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The Charlotte News

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Pelkey's Berry Farm
Photo by Lee Krohn

East Charlotte residents fear VCS's outdoor center plans



Mara Brooks
EDITOR

Neighbors say they hope the ZBA will curb school's land use

Neighbors of the proposed Vermont Commons School Outdoor Education

Center have raised concerns that, absent zoning restrictions imposed by the town, the South Burlington school will transform their quiet, pastoral community into a noisy, chaotic hub for sports events, graduation ceremonies and other large school gatherings. Neighbor Sarah Thompson, 39, said even driveway access to her home has been put at risk by the school's plans.

Thompson, a local high school science teacher, lives next door to the proposed outdoor center with her partner, Zeb Martin, and her four horses. She took over the property in 2012 following her mother's death.

"I own a really narrow strip that equals 12 acres, and it's only a few hundred feet wide—what they used to call a spaghetti lot—that borders the entire north portion of the 54 acres that the Vermont Commons school bought," Thompson said. "Everything that [VCS] is going to do affects how enjoyable my property is."

Late last year, VCS, which serves grades six through 12, presented the town with a site plan for the outdoor school center. In July, the Planning Commission granted VCS conditional approval with the caveat that a



A narrow dirt road serves as the sole driveway access to Thompson's residential property. VCS is planning construction to widen the road for school buses and student vehicles.

Photo by Mara Brooks

conditional use review by the Zoning Board would still be required. (On August 9, the Selectboard delayed approving a highway access permit for the school until the Zoning Board completes its review.)

Thompson's mother Jane Dowd (later Jane Thompson) and first husband Ray Dowd purchased the "spaghetti lot" from Alma St. George in the 1970s. At the time, Dowd had an informal arrangement with St. George that she could use the driveway, which was on St. George's land, to access her property.

"There was a farm access that used to be used as a driveway," Thompson said. "So, technically, I enter my property from their land."

Before she died, Dowd Thompson tried to secure an easement for the driveway, but was unable to complete the process, Thompson said. So, when VCS purchased the property from St. George's daughter Lucia Plante in September 2020, they purchased the driveway to Thompson's property along with it.

"The fact that my land is so narrow and [VCS] is proposing basically an event site, and I don't have a driveway, it's sort of a nightmare," Thompson said.

Thompson said after meeting with VCS Head of School Dexter Mahaffey last fall she was left with the impression that the school planned to use the site for occasional, small-scale activities.

"[Mahaffey] told us they wanted this to be an educational site, they wanted a small pavilion," Thompson said. "He said that the kids might play some games and camp there three times a year. And we were like, 'awesome.'"

Thompson said what she observed during the 2020 to 2021 school year seemed to align with Mahaffey's representations.

"On Wednesdays I would see students on the property, taking measurements, collecting data, sometimes little meetings would be held, or the kids would play a little frisbee," she said.

Thompson said she enjoyed seeing the

SEE **VCS** PAGE 2

Selectboard gives green light to traffic calming study



Photoshop creation by Anna Cyr

Mara Brooks
EDITOR

The Selectboard approved a traffic and speed calming study in the east and west villages to be conducted by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. The study, which was voted on at the board's Aug. 23 regular meeting, will focus on two village intersections and gather data about quantity of traffic, types of vehicles, and speeds at which vehicles are traveling.

Town Administrator Dean Bloch said the CCRPC asked the town to match 20 percent of the study's estimated \$20,000 cost. After a discussion, the Selectboard approved the \$4,000 contribution.

"We're not just looking to lower speed limits, we're looking at a more comprehensive suite of strategies and methods to address traffic calming," Bloch said. "The speed limits in the West Village are already fairly low."

Dean said as part of the study the CCRPC would hold public meetings and develop "site-specific" traffic calming strategies in both the east and west villages.

For months, Charlotte residents have voiced concerns about speeding motorists, particularly on Greenbush and Ferry roads. Suggested solutions posted by residents on Front Porch Forum included adding speedbumps and/or traffic cameras, increasing signage, using solar speed feedback displays, and lowering town speed limits.

Selectboard member Lewis Mudge described the current 45 mph and 50 mph speed limits on Spear Street as "ridiculous."

"You've got a church, you've got the Grange, you've got a horse stable up there," Mudge said. "It's absolutely necessary to get some type of dialogue started on calming that [traffic] down."

While northern Spear Street has a speed limit of 45 mph, the southern portion does not have an established speed limit. Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow pointed out that 50 mph is the default speed limit for unposted paved roads

SEE **TRAFFIC** PAGE 3

Charlotte Health Center woes: group appeal moves forward, neighbors file second appeal

As group petitioners move forward, the Kaczka-Villieres file an action of their own

Mara Brooks
EDITOR

A group of 20 petitioners opposing Emerald Green Properties' Charlotte Family Health Center filed a Statement of Questions with the Chittenden County Superior Court on September 2.

The September 12 filing asks the court to determine whether the health center complied with the town's land use and development regulations regarding wetlands and associated buffer and setback areas. Petitioners also asked if the health center complied with the town's stormwater management and erosion control standards.

The petitioners, led by former Zoning Board member Ronda Moore, have appealed the Planning Commission's July 29 approval of the health care center. They argued the proposed site at 251 Ferry Road is a protected wetlands area and building there would violate Charlotte's land use

regulations.

The petitioners' appeal was filed on August 16 by attorney Jon Anderson of Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramer. The town is represented by Stitzel, Page & Fletcher attorney Joseph S. McLean.

On August 27, neighbors Rene and Jeanne Kaczka-Valliere filed a second appeal on their own behalf. The couple, whose property adjoins the proposed health center, is representing themselves.

The Kaczka-Vallieres previously spoke to *The News* about their concerns that noise, traffic and light pollution generated by the health center would intrude on their quiet enjoyment of their property.

Attorney Michael Russell, who represents the health center, has argued that the site was previously developed and already contains an existing building and a set of man-made ditches.

During the health center's application process, independent consultant Dorie Barton, who was hired by the health center, and the state's wetlands specialist from the Agency of National Resources, concluded

the site contained only low-quality wetlands and was safe to build on.

In an interview with *The News* last month, Town Planner Larry Lewack said that the town relied on the expertise of Barton and the state's wetland specialist when deciding whether to approve the health center's application. Lewack admitted the town had struggled to interpret the land use regulations regarding building in wetland areas.

"In one place the regulations say no building of any kind on wetland buffers, but in another place, it 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 at the time. Now it is up to the court to decide if the town was right in its interpretation.

Group petitioners' leader Ronda Moore resigned from the Zoning Board on July 28 following accusations by ZBA Chair Lane Morrison that Moore failed to disclose an alleged conflict of interest with the Charlotte Health Center.

Town

VCS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

students on the land and marveled at how they “were out there in all kinds of crazy weather, gathering data. I thought, that’s sort of cool.”

It was not until she saw the school’s official site plans that she realized VCS had a larger vision for the property than the “small, unintrusive” plans Mahaffey described in his conversations with her, Thompson said.

“Everything sort of went a little bit south for me when I got to see their first round of maps that they presented to the Planning Commission,” she said. “They had two large ultimate frisbee fields, a 40 by 80 pavilion, parking for 25 cars.”

But Mahaffey insisted the school never wavered in its plans for the site or how they represented those plans to the neighbors and the town.

“There is a sense that things had changed and that there was suddenness to this, and I think I would just have to say that none of this is new,” Mahaffey said. “Part of the challenge is that people maybe weren’t at a meeting or didn’t read the materials.”

In a December 22, 2020 letter addressed to the town, a dozen East Charlotte neighbors raised concerns about the project, which they described as a “akin to opening Pandora’s Box.”

“Once playing fields are built, there is little the town or neighbors can do to limit their use,” the letter states. “At one point Dexter Mahaffey said that the fields would be for practice, then maybe a few games, and then perhaps the school would restart a soccer team. As you can see, once the fields are there, more uses will be found.”

The letter also raised environmental concerns.

“This field is also connected to the wildlife corridor and often is a feeding ground for deer, bobcats, coyotes, fox and the random bear and moose,” the neighbors asserted.

Thompson said if she and her horses cannot live peacefully on the property, she will be forced to leave the only town she has ever called home.

