interfaith Climate Action Network (ICAN) have stepped in to create a tithe program to help get solar developments at the farm underway.

Acorn Energy, a volunteer organization, will be placing 1,694 solar panels on the site of the former Bristol landfill at 80 Pine Street. Twenty percent of the available units were reserved for ICAN and VTIPL to offer faith organizations and their members a chance to invest in a solar future. Purchasers were asked to donate a tithe (10 percent) above the purchasing price to help support solar development at CFF.

“Our duty as people of faith is to do everything we can to protect creation,” said VTIPL board member Richard Butz. Although there is the added benefit of lower electricity costs in the future, this is a project of stewardship and helping the next generation. Butz added, “I’m almost 80, so I’m not going to see much of a payout, but we have kids and grandkids, and we’re worried about their future.”

Through the tithe program, ICAN and VTIPL raised enough to purchase about 13 units for CFF. The units will ensure clean electrical generation for a portion of the farm’s needs.

The project is broken into a single “series A”

investor and many “series B” investors. The series A investor, the Co-operative Insurance Companies of Middlebury, will provide about 27 percent of the capital needed for the project. The rest of the capital will be provided by around 120 separate series B investors. Investors can expect a payoff in about 12 years.

All electricity generated will be allocated to Green Mountain Power. The revenue will be credited to purchasers through their GMP electrical bills.

This project provides an opportunity for those who want to participate in a solar future but do not have the ability to do it on their own land. Rich Carpenter, treasurer for Acorn Energy, said, “We certainly don’t want to encourage people to cut down trees.” He added that the Bristol Co-op is an ideal situation for those who are in a condominium or renting where renters who cannot physically mount their own units to a building.

Nearly all units in the solar field are reserved, pending a bond issue in Middlebury that, if passed, would finance the remaining units. The financial closing for “series B” investors is set for September 10. Carpenter said, “Our hope is that actual construction will begin by the end of September.” If all goes well, they hope to be generating electricity by the end of the year.

Nick Bishop is a student at the University of Vermont and a reporter for the Community News Service, a student-powered partnership with local community newspapers.



Acorn Energy, a volunteer organization, will be placing 1,694 solar panels on the site of the former Bristol landfill at 80 Pine Street.

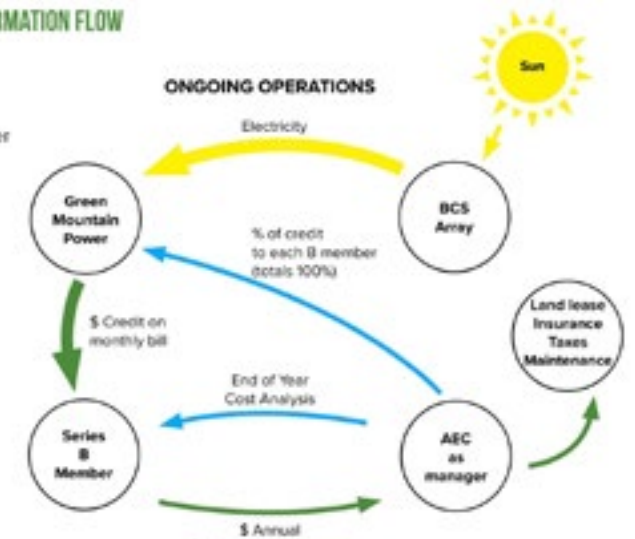
HOW ELECTRICITY, MONEY AND INFORMATION FLOW

There are four elements:

- Series B Member
- BCS Array
- Acorn Energy Co-op as Manager
- Green Mountain Power

The flows are color coded:

- Energy - yellow
- Information - blue
- Dollars or credits - green



NOTICE OF VACANCIES ON TOWN BOARDS

August 10, 2021

The following boards currently have unfilled seats:

- Zoning Board of Adjustment (1 seat; term ending April 30, 2024)
- Energy Committee (3 seats; terms ending April 30, 2022 & 2023)
- Board of Auditors (1 seat; elected position; appointment to Town Meeting, 2022)
- Trustee of Public Funds (2 seats; elected positions; appointments to Town Meeting, 2022)

If you have interest in serving the Town by participating in any of these capacities please send a short statement explaining your interest and relevant background information to Dean Bloch, Town Administrator at dean@townofcharlotte.com. If you have questions, please e-mail or call 425-3071 ext. 5, or stop by Town Hall.

Farm Series

The last pizza on earth

Lucie Lehmann
CONTRIBUTOR

Pizza on Earth, the pioneering establishment that brought artisanal wood-fired pizza to Vermont, served its last made-to-order creations on July 23. Owners Jay and Marcia Vogler, both 66, haven't decided whether the closure will be permanent, but they say it's time for an extended break after "10 years of farming and 22 years of pizza-ing."

The couple alerted the community of their plans several weeks before the closure, and customers flooded the phone line on the last morning they were taking orders. It took just 50 minutes to sell out the 100 available pizzas, leaving many longtime customers frustrated. "We had a lot of swearing the other day," Jay noted wryly. "One of our regulars from Hinesburg got the last Pizza on Earth and he said that will go down in the history books."