“I wouldn’t be able to stay in Charlotte,” she said. “The only reason I’m living here is because my mom spent her life paying for [this property].”

She described her predicament as “the ultimate Charlotte dilemma.”

“It’s the little guy versus the big guy,” she said.

Thompson said she has asked the school for “three things: protected driveway access, protection for the horses, and some sort of reasonable time of use.”

“They own [the land] and I get that,” she said. “But [the proposed activities] are totally out of character with the neighborhood.”

Mahaffey disagreed that the activities described in the site plan will change the character of the neighborhood or disrupt local wildlife.

“When you talk about hunting, chainsaws, logging operations, woodlot operations, tilling, farming, excavation—businesses that are already in the area—it’s pretty clear that we’re not talking about a new expanded noise disruption that would cause problems for wildlife,” Mahaffey said.

The only large-scale events planned by the school, Mahaffey said, are an annual fall bonfire for approximately 100 people, and a graduation ceremony in June, which draws



Sarah Thompson stands in the driveway of her property at 2333 Spear Street.



One of Sarah Thompson’s four horses peeks out from the backyard stable.

Photos by Mara Brooks

about 200 attendees.

“I live on a farm in Charlotte, fewer than five minutes away, so I am the neighborhood,” Mahaffey said. “And if a neighbor came to me and said, ‘We want to hold a wedding and it’s going to be on a Friday night and there’s going to be a band, is that okay?’ I would say ‘of course.’ I wouldn’t even blink.”

But according to Mahaffey and the site sketch plan, the school is planning additional large (130+ people) events at the property, including an “all-school” Orientation Day in August from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and another all-school Field Day in June.

“But those are the only four large community events that we are and have been talking about at any point,” he said.

As for smaller events, Mahaffey said the school hopes to hold soccer, volleyball and ultimate frisbee practices at the site after school five days a week, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. in September and October, and again in April and May. The practices would consist of approximately 30 to 40 middle and high school students plus coaching staff.

The May schedule might also include up to five Ultimate Frisbee games with approximately 70 people attending, Mahaffey said.

For Thompson, that schedule translates into disruption to her property on a regular, sometimes daily, basis. One of her primary concerns, she said, is for the safety of her horses and that of the students who might try to approach them.

“So far [on the school property], it’s been kids and teachers walking, doing measurements, and the horses have been aware and wary, but they’ve been fine,” Thompson said. “But when they start bringing in cars, and music

and graduation, and the games, the sports, the yelling and screaming...” her voice trailed off.

“I work with teenagers, I know what a pavilion of students sounds like,” she said.

Thompson also expressed concerns that students could injure themselves on the electric fence that borders her property. She said she told Mahaffey students should be made aware of the risk.

Aside from the disruption to her property and driveway access, Thompson is also worried about sharing the driveway with multiple school buses, student drivers and other vehicles. At the August 9 Selectboard meeting, residents and Selectboard member Louise McCarren echoed Thompson’s concerns. Road Commissioner Jr Lewis suggested widening the proposed highway access point and removing two existing trees, which VCS agreed to do.

Thompson said widening the driveway will not solve the safety issues.

“It’s an adequate driveway for a household of two mature drivers,” Thompson said. “It is not an adequate driveway, even with the maintenance, for a shared business entity and a household. I’ve lived here my entire life and that driveway is dangerous.”

Thompson said there is ample space on the school’s property to create a second curb cut, which would solve both safety and access issues.

“There are at least a hundred feet where a driveway could go,” she said.

Mahaffey said the driveway situation is not as bad as some neighbors are making it out to be. He pointed out that many VCS students are not old enough to drive and that not all student drivers can afford their own vehicles.

Transportation for the practice games would be provided by two VCS passenger buses and “eight or 10 personal cars at most,” he said.

When asked if VCS would consider creating a second curb cut to give Thompson sole use of the driveway her family has used for more than 40 years, Mahaffey demurred.

“I think we have to let the folks reviewing the highway access permit weigh in on what they think is the best for the properties, what they think is the best for the town,” he said.

Mahaffey said VCS will do whatever the town decides is in the community’s best interests.

“If the community, through our governance that we collectively put together, says, ‘Here’s what’s going to work and not work for the property,’ we will comply with that,” he said. “We don’t want to make our neighbors miserable. We want to work with everybody.”

He said the school intends to submit its conditional use application to the ZBA early this month.

“We don’t want it to drag on any more than it has to,” he said. “The flip side of that is we also know that the town and the neighbors may need to take their time, and we will be responsive and receptive to as long a time as people need to take because we want to get it right. We’re in it for the long haul.”

At press time, Thompson updated The Charlotte News via email that she and the Vermont Commons School are in negotiations to resolve the right of way issue.

The Charlotte News publisher John Quinney was one of the 12 residents who signed a December 22, 2020 letter to the town opposing the Vermont Commons School Outdoor Education Center. Mr. Quinney was not involved with the reporting of this story.



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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Opinion

You can make a difference!



Rep. Mike Yantachka

"Politics is about the improvement of people's lives. It's about advancing the cause of peace and justice in our country and the world. Politics is about doing well for the people."
—Former U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone (D-MN)(1944-2002)



Vermont law requires political parties to reorganize in every odd-numbered year by electing members at town caucuses and then sending representatives to county committees, which send representatives to the state committee meeting. In a few weeks Vermont's political parties will be reorganizing at the local level.

When Vermonters register to vote, we do not have to declare a party affiliation. Only in Presidential primaries are we asked which party's ballot we want. While many Vermonters value their independence and prefer not to be affiliated officially with a political party, there are good reasons to align with a party that represents your values. 1) *Your voice is important.* A political party is nothing more than the people who affiliate with it. It gives an individual more influence over the implementation of those values. 2) In numbers there is strength and the ability to translate the commonly held values into policy. 3) It provides a network for people to come together across the state and across the nation to work toward those policy goals.

I believe that there are certain issues that are not up for debate: climate change, racial justice, voting rights, marriage equality, high-quality education, affordable health care for everyone, a livable minimum wage, and fair

taxation. Across America it is Democrats who are fighting to combat climate change, standing up for marriage equality and gender equity, leading campaigns for racial equity and to end the criminalization of marijuana, protecting our rights in the workplace, in the voting booth and at home.

If these are issues that are also important to you, then I invite you to join me, Charlotte Democratic Chair Braxton Robbason and other Charlotters on Sept. 23 at 6:30 p.m. for our reorganization caucus. We will elect town party officers, including chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer and delegates to the County Committee, which will hold its reorganization meeting in October.

We recommend that you join us via Zoom, but you can also attend in person at Town Hall if you wear a mask. If you prefer to attend remotely, contact me (802-233-5238, myantachka.dfa@gmail.com) or Braxton Robbason (646-594-0232, braxton.robason@gmail.com). If you reach voicemail, please leave your name, phone number and email address, and a Zoom link will be sent to you.

Letter to the Editor

To the editor

I have just finished reading the Aug. 26 edition of the *News* and want to say how much I enjoyed it. The variety of stories were extremely interesting, and I found myself clipping pages to save for later. As a gardener, I relished learning from Joan Weed about good websites to explore for identifying weeds (not her relatives!). As a walker, I am excited to try some of the trails I have not used before in Shelburne and Hinesburg, as described by Elizabeth Bassett in her column. As an historian, I was fascinated to read Dan Cole's article about Caroline Ardelia Yale's inspiring

teaching career. And I want to commend Molly McClaskey for her very well-written and accurate description of the memorial service for Terry and Marty. There were other articles I also enjoyed but these really stood out for me.

We are so fortunate to have good writers in town and a strong newspaper. Many thanks to all who are involved in this critically important endeavor.

Frances Foster
Charlotte

Thank you, Frances! -- Editor

TRAFFIC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in Vermont. (For unposted class 3 gravel roads, the default speed limit is 35 mph.)

"The town did not set [the speed limit] at 50, that's the de facto speed of a road that has not had its speed limit set by the town," Krasnow said.

In 2013, Chittenden County Regional Commission performed a speed limit study on Spear Street from the Shelburne Town line to Hinesburg Road ("Section A"), and from Hinesburg Road to Prindle Road ("Section B"). Their findings indicated 85 percent of motorists traveling both north and southbound on Section A drove an average of 54 mph, while northbound motorists on Section B drove an average of 52 mph. Southbound drivers on Section B drove an average of 42 mph.

The CCRC made several recommendations in the 2013 study, including lowering the posted speed limit from 50 mph to 45 mph, adding pavement edge markings on Spear Street and Hinesburg Road, adding "Stop Ahead" sign locations on all four approaches at the intersection of Spear Street and Hinesburg Road, and other traffic calming measures.

Bloch said the town implemented some, but

not all, of the 2013 recommendations. An amendment to the town's motor vehicle and traffic regulation ordinance was filed in April 2014, setting a maximum speed limit of 45 mph on portions of Greenbush Road, Spear Street, Mount Philo Road and Hinesburg Road. The town also added painted "fog lines" (white lines) on all four approaches to the stop signs in East Charlotte as well as for the West Village stop signs.

"The planned CCRPC study will help determine whether [the changes made after the 2013 study] made a difference by providing data that can be compared to previously collected speed data," Bloch said.

The 2016 handbook "Setting Speed Limits – A Guide for Vermont Towns" prepared by the Vermont Local Roads Program states that towns "tend to set speed limits too low" thereby creating more speeders as "the majority of motorists drive at speeds they perceive to be safe."

CCRPC Communications Manager Emma Vaughn said speed data collection in the East Charlotte Village will commence after Labor Day weekend and the commission hopes to hire a consultant in September "to assist with the development of traffic calming measures, short- and long-term."

Around Town

Congratulations:

to **Kevin Devine** who graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Engineering from Wentworth Institute of Technology on August 22. Earning Dean's List several years at Wentworth, Kevin was also a member of the school's volleyball team which reached the NCAA Division III Playoffs this past season.

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Town

Heard on the street

Tenney, Spear reach settlement

Richard Tenney and Carrie Spear have settled their well/septic dispute. Parties are reportedly awaiting final survey documents and will be filing a dismissal with the court shortly.

Charlotte Health Center statement coming

Sources at Evergreen Family Health claim a public statement will be made as early as this week regarding appeals filed against the proposed health center on Ferry Road. In recent weeks, parties on both sides of legal battle have not responded to press inquiries.

While not a gossip column, Heard on the Street alerts readers to smaller news items, developing stories and issues brewing in the community. Send confidential tips to news@thecharlottenews.org with the subject line "HOS".

SCHIP Autumn grant deadline

The autumn deadline for SCHIP grant applications is Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2021. Since SCHIP began making grants, many nonprofits have used their awarded funds to continue their mission to improve the lives of our neighbors and strengthen our communities. *Grants range from a few hundred to several thousand dollars. Grants may not exceed \$3,000 per request, and only one grant can be received within a year by any one entity.*

Applicant requirements:

- Be a 501(c)(3) or submit the application through such an organization.
- Projects must serve residents of Shelburne, Charlotte, and/or Hinesburg.
- Funds may not be applied to annual operating budgets or permanent staffing.
- One application per organization per calendar year.

Grants deadlines are now May 15 and Oct. 15. To obtain an application, go to the "Contact" link on the SCHIP's Treasure website at SCHIPSTreasure.org.

Join Charlotte Girl Scouts!

Charlotte Girl Scout Troop 30066 is gearing up for another year of exciting and educational experiences. We are currently a multi-level troop of Daisies, Brownies, Juniors and Cadettes (grades K-8). For more information about our troop you can contact Cindy Bradley at cahbradley@yahoo.com or go directly to the girl scout website, Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains and register to become part of our troop there. Just put in our troop number 30066 when asked. We hope to meet more of you soon as you choose to join in on the fun!

L to R: Marissa LaClair (Brownie), Alexis Pearce (Cadette), and Brooklynn LaClair (Daisy).
Photo by Cindy Bradley



No emerald ash borers found in Charlotte, at least not yet



Alexa Lewis lowers one of the dozen EAB traps put up in mid-June.

Photo by Vince Crockenberg

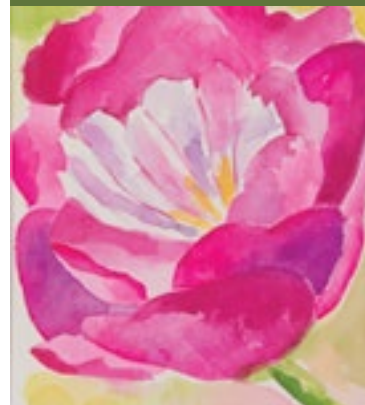
Vince Crockenberg
CHARLOTTE TREE TRIBE

Last week, Deputy Tree Warden Alexa Lewis, closely observed by a cow at Fat Cow Farm, lowered one of the twelve green triangular EAB traps that were initially hung from a dozen trees throughout Charlotte back in June. Despite the heavy concentration of bugs and bark on this and other traps, no EAB were detected on any of them. For the time

being at least, Charlotte seems free of the pest, which will eventually kill almost all of Vermont's ash trees, including those in Charlotte.

EAB infestations have been confirmed in Chittenden County since October of 2020, and the pest has recently been found in towns in neighboring counties, including Middlebury, Swanton, Highgate, St. Albans City, Berlin, Rupert and Wilmington.

FALL PAINTING WORKSHOPS

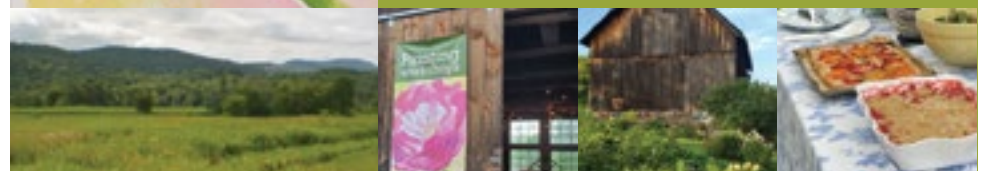


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SATURDAYS 8:30am - 4:30pm

9/18 Landscapes	10/9 Landscapes
9/25 Barns	10/16 Landscapes
10/2 Barns	10/23 Fall Flowers

Church Hill Road / 802-233-6463
kehoedesign.com/painting-workshops



Food Shelf News

Neighbors helping neighbors

Susan Ohanian
CONTRIBUTOR

People matter! The Vermont Foodbank is a member of Feeding America, which developed out of the idea of one man: John van Hengel. In the late 1960s, Van Hengel, a retired businessman in Phoenix, Arizona, met a woman who regularly rummaged through grocery store garbage bins to find food for her children. Van Hengel, then a volunteer at a soup kitchen, responded to the woman's idea that discarded food ought to be made available in places besides garbage bins. He established St. Mary's Food Bank as the nation's first foodbank.

This idea caught on and as foodbanks increased across the country, Van Hengel established Second Harvest. In 2008, the name was changed to Feeding America to better reflect the mission of the organization. Today, thanks to one volunteer's mission, Feeding America is a network of 200 foodbanks across the country, each one depending on volunteers to accomplish its community vision.

Speaking to the Burlington Free Press, John Sayles, CEO of the Vermont Foodbank noted that "you can't solve hunger in a vacuum, it has to involve people in communities and how they are supporting each other," adding how remarkable local foodbanks were in staying open throughout this entire Covid crisis.

Sayles made a critical point: "Solving hunger is not something that should be seen as charitable work. It's really about justice, and without the state and the federal government taking responsibility to ensure that everyone has the resources to have the food that we eat, we can't do this."

Go to the Vermont Foodbank site where they answer many questions: vtfoodbank.org/about-us/newsroom/faq

The Charlotte Food Shelf is an all volunteer organization located in the Congregational Church vestry at: 403 Church Hill Road. 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, PO Box 83, Charlotte, Vermont 05445. Thank you.

Schedule

The Food Shelf is open the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month from 4-6:30 p.m. For Emergency Food, call John: 425-3130

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.

Assistance

The following types of assistance are available:

- Adult Preventative Dental Care Assistance
- Emergency Assistance with fuel and electric bills.
- Check the Food Shelf website for more information of different types of 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

Emergencies outside the scope of established programs may receive assistance. Call 425-3252.