That regular, Tom Barden, is still processing the news. "I'm from Ireland and I Zoom with my still-living siblings in Ireland, and they knew that we had pizza every Friday. They asked me what I'm going to do now, and I said, well, I'm going to starve."

The Voglers moved to Charlotte from New Jersey in 1991. In the beginning, it was farming, not pizza, they focused on. Jay, a chef who had apprenticed on an organic farm in New Jersey, ran the 64-acre Bingham Brook Farm, while Marcia continued to work full-time as a bra and lingerie designer. And just as Pizza on Earth would eventually pave the way for other wood-fired pizza purveyors, they also helped build the culture of organic farming in Vermont. "When we moved here, we were one of 60 organic farms in the state; now there are 700 or more," Jay noted.

They evolved from a largely wholesale farm to one that for a time featured a CSA. Pizza came into the picture after they installed a commercial bread oven in the late 1990s. Since people were coming to pick up their CSA shares, they reasoned, why not also offer pizza? "The first year I'd be farming and then I'd run in make the dough and everything and go back out, and maybe we'd sell eight or 10 pizzas," Jay recalled.

That changed when *Seven Days* cofounder Paula Routly and columnist Debbie Solomon began writing about the mouthwatering, thin-crust pizza Jay made with the farm's and other locally sourced fresh organic ingredients. By 2001 they stopped farming to focus on pizza and were regularly selling up to 120 pizzas each night they were open, along with several types of bread and Marcia's cakes, tarts, cupcakes and gelato. "I don't know why we



did that," she admitted, shaking her head as they recalled their ambitious offerings.

"To show we could," Jay interjected.

Marcia, who quit fulltime work in 2006, recalled that casual dining and takeout options around Charlotte were limited 22 years ago. "People starting talking about how they needed a place to meet in the community," and their Hinesburg Road farm became that spot. It regularly drew families with children, visitors from out of town, and anyone who wanted to enjoy exceptional pizza and desserts on the wooden picnic tables scattered in front of the farmhouse.

The roughly four days of preparation required to make the pizza and its changing ingredients, the hard physical work, and the nights when guests sat on their front lawn until 10 o'clock took their toll over the years. And though the business always had a loyal following, competition from as many as eight other establishments that now serve pizza within 10 miles highlights how much the food landscape has changed since 1999. Covid forced the couple to rethink their model, first shutting it down entirely, then eliminating paid staff and paring back to takeout only.

Surprisingly, Jay and Marcia found they liked the change and weren't ready to return to the old way. Of their decision to close now, Marcia explained it this way: "We want to just regroup and think about what it is we want to do, and if it is keeping the same model or not doing it at all."



Jay and Marcia Vogler seated below a painting by Jay.

Photos by Lucie Lehmann



On an eerily quiet Friday morning when the phone would normally be ringing with orders, the pizza shop was dark and the oven cold. As they reflected on what might come next, both Jay and Marcia said it was too early to know. They mentioned simple things like cleaning the barn, climbing Mt. Mansfield—which they've never had time to do—spending more days at their lake cabin in Cornwall and having more time for artistic endeavors. "I'll be painting more," Jay said, and Marcia, who is also a guide at the print shop at the

Shelburne Museum, is learning letterpress printing.

Both of them shake their heads when asked if they intend to rest. Whatever comes next, it won't be sitting still. "That's not what we would do," Marcia says firmly.

Jay agrees. They've kept their food license, and, rather than shutting down or selling off their equipment, they've hung a closed sign for the time being. "If we think it's a mistake, it's here to redo."

Vermont Open Farm Week celebrates seven years

Farms welcome the public through August 15 to dig into Vermont's agricultural economy

Tara Pereira
VERMONT FRESH NETWORK

Vermont Open Farm Week is coming back strong in 2021. This summer, Vermont Open Farm Week is Sunday, Aug. 8, through Sunday, Aug. 15, and features 90 events at over 45 farms across the state. For the seventh consecutive year, farmers across Vermont will open their barn doors and garden gates to welcome the public for a behind-the-scenes look at Vermont's vibrant working landscapes.

Event listings can be sorted by day and location on DigInVT.com.

Open Farm Week is a celebration of Vermont farms offering visitors a backstage pass to learn about local food origins, experience authentic agritourism activities and build relationships with local farmers. Activities vary widely and take place across the state. Farm visitors can look forward to wine and honey tastings, goat yoga, jam-making classes, behind-the-scenes tours, on-farm dinners, live music, herding demonstrations and more.

"Vermont's unique agricultural heritage plays a large part in attracting visitors to our state and we're so glad to see that this year's

Open Farm Week has more events than ever before," said Department of Tourism and Marketing Commissioner Heather Pelham. "Open Farm Week is a great example of how partnerships between local farms, agricultural organizations, higher education institutions, and state agencies can continue to grow agritourism in Vermont."

Many events are free; some require pre-registration. Not all farms are open every day, so visit DigInVT.com to explore the event schedule. Everyone is invited to join the Open Farm Week conversation on social media using the hashtag #VTOpenFarm.