- Children's Assistance
- Non-marking sneakers for PE at school
- Winter clothing: Remember: The Grange annual rummage sale is coming in October.
- High interest children's books are available at the Food Shelf and from the rubber tub on The Grange steps. We invite children to choose a book that looks interesting. Read it and then choose another one.

Volunteers Welcomed

The Food Shelf welcomes volunteers to assist with:

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

There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available, and we look forward to continued community participation in these challenging times. For information please call: 425-3252.

Speaking of volunteers, the time is near of The Food Shelf annual membership meeting. This year it will be held Thursday, September 30 at 7 p.m. via ZOOM. If you would like to attend, please e-mail Food Shelf Secretary Peggy Sharpe: ckmj@comcast.net. You will then receive the agenda.

Town

Working in the watershed: Wrapping up the water quality stewardship field season



Volunteers remove European frogbit plants in Town Farm Bay.

Photo contributed

Kate Kelly and Matt Gorton
LCA PROGRAM MANAGER
AND CONTRACT BIOLOGIST

Among the great egrets and northern map turtles in Charlotte's Town Farm Bay and Shelburne's LaPlatte River wetlands, volunteers removed non-native, aquatic invasive European frogbit for the fifteenth consecutive year this summer. Lewis Creek Association's (LCA) Water Quality Stewardship Program is an invasive plant and water quality project coordinated annually since 2007. It is supported by LCA, the towns of Charlotte, Shelburne and Hinesburg, Point Bay Marina, Shelburne Bay Boat Club and a Charlotte property owner.

European frogbit was introduced to arboretum ponds in Ottawa in 1932 before spreading to the United States via the St. Lawrence River. It is considered an aquatic invasive species (AIS) because it grows on the water surface and out-competes native plants for sunlight and nutrients. In 2007, friends of LCA discovered frogbit covering 50 percent of Town Farm Bay. Through volunteers' annual field work, the frogbit cover has been substantially reduced and is now maintained at about 5 percent cover. In contrast, when frogbit was discovered in the wetlands of the LaPlatte Natural Area, it had low percent coverage, providing an opportunity for "early detection, rapid response." Though the invasive plant will never be eradicated in either location, maintaining this low population allows native plants and animals to thrive. This year, volunteers removed 459 pounds of frogbit from Town Farm Bay and 1.5 pounds of frogbit from the LaPlatte River wetlands (where frogbit levels were very low at the beginning of this season and remained

low throughout the season).

LCA's Water Quality Stewardship Program also includes the annual monitoring of water quality in the LaPlatte River, Patrick Brook, McCabe's Brook, Thorp Brook and Kimball Brook by volunteers for South Chittenden River Watch. Volunteers collect water samples that are then analyzed by the Vermont Agricultural and Environmental Laboratory and interpreted by LCA technical consultants. The sampling season has recently wrapped up and included sampling for nutrients and chloride in order to understand sources of nutrient loading to Lake Champlain while informing water quality improvement project plans. Results for 2021 will be available on our website in the spring of 2022. To see past years' results, visit the LCA website at lewiscreek.org. Check out more information on water quality and what you can do to improve it on LCA's YouTube channel at <https://bit.ly/3iS2z4b>.

This water quality stewardship program is important for maintaining productive, functioning and scenic waters and also allows residents of Charlotte and Shelburne to become advocates for water quality. Volunteers in each town help share this information with neighbors and friends, helping improve water quality in the future. This program, funded through your town budget, is crucial since it allows the whole community to take ownership of local water quality and natural resources that are extremely important to protect. It will result in healthier ecosystems that all citizens can enjoy. If you are interested in assisting with water quality monitoring or invasive plant removal in 2022, please reach out to Kate Kelly, LCA Program Manager, at lewiscreekorg@gmail.com or 488-5203.

Town of Charlotte Notice of vacancy for Canine Control Officer

Do you love dogs? The position of Canine Control Officer will be vacant at the beginning of October.

The primary role of the Canine Control Officer is to reconnect stray dogs with their owners. This position is also responsible for bringing stray dogs with no owners to Comfort Hill Kennel in Vergennes, enforcing the Charlotte Ordinance Regarding Nuisance Animals (including levying fines when appropriate), and impounding any dog that has bitten a person to determine if the dog is rabid. In addition, the position is responsible for filing animal bite reports at the Town Hall.

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

For inquiries regarding this position, please call Dean Bloch, Town Administrator, at 425-3071 ext. 5 or e-mail dean@townofcharlotte.com.

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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.

Grange on the Green Thursday, Sept. 9, 5:30 to 7 p.m.

The final concert for the “Grange on the Green” season on the Library porch with picnicking on the Town Green. This joint Library/Grange event is free and features music from the Will Patton Trio. Will Patton, David Gusakov and Dono Schabner have been playing their spirited stew of world music around the Northeast for over 20 years.

Grab a pizza from Stone’s Throw, baked goods and sandwiches from the Red Onion or Old Brick Store, or bring a picnic. Farmer and community displays, ice cream and local beverages too!

This event is sponsored by the Charlotte Children’s Center, and this summer’s music season has been made possible thanks to the generous support of College Essay Coach and Mow Electric!

All Souls Interfaith gathering to mark the 20th Annual Choral Celebration Sunday, Sept. 12, 4:30 p.m.

291 Bostwick Farm Road, Shelburne

This event includes music celebrating the interfaith commitment of the congregation.

Music this year will be provided by the Wellspring Singers and the All Souls Choir, both under the direction of All Souls Music Director Ronnie Romano. Kirtan will also be presented by Kirsten Rose and family.

Spiritual leaders from various faith traditions will present prayers of compassion for the world. Attendees are encouraged to bring a comfortable lawn chair or blanket.

FALL PAINTING WORKSHOPS

Saturdays 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Church Hill Road, Charlotte

Gourmet farm to table style lunch is served next to our heritage perennial gardens. www.kehoedesign.com/painting-workshops

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9/25 Barns

10/2 Barns

10/9 Landscapes

10/16 Landscapes

10/23 Fall Flowers

Come learn and paint in and around our historic 1800s Studio Barn. Any experience level is welcome. Mediums can be watercolor, pastel or oil. Demonstrations will be taught throughout the morning.

The Rotary Golf Ball Drop Sept. 18, 10 to 11 a.m.

Join CSH Rotary for our annual Golf Ball Drop to raise money for Charlotte, Shelburne and Hinesburg Fire and Rescue. We’ll drop 1,500 golf balls FROM A HELICOPTER!! at Gonzo’s Driving Range at the Kwini Club (5353 Spear Street, Shelburne). Closest ball to the pin wins \$1,000!! Long Drive contest, donuts, putting green games and more! <https://cshrotary.eventgroovefundraising.com/drop-a-ball-for-fire-and-rescue/Campaign/Details>. Winner does not need to be present, and you can livestream the drop!

Farm Series

Head Over Fields Farm nears the end of its first successful season

Lucie Lehmann
CONTRIBUTOR

Katie Rose Leonard never intended to be a farmer. After graduating from college, she pursued her dream career in environmental education. But while working on water quality restoration on the east end of Long Island where the land forks, her own path diverged from that plan.

“My employer in our advocacy work was always beating up on ag,” the 31-year-old recounts on a blistering August day, sweat beading on her nose. She and her business partner and fiancé, Bryan Seward, 32, are sitting outside of their recently opened farm stand on Route 7, surrounded by the land they purchased earlier this year. “All of ag, as polluters. And it bugged me... We all eat. And farmers are critical to that piece of the puzzle.”

She decided to learn more about farming and then applied to apprenticeship programs. Her experience at Amber Waves—a woman-owned and operated organic farm in Amagansett, New York—changed her life. Katie Rose discovered that she loved and had “a knack for the work,” and she could spend most of her day outside, a big part of the reason she wanted to be in environmental conservation.

Eventually she and Bryan, a native Vermonter whom she met while they were both at Bucknell University, moved here and began a search for their own piece of farmland in Chittenden County. Bryan worked as a risk management consultant, which he still does, and Katie Rose garnered more organic farming experience at Common Roots in South Burlington and then managed five acres of vegetables for a 170-person CSA in Bristol. Through it all, her vision and experience guided them.

“I’m not trained as a farmer,” Bryan acknowledges readily, crediting Katie Rose with teaching him about eating healthy food and organic farming. “I cannot offer the same level of value to the farm as she can,” he says proudly. He hopes one day to work with her full time, but for now he provides critical financial stability to the enterprise, while also helping run the stand. “I can’t tell you how many people said to us, if you can, keep some off-farm income because there’s just a lot of things that pop up.”

At the same time Katie Rose and Bryan were looking for a farm, John and Carol Snow of Charlotte were on their own hunt: to preserve most of the agricultural land they had purchased in 1994 but never farmed themselves. “We wanted the land to stay open, and we knew if we didn’t do something while

we were still here, that the pressure for development would be too high on anyone else,” John explains. “And to conserve it using some of the available resources, federal and otherwise, the owner of the land had to be a farmer...”

The couples met through the Charlotte Land Trust, beginning a years-long process that culminated in the March 2021 sale of 76 of the Snows’ acres to Katie Rose and Bryan. Significant financial help came from a number of sources, including the Town of Charlotte, the Charlotte Land Trust, the Vermont Land Trust, and the USDA through its Beginning Farmers and Ranchers program. In total, 71 acres were placed in a permanent conservation easement for agricultural use, with a five-acre exclusion for an eventual house.

Barely one growing season into the endeavor, with just one acre under cultivation and without a greenhouse or substantial farm equipment of her own, the wisdom of investing in this first-generation farmer is manifest. It’s visible not just in the long red scratches on both of her arms, but in the abundance of gorgeous organic produce at the stand—over 50 varieties alone this year; in the weekly boxes for the farm’s CSA customers; and on the menus of a number of local restaurants. Next year, Katie Rose plans to double her vegetable production. She pointed out a newly worked piece of ground for the expansion.

Bryan and John Snow are both impressed that, apart from some limited volunteer help, Katie Rose operates the farm singlehandedly. Typically, she puts in 70 to 80 hours per week on site. And while her next challenges include digging a well, erecting a greenhouse and finding reliable and affordable help, Snow is optimistic that she will succeed. “Carol and I find...Katie Rose’s passion for farming and food production energizing. It is a vision that fits so nicely with our hopes for the land.”

Bryan talks sensibly of two- and three-year plans. Katie Rose’s dreams are long-term and bold: bringing grazing animals back to the farm; education programming for children; paid mentorships similar to the one she went through; an incubator to help other farmers start their businesses; and field-to-fork dinners and programs that bring the community together. It’s easy to grasp why her mother picked the name for the farm, Head Over



Bryan and Katie Rose.

Photo by Lucie Lehmann

Fields, a playful twist on how Katie Rose describes falling for farming.

Katie Rose feels a special affinity for and responsibility to other women farmers. “I love to help women succeed. I’ve already faced a number of challenges being in agriculture... There’s always an assumption that it’s not just you, that there’s someone else [doing the work].” Not, she adds pointedly, from other farmers, who have been very supportive. “We all relate to each other in a way that only we understand.”

The couple are grateful for the community support they have received. “Vermont is such an incredible place to be in agriculture,” Katie Rose enthuses. “The most exciting and heartwarming thing was how our neighbors and other folks really stepped up. We’ve been shown nothing but kindness”—especially from the Snows, they emphasize.

Ultimately, they feel a sense of responsibility to pay forward the help and mentoring that launched them. On a walking tour of the farm, Katie Rose stops in front of a big patch of sunflowers planted to be visible from the top of nearby Mt. Philo. It is a nod to the partnerships that conserved the land and its viewshed and made it possible for them to be there. “Everyone’s watching, and we know that, and we want to be respectful of this space that has been open for so long.”

On Books

Burning snakes and stained-glass windows: a trifecta of memoirs



Katherine Arthaud
CONTRIBUTOR

Hello, everyone. I hope you are having a great late summer, enjoying your days and squeezing in some reading time. I have a stack of books I have read lately and an equally tall stack of books I am looking forward to reading in the future. A bounty of books. A tower of reading yet to come. Today the rain is pouring down, making it an ideal day to curl up with a book. But instead, I will sit upright and tell you about some books you might think about reading yourself. I believe the last article you got from me was about breezy summer reading. Well, I seem to have shifted gears, as you will see.

Somebody's Daughter, a memoir by Ashley C. Ford, begins with a haunting frontispiece by Izumi Shikibu: "Although the wind blows terribly here, the moonlight also leaks between the roof planks of this ruined house"—followed closely by a letter to "Ashley" from "Dad," in which we learn that the latter has been incarcerated for 20 years and has only recently received a letter from his daughter, who is no longer a little girl, but a woman. He tells her she will always be his favorite girl, that he is grateful to be her father and wants desperately to be forgiven for all the pain he has caused her, that he is going to create a beautiful life for himself and is planning to show her and her brother how much he loves them, and that... he is coming home.

This book is riveting, emotionally jarring, honest and affective. One memorable and telling scene takes place when Ashley and her grandmother (a refuge for Ashley in the storm of her young life) are standing together in the area beyond the grandmother's backyard "where my great-grandfather let the grasses grow long." Ashley's grandmother takes a shovel and digs a hole in the soft ground. In the hole are a bunch of garden snakes "in some sort of a knot, though not stuck together." "They moved quickly and deliberately over and around one another. They were not fighting, and they did not seem to be trying to get away from us or anything else." Ashley asks



her grandmother what the snakes are doing. "They're loving each other, baby," says the grandmother. She then pours lighter fluid into the hole, lights a match, and the snakes start to burn. "The snakes did not slither away or thrash around as they burned. They held each other tighter. Even as the scales melted from their bodies, their inclination was to squeeze close to the other snakes wrapped around them. ... They did not panic, they did not run." The grandmother takes Ashley's hand and tells her that it's time she returns to her mama's house (not an easy place to survive, we discover). Ashley and her grandmother stare into the hole, watching as the snakes burn to death. "These things catch fire without letting each other go," says the grandmother. "We don't give up on our people. We don't stop loving them." She looks into her granddaughter's face, "her eyes watering at the bottoms. 'Not even when we're burning alive.'"

This is a memoir about love and loving, forgiving and not forgiving. It's written from the heart, and well worth your time.

Another memoir, recommended to me by a friend, is *Notes on a Silencing* by Lacy Crawford. "Brutal and brilliant," said the *New York Times Book Review*, and I would have to agree. This book tells

the (true) story of a sexual assault on the campus of St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire in 1990. Lacy was the girl it happened to. Initially we hear her story in the third person. "One evening around 11 o'clock, a young man called a girl on the phone." And so it begins.

This book is not for sissies. To read it is to walk through the shock, horror, shame, sadness and isolation experienced by its author. Again...not for the faint of heart. The writing is excellent—descriptive and evocative, yet spare. This is a memoir that

looks one straight in the eye. No flinching. It manages to evoke compassion and sadness for the innocent, hardworking, well-intentioned boarding school student we meet on page one, as well as burning outrage at the ensuing cover-up and the outlandish series of lies and betrayals that emanate from almost every corner when details of the assault threaten to come to light.

Sometimes this book reads like a diary, in which the reader joins the author in her innocence and utter lack of preparedness for an assault of this magnitude—sometimes like good, piercing journalism that focuses, brave and laser-like, on the frightening ways institutions, government and society tend to silence victims and distort truth to preserve their reputation and standing.

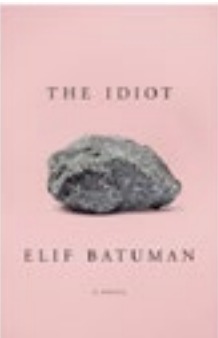
Crawford's writing is at once chilling and crystal clear, her witness compelling and (for me) unforgettable. I am a graduate of another equally elite northeastern boarding school, and so I was particularly struck by some of the details of Crawford's account, while being haunted, saddened and sickened by her school's unwillingness/inability to support her. One comes to wonder how Lacy Crawford even survived this ordeal. And one can't help but blanch at this boarding school's failure to hear, nurture and protect this student in their care.

At one point, Crawford speaks of a stained-glass window in the school's chapel (we had one, too) with biblical script that read, "Now get up and go into the city and you will be told what you must do; the knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God has been given to you." (I know those stained-glass windows, those biblical directives.) "I liked to think there was a direction for me," writes Crawford, "however much solitude it might demand, however much loneliness."