About Open Farm Week

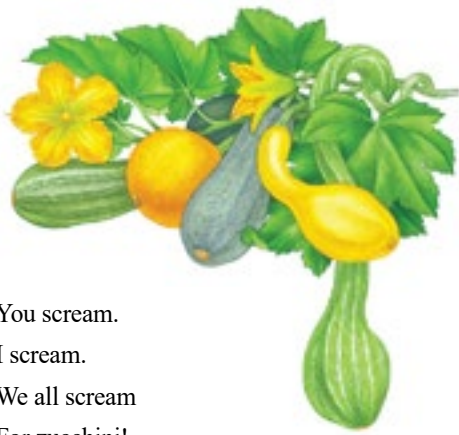
Open Farm Week is a collaborative statewide

agritourism project organized by members of the Vermont Farm to Plate Network, including City Market, DigInVT.com, Shelburne Farms and Farm-Based Education, NOFA-VT, the University of Vermont Extension, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the Vermont Fresh Network and the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing. DigInVT.com is an online agritourism platform run by a partnership of local nonprofit organizations and is the virtual home of Open Farm Week.

Vermont Open Farm Week is made possible by the generous support of sponsor City Market/Onion River Coop and media sponsor Front Porch Forum.

Food Shelf News

Susan Ohanian
CONTRIBUTOR



You scream.

I scream.

We all scream

For zucchini!

Maybe that's a bit of an exaggeration, but fresh vegetables are popular—and they are beneficial.

Attention all gardeners: Your gifts of fresh veggies the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month are very much appreciated.

We send a big thank you to Sweet Roots Farm for a bountiful supply of squash. When we say bountiful, we're talking summer squash, straight-neck squash, zucchini and patty-pan squash.

Healthy lunches

Again, we want to express gratitude to members of the Charlotte Congregational Church and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, as well as for a grant from United Church of Christ. This work and these funds have made a great lunch program possible this summer. Lunch bags filled with healthy snacks and nonperishable healthful food continue to be available at the Charlotte Library, Spear's Store and the Food Shelf. We are pleased to report that participation has been very good.

Needed

Not wanting to neglect food for the mind, the Food Shelf is distributing high-interest books to children of all ages, from birth to teen. At present, we are looking for self-help/personal growth books for teens, as well as books about

finance and budgets. Middle graders have requested books describing occupations—books along the lines of “So you want to be a fireman... a stone mason... a beautician... a health care worker...” and more. Kids we've talked to expressed a great interest in how things work, and we would love to distribute books that answer these questions. We welcome contributions in these areas and will see that they get to the children. There is a Food Shelf dropbox at the Charlotte Library.

We remind everyone that high-interest children's books, mostly fiction, are available in a rubber container on The Grange steps. Invite a child you know to go take a look—and take a book. Our goal this summer has been to be sure that every child in Charlotte has a good book to read. This project will continue into the fall...and beyond. Children need to be able to choose books, books they can keep.

Please consider helping out with school supplies: pens, pencils, boxes of markers and crayons, glue, folders, notebooks, sheet protectors.

Please think ahead to the Grange rummage sale coming early in October. There will be a special effort in collecting winter wear for children in our community.

Important Notice: Commodity Supplemental Food Program

The Vermont Food Bank is doing a special outreach push. If you are age 60 or older and meet income guidelines, you can get a free box of food every month. Learn more and fill out a simple online application here: vtfoodbank.org/share-food/csfp.

To apply by phone call 1-800-214-4648.

To request a paper application, email the Food Bank: csfp@vtfoodbank.org.

Announcement

The Charlotte Food Shelf accepts donations of paper goods. Paper towels, Kleenex-type tissues, paper napkins and toilet paper are all welcome. Items can be left in the covered entry hall at the back of the Congregational Church on Wednesdays (our distribution day) or at the drop box for the Food Shelf at the library.

Keeping Safe

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

Another successful and sweet year



The most famous and best berry picker: the one and only Uncle Bill (Bill Roberts).

Photo by Christy Hagios

The Hagios family had a successful blackberry season this year and would like to thank all who helped pick berries. “We had a much better season than last,” said Christy Hagios, owner of The Berry Patch. The Berry Patch is located at the Hagios home, and berry picking has been a tradition with their family for roughly a century. At the end of each season the money from the sales of the blackberries is donated to The Charlotte Food Shelf. This year the Hagios family will be donating \$530. You can read more about The Berry Patch on *The Charlotte News* website at: charlottenewsvt.org/2021/07/15/christy-hagios-carrying-on-a-long-and-sweet-family-tradition. The most famous and best berry picker: the one and only

Photo by Pam Darling

For emergency food, call John at 425-3130.

Financial assistance

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

Check the Food Shelf website for more information about different types of financial assistance and eligibility. Applications are available at the Food Shelf and online. The website also contains information about other Vermont resources offering further assistance. charlotteucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf

The Charlotte Food Shelf, Inc. is a nonprofit

organization supported by the Charlotte Congregational Church, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church and the Charlotte community. Our organization is run by volunteers, and all donations made to the Food Shelf go directly for nutritious food and assistance to our neighbors in Charlotte and North Ferrisburgh.

Checks may be mailed to Charlotte Food Shelf and Assistance, P.O. Box 83, Charlotte, VT 05445.

The Food Shelf is open the second and fourth Wednesday of every month from 4 to 6:30 p.m.