A book for our time. Don't miss it. My book group was iffy about a recent read, *The Idiot* by Elif Batuman, but in the end, I would have to say I really loved it. It's a strange book, not exactly funny, but not exactly un-funny either. "Dry" might be a

good word to describe it. Basically, *The Idiot* is about Selin, a daughter of Turkish immigrants, and her freshman year at Harvard. It is a rather (yes) dry, bizarre and somewhat bewildering romp. There's kind of a romance involved, but is it a romance? I'm not entirely sure, nor (I think) is Selin herself. But she gives herself to it, kind of, mostly through language, writing, and a few tepid, rather unsatisfying and sometimes quite amusing (to us more than her) encounters. There are a lot of emails, misunderstandings and miscommunications, along with a bizarre trip to the Hungarian countryside.

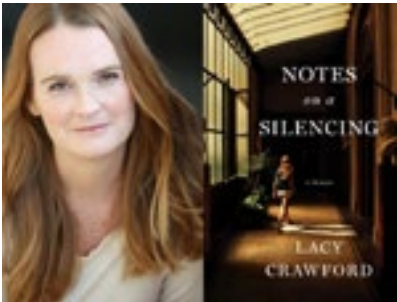
Maybe the frontispiece by Marcel Proust says it best: "But the characteristic feature of the ridiculous age I was going through—awkward indeed but by no means



infertile—is that we do not consult our intelligence and that the most trivial attributes of other people seem to us to form an inseparable part of their personality. In a world thronged with monsters and with gods, we know little peace of mind."

"Adolescence," concludes Proust, "Is the only period in which we learn anything." It's an interesting idea. Not true for me, personally, as I do believe I am still learning—though I suppose one might argue that, in fact, I am, though in my early 60s, in a delayed, prolonged adolescence, which would make it quite true, hmm, I will have to think about that. But nevertheless, it is an interesting quote, especially considering the lives and stories of the three protagonists described above.

Perhaps Proust is off, and adolescence isn't the only period in which we learn anything. But it certainly is a rich, bewildering, intense and fertile time in the human lifespan—a time teeming with learning experiences, certainly. In any case, these three memoirs do a stunning job of conveying some of its struggles, lessons, loves and heartaches, and some of what it feels like to be young and fairly new in this dizzily beautiful and damaged world.



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Hi, Neighbor!

Caroline Patten: Sewing for her passions



Phyl Newbeck
CONTRIBUTOR

Growing up in New Jersey, Caroline Patten spent as much time as she could on the water. These days, she is spending more time in the mountains, and the combination of those two loves forms the name of her new business—MoLa, which stands for mountains and lakes.

Patten’s mother taught her to sew when she was in middle school. “I thought it was a cool arts and crafts hobby,” she said, “and in high school I had a little business making headbands and other knickknacks for friends.” MoLa started the same way in 2020 with Patten making sports attire for herself and her friends, but she’s hoping to grow it into a full-time business.

Patten was introduced to sailing by some high school friends. “With sports,” she admits, “if I like it a little bit, I go all in.” She raced sailboats at Hobart and William Smith Colleges and competed in the Pan Am games in 2015, racing in the Lightning class. After college, she took a job sewing sails in Vermont, followed by a stint coaching the UVM sailing team from 2015 to 2021. “I have a lot of respect for the kids on the team,” she said, “but I was working seven days a week and travelling to Boston every weekend.”

Patten started MoLa by making hoodies on a sewing machine she already owned,



Left: Caroline Patten wears her Charlotte-made hoodie.
Right: Caroline Patten works in her cutting room.

but she was later gifted a new one for her birthday. She subsequently purchased a serger, which allows her to do more professional work. Patten makes her clothing using Polartec fabric, which runs the gamut from thicker material for fleeces to lighter material for technical shirts and sun shirts. She described how a large company like Patagonia will order yards of fabric, but what they can’t use becomes



Photo by Spencer Davis Photography
Photo by Sun Dog Creations

“dead stock” that is then sold in smaller quantities and at lower prices, making it affordable for small businesses like hers.

When she’s not sewing, Patten spends as much time outdoors as possible. “When I was in my senior year of college, one of my best friends invited me to live with her in Lake Placid and work at Whiteface,” Patten said. “I fell in love with snowboarding and living in the mountains. That’s a big part of the reason I ended up in Vermont.” Although sailing has been an important part of her life and she continues to take part in Wednesday night races, Patten has recently switched her main water interest to kiteboarding. She has also begun mountain biking after finding a group of friends who love that sport. “I like having something to do in every weather condition,” she said.

Patten hasn’t done any advertising, but her sales have already gone beyond Vermont with customers in California, Oregon, Washington and Colorado. “The idea behind the company is making clothes in Vermont for the activities we do in Vermont,” Patten said. The names of some of her clothes reflect that. Hoodies named Profanity and Nosedive are nods to ski trails and Crag refers to Vermont’s Climbing Resource Access Group. “It’s very much a Vermont focus,” Patten said, “but I’m happy when people use them in other areas.”

Patten is hoping MoLa will grow over time. “I absolutely love every part of this,” she said. “I love designing new items, selling them, seeing friends wearing them, taking photos, marketing— every aspect of the job. I’m really excited about the work and that’s something I haven’t experienced before.” Patten doesn’t want to contribute to the growing landfills in our area. “One of my goals is to create a product where if you tear it, you can bring it back and I’ll fix it or replace it,” she said.

Patten wants the company to grow into a full-time job, but she also wants to keep it local. “I don’t ever want to outsource to a remote location,” she said. “I’d rather train people who are of the same mindset and want to sew for a few hours before heading off to the mountain.” Ideally, Patten would like to have a storefront somewhere between the interstate and Stowe where people could meet her, see her work, and try out her products. “There needs to be more locally produced clothing,” she said. “Skida does a great job with head coverings and Darn Tough does a great job with socks, but people are still buying clothing made in Asia for their base layers. Vermonters love local stuff. This could be a really positive thing for our area.”



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Education

Unlock hidden skills: Try it, you might like it



Margo Bartsch
CONTRIBUTOR

Education is known as being the key to success. However, the pandemic has changed the way we think about learning and interaction. If you haven't already done so, now is the time to try online learning as a low-risk environment

to potentially unlock new skills. The journalist Perri Ormoni Blumberg wrote an August article, "Whatever your major, include these must-have college courses for career success" in the *New York Post*. Blumberg reviewed the course catalogue at Columbia University and noticed a trend toward skill-based classes. Whatever your age, there are three convenient ways to explore skill-based careers by taking online college courses, subscribing to MasterClass and listening to Ted Talks. Success might include discovering untapped opportunities.

First, online college courses are increasing in variety and accessibility. Just listen to the radio to hear UVM and Champlain College advertisements about online classes, certificate options and degree programs. Many classes are designed specifically for online learning, while some are adapted from in-person instruction. Also, high school dual-enrollment online courses continue to grow in popularity, enabling students to take classes for free or at reduced cost and later request to transfer credits to other colleges.

Blumberg highlights some core courses that are a good fit for online learning. The introductory courses in marketing/branding and statistics address two relevant subjects for everyday success. For example, with the ubiquity of social media and the growth of influencers, creating your own brand is important to develop your resume or monetize your TikTok followers. As for statistics, the role of data helps to understand trends, foster inquiry and practice analysis. Statistics focuses on the interrelationship among variables that can help to make more informed decisions. When choosing classes, the syllabus typically lists whether the course relies on a textbook and has instructional support such as online test banks. These educational resources can supplement the professor's curriculum and encourage group or



individual projects.

Second, subscribing to MasterClass lectures taught by expert instructors with real-world experience and/or academic expertise can help apply critical thinking skills and expand a world view. These pre-recorded lectures cover a range of topics from cooking with international chef and restaurateur Gordon Ramsey to writing with Shonda Rhimes, the TV creator, writer and producer of "Grey's Anatomy" and "Scandal." By expanding knowledge outside of traditional interests, students can broaden their outlook and become more open minded.

In building a resume and having memorable interviews, it is important to talk about a range of topics in an engaging fashion to help differentiate the candidate. Blumberg mentions courses in English as essential to communicating both in writing and verbally, as well as "Designing Your Life" classes that unlock creativity and probe the process of decision-making. Employers look to hire a range of candidates with diverse personalities, skill sets and experiences.