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Town

Beach party showcases food, music and fun for locals and non-residents alike

Gail Callahan
CONTRIBUTOR

At first glance, last Saturday’s July 31 activity at the Charlotte Beach appeared understated. The annual town Beach Party was minutes away from starting and anticipation was building.

Preparations were underway as the minutes ticked down to the 5 p.m. starting time.

Vanessa Knowles manned the barbeque, and singer/musician Mary Provencher strolled around the lawn, chatting with bystanders.

Provencher welcomed the Beach Party, noting she and her band, the Mystic Party Band, were booked to play “three to four sets.”

“I love it, this event,” she said.

Shortly after, motorists began arriving, seeking parking spaces in the beach parking lot.

They were greeted warmly by Selectboard member Louise McCarren, who wore her volunteer hat. She reflected on community events and their place in the fabric of the town. As McCarren talked about the event, she excused herself and greeted people in a car calling out, “Come on in.”

“The (beach) party brings a lot of people here,” said McCarren as she stood in the beach parking lot. “It’s great. I think people are happy to get out.”

Because of the pandemic, last year’s party was shelved.

Neil Kvasnak of South Burlington noted the area’s landscape draws him to its sandy shores and refreshing water. “I love the beach and the swimming,” he said “I just love the beach and Lake Champlain. It reminds me of the summer camp in New Hampshire I went to as a kid. The party is a plus. It’s wonderful the way Charlotte includes people from other towns.”

This was the fourth annual beach party, said Recreation Commission Chairman Bill Fraser-Harris. It is open to residents and non-residents alike, boasting food and community. People swayed to music provided by the Mystic Party Band, while others sat on picnic tables.

Fraser-Harris, who said about 200 people attended this year’s party, listened to music and watched as happy party goers chatted to each other or sampled the provided food from Fat Cow Farm, Misty Knoll Chicken, Stoney Loam Farm, ice cream from Backyard Bistro sponsored by Paterson Fuels and Adams Berry Farm. A generous donation of grill expertise from Mow! Mow! Mow! was also supplied for the event.

Fraser-Harris also noted that people were eager to gather after last year’s pause due to the pandemic and felt the party this year elicited a particular joyful response. “Emotions and my intellect were particularly stirred listening to the music,” he said.

As children kicked a soccer ball on the lawn Selectboard member and Charlotte Rescue

member James Faulkner was on hand with two Charlotte Rescue ambulances as well as a rig from Shelburne Rescue comprising the fleet on hand to offer help if needed at the event. Faulkner smiled as he glanced around the beach and green, welcoming the opportunity to gather again.

A few feet away, Cheryl and Frank Gouchoe sat on lawn chairs, smiling and tapping their


fingers as Provencher and her bandmates belted out their musical sets. Mrs. Gouchoe, who settled in town 24 years ago, noted this is the first time she attended the event. With a wide smile on her face, she noted the Beach Party is a welcome celebration. “I used to go to the town party,” she said, looking around the green. “This is new, and you can’t ask for anything better.”



Vanessa Knowles and her husband, Dale, man the barbecue at the party. Dale is Charlotte’s animal control officer.



The Mystic Party Band provided musical entertainment for the event. Photos by Gail Callahan



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Education Get in gear for back to school



Margo Bartsch
CONTRIBUTOR

The “Ready for School” advertising campaigns for supplies, clothing and dorm gear are full steam ahead across all media. However, following this year of untraditional learning, returning to the classroom and cafeteria does not have the same buzz as in the past. A July article, “How to Make Returning to the Office Less Painful,” in the *Wall Street Journal*, features Dr. Victor Carrion, a Stanford University professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, who explains about going back to work in the office: “What transition really means is that we need to ease into it. There’s going to be this impetus to completely return back to normal, but the reality is that life is different now. We not only want to be resilient, but we want to be adaptive.”

Similarly, returning to school can follow the four practical steps of working at the office. Families can make the process easier by going slow, acknowledging the pandemic, creating a ritual, and recognizing that one size does not fit all.

To start, taking it slow is easier said than done. As with any big decision or new adventure, there has been so much time anticipating the next step that a student might want to hit the ground running. Carrion warns, “People who jump too fast may find themselves feeling exhausted very quickly.” Setting goals that are realistic and manageable can make the transition smoother. For example, creating a calendar for time management and a list to show progress can help a student achieve and feel satisfied. The little steps taken can add up to make a big difference.

This May, the Harvard University article, “Why Getting a Good Night’s Sleep Should Be a Priority,” is a reminder that quality sleep is essential for school, work and health. Sleep can affect mood, fatigue and stress. After a year of rolling out of bed for Zoom classes, setting a goal to get a good night’s sleep can allow students to eat breakfast in the morning and feel less rushed.

Second, the pandemic continues to loom, even as schools opens their doors. Many schools are planning activities to acknowledge the loss and reflect on the overall impact of this past year. This is also an opportunity to encourage open discussion and offer support resources.

This May, *Times Higher Education* featured an

article, “How to Readjust to Campus Life after the Covid-19 Pandemic,” from Leeds Trinity University in England, about the adjustment to reopening for face-to-face learning. Toby Chelms, head of student support and well-being, offers some tips to manage feelings. “The crucial thing to remember as you go back to campus life is that everyone’s experiences and expectations will be different.” He encourages taking time to transition and looking after oneself and each other.

Third, creating a ritual can help form a school routine. Carrion suggests that writing down this past year’s experiences will solidify these memories, while adding a twist to build goals to achieve this year. “It gives you a different point in your psychological map,” Carrion explains.

Although getting back into a routine can be challenging, being organized can balance a well-rounded life. Nebraska Methodist College publishes “5 Tips for Getting into the College Routine,” which is also applicable for high school. The five points include establishing consistency, eating healthy, having a planner to keep track of assignments, scheduling daily exercise, and making time for friends.

Finally, when going back to school, it is important to be flexible: one size does not fit all. Some students may be hesitant to return to the physical school, whereas others are eager to embrace traditional campus life. Each student has specific experiences in living with isolation and in craving socialization. Thus, there is a unique starting point for each student to transition to school.

Last March on CNN, Dr. Neha Chaudhary, in an article titled, “Prepare Your Kids Mentally for the Transition Back to School,” provided the following seven helpful tips to safely return to school: plan ahead, talk about worries, anticipate anxiety, be aware of mental health, remember that change does not happen immediately, stay flexible, and be present and consistent. These points affect school performance, personal attitude, social interaction and family dynamics. Be patient and encouraging.... life is a journey that includes resilience.

Back to school is around the corner. Fasten your seat belts and enjoy the ride!

Margo Bartsch founded College Essay Coach, a full-service college admission business, and has been an adjunct professor of business at Champlain College and at Middlebury College.



Hi, Neighbor!

Wendy Pelletier: Bringing her own expertise to the Planning and Zoning Department



Phyl Newbeck
CONTRIBUTOR

There are times when Charlotte Zoning Administrator Wendy Pelletier could easily sit at the other side of the table, providing input to a developer on engine specifications, but that’s no longer her job. Pelletier has a B.S. in civil engineering and a master’s in structural engineering. She took early retirement from VTrans when her office was moved from Montpelier to Barre, but when she saw the posting for zoning administrator she decided to apply.

“I’m calling this my semi-retirement job,” Pelletier said. “I was home during COVID and I was bored. I’m used to a fast-paced work environment, and this looked like it was somewhat related to my background without the stress of multimillion-dollar project management.” Pelletier lived in Hinesburg for several years and was familiar with Charlotte. She started work in late May. “This is a really pleasant group of people to work with,” she said. Pelletier admits to a certain degree of naiveté regarding the complications of the job, but said she is up to the task.

“For the most part, people are very nice,” she said. “We deal with everyone carefully and respectfully.”

Pelletier appreciates that her work day is never

slow. “It’s interesting,” she said, “and I’m certainly never bored. I was familiar with the eastern part of town, but now I’m learning about areas I never got to explore previously, like Cedar Beach and Thompson’s Point, and that’s a lot of fun.” Pelletier is pleased with the way the town’s land use regulations are written. “I’ve read some other regulations,” she said, “and these are written in a fairly friendly style so you don’t need to be an attorney to understand them.”

When Pelletier took over the job there was a bit of a backlog, but she believes they are now caught up. She respects the fact that Charlotte residents are very involved in their community. “I like meeting new people,” she said, “and most of them are excited about projects and happy to get some guidance.” Pelletier noted that residents come from diverse backgrounds, and she believes she can have constructive discussions with people who see things from different viewpoints.

She may be an engineer, but Pelletier also has an artistic side. “I’m a Gemini,” she said. “I dabble in a lot of things.” Pelletier’s art runs the gamut from photography to watercolors, acrylics, stained glass and ceramics. “I don’t stay in one genre,” she said. “I come back to different forms of art.” Pelletier has been busy lately, having just moved her mother from Pennsylvania to an assisted living facility in Vermont, but before that she had been working on some acrylic paintings.



Right: Wendy bikes with her daughter, Katie, on the Burlington Bike Path. Photos contributed

Originally from the Pittsburgh area, Pelletier met her husband, Mike, when they were both working for IBM outside Washington, D.C. A native of southern New Hampshire, Mike wasn’t happy in Virginia, so after the couple married they transferred to Vermont and moved here in 1989. Mike is the university engineer for UVM’s physical plant. Their son Robert, 30, is a mechanical engineer with the Navy. “He has top secret clearance so we don’t really know what he does,” Pelletier said. Their daughter Katie, 27, teleworks for a British company from Newport, Rhode Island. She is the outlier with her career in business and marketing, but the family always teases her when she says or does something that suggests an inner engineer. Although the couple loves dogs, they want to wait until they have more free time before they adopt one. In the

meantime, they share their house with two cats.

In college, Pelletier took part in what is considered a rite of passage for civil engineers: building a concrete canoe. The dearth of female students meant that, despite Pelletier’s professed lack of swimming talent, she was one of those assigned to paddle the women’s boat in a race sponsored by the American Society of Civil Engineers. “I managed to do okay,” she said, “but the boat sank in the next race with our professors in it.”

Pelletier wants to make sure she wears the proper hat when she sits at Town Hall. “I’m sensitive about not telling people what to do from an engineering standpoint,” she said. “I’m trying to rein that in. It’s a blessing and a curse because it’s hard when I know things and can’t share them because it’s not appropriate. It’s something I have to be careful about.”