Third, listening to Ted Talks is a quick way to learn about accomplished people and new perspectives. Their tagline is "Ideas Worth Spreading." In fact, the UVM undergraduate application previously had a 500-word essay prompt asking to develop a Ted Talk title, create a lecture and write about your interest.

Ted Talks are like a "test drive" to expose the listener to experts in professional fields, who share a short story about their journey. Blumberg includes both Personal Finance and Graphic Design as important courses for successful careers. However, these

specific classes can be intimidating without understanding why they are interesting to study.

It is easy to look up topics on Ted Talks. For example, searching for "personal finance" includes a lecture by John Doerr, the Silicon Valley venture capitalist, who has an 11-minute talk titled "Why the Secret to Success is Setting the Right Goals." His informative insights reposition personal finance with a result-driven angle. In searching for graphic design, Stefan Sagmeister has a range of talks with compelling topics such as "The Power of Time Off" and "Happiness by Design." These talks highlight the creative role of graphic design in mind, body and spirit. Overall, Ted Talks are a unique way to practice the lost art of listening that could lead to discovery of potential new interests.

Learning is an ongoing process with twists and turns along the way. Online options make it easier to build new skills without investing a lot of time or resources. By exploring new fields, the knowledge gained can be potentially life changing. Success involves pursuing the passion of new ideas. Try it, you might like it!

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

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Food and Garden**Canning fresh tomatoes**

Above: Unpeeled tomatoes, cored and quartered, should be simmered over medium heat for 22 minutes to make puree.

Below: After canning, allow jars to cool for 12 to 24 hours before storing.

Photos by Joyce Amsden

Joyce Amsden
EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER INTERN
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

There is no fruit as versatile as a tomato fresh from the vine. Canning the surplus further expands its versatility to hearty winter dishes, sauces, soups and juice.

You will need canning jars (inspect for cracks and roughness on the rim), screw bands, sealing lids, a canning funnel, a jar lifter or canning tongs, water bath canner with rack, and a food mill or cone strainer (for puree).

Wash jars, lids and rings in soapy water. Rinse well. Cover with water and bring to a simmer in a pot of water until ready to fill. Do not boil.

For all the following instructions, add two tablespoons of lemon juice to each quart jar (one tablespoon per pint) to ensure a safe acidity level.

For whole or cut tomatoes: submerge clean tomatoes in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds, or until the skins begin to crack. Immerse for a few seconds in cold water. Drain. Cut out stems. Slip off the skins. Cut as desired.

There are two methods for filling jars. For hot pack, add tomatoes to a pot of water. Simmer for five minutes. Ladle into jars. For cold pack, place tomatoes into jars. For either method, top off jars with hot water, leaving a half-inch headspace.

For tomato puree: core and quarter the unpeeled tomatoes. Simmer over medium heat for 22 minutes. Adjust heat as needed to prevent burning. Press tomatoes through a food mill or cone strainer to remove skins and seeds. Fill jars with hot puree, leaving a half-inch headspace.

The canning process: fill your canner (with rack) about half full of water for pints and adjust for quarts so water will be one inch above the jars. Bring water to a simmer and maintain simmer. Set a kettle to boil in case you need extra water.

Run a knife up and down the edge of the jar to release trapped air bubbles. Wipe the jar rim with a clean, damp cloth; add the lid and turn the screw band on just



until you feel resistance. Use tongs to lower each jar into the simmering canner.

Add boiling water to the canner if needed to cover jars by at least one inch of water. Cover.

Bring to a boil, and then keep the water at a steady but gentle boil for 45 minutes for quarts, or 40 minutes for pints. Remove jars to a towel, leaving at least an inch of space between each.

Let cool for 12 to 24 hours. You may hear a popping sound as the jars seal. Check each jar by removing the band and pressing on the center of the lid. A sealed jar lid has no flex to it, and you can't lift it off.

Refrigerate or freeze any unsealed jars. Label and store sealed jars in a cool, dark place. When the north wind blows, put on a pot of soup or chili to simmer, and enjoy the delicious pleasure that comes with preserving your bounteous harvest.

For more information on canning tomatoes, visit <https://go.uvm.edu/canning-tomatoes>.

Joyce Amsden is a UVM Extension Master Gardener Intern from Sharon, Vermont.

Food and Garden

Raspberry freezer jam: Savor the flavor all year long!

Joyce Amsden
EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER INTERN
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Is there anything as delicious as a sun-warmed raspberry plucked from the bush and popped into your mouth?

The flip side of this simple summer pleasure is how fragile your freshly picked raspberries are and how quick to spoil. Fortunately, raspberries freeze well and are a tasty addition to baked goods, smoothies or yogurt. Another tasty option is freezer jam. Because the berries are not cooked, the flavor is distinctly fresh.

Here are some helpful tips for making raspberry freezer jam.

Do some research to learn when raspberries will be available in your area. The timing varies from early July to early fall depending on the varieties grown and the location of the berry farm.

Purchase fruit pectin. Several brands are available, but check that the brand you select offers a recipe for freezer jam. Some brands offer a reduced sugar version. Read the instructions and make sure you have everything you need.

Pick only ripe berries that separate from the core with a gentle tug. Avoid picking when the berries and bushes are wet with dew or rain. Wet berries mold very quickly.

The ideal containers for picking are shallow fiber or wood boxes that can be set into a basket hung from a belt loop. In a deep container, the berries in the bottom can get crushed and lead to rapid spoilage. Handle your berries gently.

If you travel a distance from home in a hot car, consider bringing along a cooler with ice packs and/or cool the car before heading for home.

At home, sort through your berries immediately, watching for debris and squashed or mushy berries. Place the fruit gently into freezer containers. Refrigerate or freeze within a day or two to preserve freshness. Immediate chilling can also prevent any problematic effects of spotted wing drosophila (<https://go.uvm.edu/>



Nothing tastes better than a slice of buttered toast slathered with homemade raspberry jam.
Photo by Joyce Amsden

spw).
No time to make jam? It will be just as good made later with frozen berries.
Remember, successful freezer jam is dependent on accurate measurement of the ingredients. Follow the recipe exactly. Measure carefully.
Whether using fresh or previously frozen berries, crush a single layer of berries at a time with a potato masher and measure. A quart-size glass measuring cup works great for this. Measure the sugar into a separate bowl so that you can begin again if you get distracted or lose count.
Follow the package directions. This generally involves mixing the sugar and crushed berries, cooking the pectin briefly and adding it to the berry mixture. Portion the jam into containers, cover and let it sit for a time. Refrigerate or freeze. Your jam will keep several weeks in the refrigerator or a year (or more) in the freezer.
Six months later as the north wind howls and blows, pull a jar of jam from the freezer, sit down with a mug of your favorite warm beverage, a slice of buttered toast slathered with raspberry jam and revisit the sweet sensations of summer.



Charlotte Sunset

Photo by Claudia Pfaff

Into The Woods

What makes a forest healthy?

Ethan Tapper
CHITTENDEN COUNTY FORESTER

Landowners always ask me, “Is my forest healthy?” While this seems like a question that should warrant a simple yes or no answer, it is a question that almost always makes me pause, my eyes glazing over. Like many parts of our world, the deeper we dig into forests, the less clear things become, and judging if a forest is “healthy” or not is profoundly complex.

One of the many things that foresters are is scientists. As part of a scientific approach to management we want to use objective, measurable means to help us understand forests and how to take care of them. In school, one of the ways I was taught to define forest health was through the metrics of Acceptable Growing Stock (AGS) and Unacceptable Growing Stock (UGS). In forestry, an AGS tree is generally defined as one that may someday yield a sawlog (a higher-quality log that is sawn into boards) and has no obvious health issues that will kill it in the short term. Conversely, a UGS tree is one that does not meet those standards. By comparing the relative abundance of AGS trees to UGS trees, we can form an idea of how healthy a forest is.

The problem with AGS and UGS is that these metrics define forest health based on economic value and merchantability, parameters that have nothing to do with how forests actually function. Some tree species, like hop hornbeam or beech, may never be AGS because there is no market for them as sawlogs. Trees of these “non-merchantable” species, as well as trees that are dying, big and old, and trees that are healthy but

defective from a commercial perspective, are “unacceptable” even though they may provide important habitats and support natural processes that are critical to forests.