DRB

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

1. The PC spends 85-90 percent of its time on “quasi-judicial” work (reviewing individual project plans) and has little time to spend on its primary function: planning.
2. Citizens struggle with a confusing process (who do I see about what? ... and what information do I need to include?) and what seem to be arbitrary and confusing rulings by the ZBA or PC on their projects relative to the actual rules.

A related issue that received focus was that the “town doesn’t know what it wants to become...development that does happen does not follow the Town Plan,” i.e., most development happens in rural areas, despite

the town plan calling for more concentrated development in village areas. This was attributed in part to the lack of time spent on actual planning issues by the PC.

It was agreed that moving to a DRB structure was not a “magic potion” that would solve all problems. Board-member training and stability in board and administrator staffing were seen as major problems of late, as well as an overall need to streamline the rules and planning process.

Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow reviewed the process going forward, which would include a decision by the Selectboard following more research, public input and deliberation. The final decision for any change would be made by citizens in a Town Meeting vote.

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Sports

Shrine Maple Sugar football game goes to New Hampshire



Edd Merritt
CONTRIBUTOR

This year’s Maple Sugar Bowl is carved in granite. Played Saturday at Castleton University, New Hampshire ran the 68th bowl game into the ground and shut out Vermont 21-0. This was the second straight Shrine Bowl win for them with last year’s game cancelled because of coronavirus pandemic.

It was all New Hampshire’s running game that made things happen. Their backs carried the ball 56 times, throwing only four passes, none of which were completed. Vermont’s

defense held strong for the opening half and did not allow a score. Unfortunately, their offense did no better, and, despite beginning the second half with the ball, Vermont had to punt, and New Hampshire capitalized with its first touchdown.

Fair Haven’s Kohlby Murray was one of few offensive standouts for Vermont, catching three passes for 52 yards. CVU and Charlotte half back Seth Boffa carried the ball 12 times, gaining 40 yards.

Practices for the coming year begin on Monday. It should be interesting to see the nature of this season’s games given the continuation of the virus pandemic. Will they become modified versions of the sport?



Bassiru Diawara (10) carries the ball in the second half of the Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl.
Photo by John Olender Rutland Herald

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Brookies and Chanterelles.

Photo by Bradley Carleton

Bradley Carleton
CONTRIBUTOR

I recently headed up into the mountains in search of native brook trout with a few very accomplished angler friends—Mark Wilde and John Leshner. My back had been acting up quite a bit, and I had to be extra careful of the terrain that we were going

to fish. The entry to the small mountain stream was down a steep embankment of rocks and roots covered with a slippery emerald moss. I chose my steps carefully and clung to every tree that would support my frame.

Now this might have been accomplished more simply had I not had an expensive LL Bean flyrod and reel with me, but that is a part of the whole picture. Once into the stream it was necessary to monitor each step. Some of the rocks and pebbles were a little slippery with some dark green algae and uneven footing. One second, I'd find myself with one foot on a firm dry rock, and if I was not paying close attention, the next step would send me reeling toward the surface of the rippling water.

Before we walked into the stream, I had mentioned to my friends that I had not caught a fish in these waters for three years, but with two anglers with far greater skills than my own, I would soon find out if it was just my less than exceptional casting and presentation or if, in fact, something about this river had changed. If anyone could catch brookies in this stream it would have to be these two talented fishermen.

They still wanted to try. "Okay," I said. "This will prove to me that it is not my lack of skill that leads to my frustration." Upon examining the water and taking its temperature with two separate thermometers, we decided that 66 degrees was certainly habitable for the magnificent *Salvelinus Fontinalis*, known by true Vermonters as the State Fish—the brook trout.

Brookies have inhabited Vermont waters since the retreat of the glaciers. They can live only in cold, clean water, which is why if you want to pursue them you will need to climb down steep embankments and clamber over boulders from the last big spring melt. As destructive as nature can be, it also presents new opportunities, such as deep pools where the torrential spring waters carve into the streambed.

These pools provide welcome habitat for the brookies on sweltering hot days like the one we experienced. Ambient air temperatures were hovering around 90 degrees after several cooler days earlier in the week. We fished every pool

for about a half-mile upstream, leapfrogging one another and, being gentlemen, offering the next good-looking opportunity to the next guy.

After two hours with no fish and not even a rise to inspire us, we began hypothesizing reasons for what we called the "PBNF" syndrome, which we decided stood for "Pretty Brook No Fish." Our best guess was that, after three summers of extremely high temperatures (brookies struggle to survive water temps over 70 degrees), the entire wild brook-trout population of this stream had been wiped out. I told the guys that four to six years ago I would have caught 20 to 30 of these gorgeous fish and never kept more than two or three for the frying pan.

So, what was the cause of this precipitous decline? Overfishing? The current Vermont Fish and Wildlife laws allow an individual to take 12 brook trout in a day. This is an excessive limit and should be reduced by at least half. But is this what caused the decline? I doubt it, because the paths down to these pools were not well worn at all. They are extremely hard to access, and no lazy fisherman would risk their life to do so.

I sat sullenly on a big rock that had the perfect shape for an old man's behind and found myself getting really depressed about the possibility that this fishery was no longer viable. It felt like a vise was constricting my heart—not the kind of physical pain that one fears, but one of deep sadness for a once-productive ecosystem decimated by our changing world. At my lowest point, I began to pray. I had surrendered to the realization that this stream would not produce anything again this year.

I stood up and wandered into the pine woods and found a small trail along the bank. As I focused on the love I have for this planet, my eye caught a glimpse of bright yellow to my left. Chanterelles! Gorgeous, funnel-shaped and fluted wild mushrooms! I began to pick these beautiful edible mushrooms and, without diminishing their population, was able to fill my fishing creel with the succulent morsels.

On the hike back to the truck, I realized that sometimes the Great Spirit presents us with gifts for which we weren't really looking. Maybe the next time I want to go brook trout fishing, I'll just set my focus on everything this world offers and be grateful for her gifts—no matter what form they take.

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

Town

Charlotte Senior Center news



Carolyn Kulik
SENIOR CENTER DIRECTOR

"I love how summer just wraps its arms around you like a warm blanket."

- Kellie Elmore

Stop in. Say hello.

Our OPEN flag is out. We're open 9 to 4, Monday through Friday, and located across from the post office. We're getting back up to speed and there's lots going on.

If you wish to visit or join an activity, there are some mask requirements to keep in mind. Some activities, like bridge and Mahjong, require participants to be fully vaccinated because they take place over long periods of time and in close proximity to others. Please call if you have questions.

Mask notes

Here is where things stand as of now at the Senior Center:

If you are . . .

Fully vaccinated:

No mask required

No social distancing required

Not vaccinated:

Mask required (*also applies to exercise classes*)

Social distancing required (six feet) (*also applies to exercise classes*)

Not vaccinated and not wearing a mask (*for any reason*):

Kindly do not plan to visit at this time.

Please come see us after the mask guidance for the Center has been updated.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Lunch schedule

Currently, the schedule for meals is somewhat irregular. We recommend calling beforehand to check if lunch is being served on a particular date. The information will be posted on the CSC website: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. Our café is spacious and airy, and our porch has tables with big sun umbrellas.

Monday, August 16 – no lunch

Wednesday, August 18 – BYOBL, at noon

The focus of this lunch is meeting friends and enjoying conversation.

Come, Bring Your Own Bag Lunch (BYOBL), and enjoy some home-baked cookies and a beverage. (Any donation is welcome.)

Please sign up by Tuesday afternoon, August 17 (call 425-6345), as the baker needs to know in advance how many will be coming. If BYOBL catches on, it will be continued for future Wednesdays.

8/23, Monday Munch, 11:30-12:30

Cold yogurt and golden raisin soup

Chicken and orzo salad

Bread and beverage

Berry crumble & ice cream

8/25, Wednesday – luncheon served at noon by The Residence at Shelburne Bay

End of Summer BBQ – menu TBA

In-person activities and courses

We are transitioning to in-person courses in the fall. The new **fall schedule** will be inserted in this paper and posted on the website as of August 26.

Exercise classes take place in the Great Room. Come and check out a class one time for no charge. Classes are ongoing. There is no need to register in advance. Stop by and fill out an address form. Walk-ins are welcome. For course descriptions, please visit the website or call.

Chair Yoga – Mondays, 9:30 a.m.

Pilates Plus – Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m.

Essentrics – Wednesdays, 8:30 a.m.

Pilates – Thursdays, 8:30 a.m.

T'ai Chi (Advanced) – Thursdays, 11 a.m.

Essentrics – Fridays, 9:30 a.m.

In September, **Gentle Yoga on Mondays at 11 a.m.** and **T'ai Chi for Beginners**

on Thursdays at 10 a.m. will resume

with in-person classes at the Center.

Talks at 1 p.m. Wednesdays

These free talks will continue online throughout the summer. Advance registration is not required, 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 two weeks on our website.

August 18: Braver Angels: Seeking to depolarize America, with Bill Mares

Braver Angels (BA), a national citizens movement, aims to unite Americans across the political spectrum. Embracing core values of respect, humility, honesty and responsible citizenship serves to bring us together. Mares will introduce the BA model and its wide range of activities at the community and family level. Bill Mares, BA Ambassador, has been a reporter, state legislator, high school teacher, and is the author of numerous books.

The talk scheduled for **August 25 (Immigration Challenges, with Greg Smith)** has been cancelled, and will be rescheduled for November. Greg will take a look at the future of immigration reform, asylum challenges at the border, and refugee challenges globally.

In September

All Wednesday talks and events will be in-person only, no registration necessary. The first three September events at 1 p.m. will be a little different:

September 1: Music of the 50s & 60s - Oldies revival, with Peter & Helen Rosenblum

Join the musical fun as this Hinesburg duo strums and sings the hits that will forever live in our hearts and minds—from the romantic ballads of the Everly Brothers to the rockin' rhythms of Chuck Berry.

September 8: Vermont humor through the ages in art, words and performance, with Bill Mares

Through words and cartoons, Mares will detail the evolution of Vermont humor,

A Kayak trip on July 16 at Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area



A good time was had by all and the weather cooperated. In attended were Karen Champney, Karen Peterson, Karen Costello, Raymonde Mayhew, Nancy Bretschneider, Lenice Hirschberger, Joan Mollica, Patricia Lavery and led by Kate Mesaros. (names are not in order of the photo)
Photo by contributed

from anonymous jokes told on old country store porches to stand-up performances like Vermont Vaudeville and Ground Hog Opry. Bill's talk will help you forget COVID just the way known and unknown humorists have helped wipe the sweat and tedium from Vermont labor over the years.

August 15: Greenbush - Music with John Creech and Cobey Gatos

Longtime friends and neighbors, John and Cobey, draw on a lifetime of playing jazz, blues and rock, as well as years of weekly get-togethers in Cobey's backyard studio. They'll choose from a library of their own original pieces and from carefully selected compositions written by musical masters.

Art news

Until the end of August, stop in to see the art of Deb Peate. The exhibit includes watercolors, pastels, silkscreens and five fanciful decoupage pieces. Most are available for purchase. Since this space is also used for classes, the best times to view the exhibit in August are: Monday at noon, Wednesday after 1 p.m., and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday after 12:30 p.m.

Annual Senior Art Show

Coming in September: the **14th Annual Senior Center Community Art Show**. Consider entering your artwork in this exhibition. Any medium is acceptable. (Limit: two pieces, each not exceeding 2'x3' in size.) All levels of mastery welcome. Artwork should be ready to hang with your own wires or hooks before being dropped off. We request that any artwork not have been previously shown at the Senior Center.

Stop by to fill out the registration form. The registration deadline is Monday, August 23. It is important that artwork be delivered between noon and 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 26, or Friday, August 27. If you have questions, please contact Judy Tuttle, art show coordinator, at 425-2864 or jtuttle@gmavt.net.

About volunteering

A note from Lori York, our new Assistant to the Director & Volunteer Coordinator:

As we have been transitioning to in-person programming, it has been great to see all the friendly faces in this vibrant community. Here at the Senior Center, we rely on our volunteers in a variety of ways. Whether you are available once a month for a couple of hours or on a weekly basis, we ask that you please consider volunteering. This is a great opportunity to meet other people, make new friends and be of service to our community.

We have many volunteer opportunities ranging from hosting our reception desk to cooking, dishwashing and/or prep for our weekly lunches. I would love to meet you and show you around our lovely building and talk with you about volunteering at the Charlotte Senior Center. Please email VOL4csc@gmavt.net or call 802-425-6345.

How to register

As of September, registration will be in-person only, by phone or by mail. (It will no longer be possible to register by email.) For the fall season, all fees will return to the original rates, and the exercise courses will no longer be five dollars per class. Be sure to check the course descriptions in the fall schedule or see our website for details.

Please visit our website for expanded course descriptions and more information: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. The mission of the Senior Center is to serve those age 50 and up. Some course enrollments are limited. If a course is not full, younger participants are welcome to enroll. Questions? Call or stop by between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., or leave a message at (802) 425-6345.

Charlotte Senior Center
425-6345
CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org

Town

Library news



Margaret Woodruff
DIRECTOR

Time to mask up

Due to the increase in COVID cases, the CDC has issued new masking recommendations. As our policy throughout the pandemic has been to follow their guidance, we are now asking all library patrons,

vaccinated and unvaccinated, to wear masks indoors. As always, we appreciate your commitment to keeping our community safe.

Kindergarten cards

A new kindergartner in your house? We'd love to welcome them to the library with their very own library card. Stop by the library during open hours to sign up. Ask for your bookmark

and sticker set, too!

Climate change action

The latest UN report on climate change urges us all to take action. Thanks to 350.org, you can add your voice asking the Vermont Climate Council for a "Just Transition Climate Plan." Postcards are available at the library circulation desk to fill out. You can leave finished postcards at the library for delivery by 350.org. Need more information? Check out their website: 350vermont.org.

Happening at the library

Mystery Book Group: *Henrietta Who?*
Monday, Aug. 16, at 10 a.m.

Early one morning in the quiet English

village of Larking, the body of a woman named Mrs. Jenkins is found in the road. Miles away, her daughter, Henrietta, receives the bad news while working in the university library. Poor Mrs. Jenkins appears to have been the victim of a horrible car accident. When an autopsy proves not only that this was no accident, but also that Mrs. Jenkins never had a child, young Henrietta's life is thrown upside down. If she's not Mrs. Jenkins's daughter, then who is she? It's up to Detective Inspector C. D. Sloan of the Calleshire Police Force to bring the murderer to justice—and a sense of order back to Henrietta's life. Copies are available at the circulation desk.

Saving the Lake by Being BLUE
Wednesday, Aug. 18, at 7 p.m.

Lake Champlain Sea Grant partners with BLUE, an innovative program that certifies homes, businesses and institutions as watershed friendly. Learn how you can take part as the crew from the Lake Champlain Sea Grant at UVM shares the details of this innovative program that helps us help the lake.

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

Library Contact Information

Margaret Woodruff, Director
Cheryl Sloan, Youth Services Librarian
Susanna Kahn, Tech Librarian



Phone: 802-425-3864

Email: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org

Not a bagel



Found on Garden Island in Charlotte are two *Lactarius deliciosus*, commonly known as the saffron milk cap.

Photo by Elizabeth Bassett



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