As in this example, definitions of what constitutes a “healthy” forest differs depending on who is looking at the forest and what they are looking for. If we see the forest solely as a resource to be exploited, measuring forest health based on economic parameters makes sense. If we see the forest as just a bunch of trees, measuring forest health based on how many trees appear to be healthy or unhealthy seems reasonable. But if we look at forests more holistically, neither of these definitions make any sense.

To truly understand what makes a forest healthy, we need to *reimagine* what a forest is. Forests are complex ecological communities that are defined by trees, but that also include a huge range of other stuff. Besides trees, what makes forests work are the interactions between trees, plants, fungi, bugs, reptiles, amphibians, birds, mammals and more, their environment, and natural processes over time.

Within this more holistic view, trees that we usually call “unhealthy” have important roles to play. Declining, dying and imperfect trees are host to a number of critical ecological processes: providing habitat, creating rich forest soil, storing carbon and supporting healthy hydrology, among other benefits. While healthy trees are an important part of healthy forests and removing unhealthy trees to encourage healthier trees is an important part of responsible forest management, removing all unhealthy trees would result in the loss of these processes and habitats that are critical to the health of the forest as a whole.

So, what makes a forest healthy? Increasingly,

I define forest health using the word *resilience*. Instead of managing forests for *stability*—their ability to resist change—managing for resilience means supporting the forest’s ability to remain functional and vibrant *while it changes*. Resilience recognizes that forests are more than trees, that forests are dynamic, and that forests’ ability to change and adapt is what makes them truly healthy. Building resilience is especially critical today, as forests are forced to adapt at an unprecedented rate to an unprecedented array of stressors. This includes the myriad effects of climate change, non-native invasive plants, pests and pathogens, forest loss and fragmentation and more—the combination of stressors that we call *global change*.

The secret to resilience is managing for diverse, complex, whole forests and mitigating the factors that threaten their ability to become and remain diverse, such as non-native invasive plants, deer overpopulations, and forest fragmentation and loss. A precise definition for what a “healthy” forest is may continue to elude us, but by managing for resilience we can allow our forests to show us the way.

For more on building forest resiliency, check



Cambridge Pines

Photo contributed

out: <https://masswoods.org/sites/masswoods.net/files/Forest-Resiliency.pdf>.

Ethan Tapper is the Chittenden County Forester. He can be reached at ethan.tapper@vermont.gov or by phone at (802) 585-9099. Sign up for his email list or see what he’s been up to at <https://linktr.ee/ChittendenCountyForester>.

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Sacred Hunter

How Passion Overcomes Adversity – A Tale of True Grit



Bradley Carleton

Normally, I like to use this venue to espouse the virtues and spiritual connections through hunting, fishing, foraging, and generally learning to find joy through immersion in the outdoors. But once in a while a story needs to be told of a particularly remarkable feat of an individual. I was recently assigned to write about such a person. I think that this kind of story needs to be told to recognize the innate healing power of joy and tenacity.

This past spring a young man with a passion for the outdoors- and particularly fishing- for a brief few weeks met a challenge that many of us would have met with despair. But this young man chose to overcome this painful and frightening obstacle to rise above it and prove that he is much more than what happens to him. He is a True Outdoorsman and worthy of the recognition that the Lake Champlain International Fishing Derbies have bestowed upon him.

His name is Zachary LaFountain. He is 13 years old and lives in Essex, VT with a wonderfully supportive family that acknowledges his love of fishing and promotes his passion. Zack began fishing at the age of three years old with his father’s grandfather, who he referred to as “Pep.” Pep taught him the fundamentals and

ignited his love of fishing. When Pep passed away, Zack was only six years old, but the appreciation for fishing had already taken hold in this young man’s spirit.

According to his mother, Renee, Zack has never been a morning person. Except when it came to an opportunity to hunt, fish, or gather sap for his boiler.

Zack’s passion for fishing had taken him and his family all over the country in search of new species. He has been to the Dominican Republic and caught mahi-mahi, Hawaii for rainbow runners and peacock bass, amberjack and snook in Florida and of course, salmon in Pulaski and striped bass in the Hudson River. Every year his family would plan a vacation and always planned at least one day of fishing wherever they went. When I asked him what his favorite fish was, I was pleased to hear that it was a fish native to Vermont – the yellow perch. I asked him what he loved most about fishing and he quickly blurted out “the feeling of a bite on my line and then reeling it up”!

Everything this young man loves most about life was fishing. He never expected that one day, soon, his passion would be tested by overcoming great adversity.

On May 14 of this year, he met with an unfortunate accident that easily could have ended his life. He and a friend had been learning about a new spearfishing rod and were planning on trying it out on frogs. Then the



The Bond of Fishing with Passion - The Lake Champlain International Fishing Derbies.
Photo by Bradley Carleton

idea of trying to knock over a cornstalk came into their imagination. As his friend swung the spearfishing rod around to aim at the fibrous form it accidentally discharged and the spear and the rod went into the right side of Zack’s skull, penetrating approximately 1-1/12” inches into his brain. His friend was in shock and Zack asked him to get him his phone so he could call his mother. They were on the backside of about seven acres. His mother rushed to the scene and

called 911. He was transported to the hospital with paramedics still holding the rod to the side of his head so that it wouldn’t move and cause further damage. After several hours of operations, the doctors were able to remove the spear by sawing a hole in his skull, removing the spear from the bone, and then patching it back up.

Once it was determined that the surgery was a success and that it appeared there may be few side effects, the race to heal was on. It was only five weeks until the big LCI Father’s Day Derby that Zack had planned on fishing with his father, Brad, and his mother, Renee. This is where the test of true grit comes in. In a five-week period, Zack was determined to overcome this significant setback with courage and optimism. His passion for fishing was far greater than his pain and suffering. He knew that he just must be ready for the Derby. And fish he did!

It is this valor and tenacity that makes Zack the obvious winner of this year’s “LCI Sportsman of the Year,” It is an honor to have been asked to tell Zack’s story and I hope that anyone who meets this extraordinary young man is inspired to “fish on”!

Bradley Carleton is Executive Director of Sacred Hunter.org, a non-profit that seeks to educate the public on the spiritual connection of man to nature.

Fall sports are off and running for Redhawks

Edd Merritt
CONTRIBUTOR

Football, soccer and cross country running are all in play as the fall sports season begins.

Football looks like its old self, instead of the touch ball that it was the last time it hit the gridiron. Quarterback Max Desito threw four TD passes as the Redhawks topped the bi-school Burlington/South Burlington Seahorses 35 to 14. Aidan Miller caught two TD passes for a first-quarter 14 to 0 lead that expanded to 21 to 7 by halftime. Jack Summer, Alex Provost and Angelos Carroll caught or ran for TDs, and CVU’s defense held the Seahorses at bay for the rest of the game.

Skyler Kingsbury and Chloe Pecor each hit the net twice for the women’s soccer team as the Redhawks topped Mount Anthony 6 to 1 on Saturday. Anna Morton and Zoe Zoller set up

two goals apiece with their assists. On the men’s pitch, CVU shut out Burr and Burton 3 to 0 on goals by Holden Batchelder, Thomas Roberts and Sam Dennison. Tyler Wuthrich, Diego Robinson and Fritz Wetzel assisted.

Also on Saturday, the Essex Invitational held at the Tree Farm course saw CVU’s cross country teams finish second among the men and third among women. Redhawk Matthew Servin topped the men’s individual runners with Kai Hillier running eighth. Alice Kridell was the sixth-place finisher among women.

Men’s volleyball and golf teams were both victorious in their opening contests. The volley ballers spiked South Burlington 3 to 1, while the golf team found the Champlain Country Club course comfortable enough for them to top Colchester, Rice and BFA. Zach Vincent’s 40 was the low individual score.



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Charlotte Senior Center news



Carolyn Kulik
SENIOR CENTER DIRECTOR

I am what time, circumstance, history have made me, certainly—but I am, also, much more than that. So are we all.

—James Baldwin

Will we be all fooled again into thinking fall is already here—only to have a few 90-degree days at the end of the month? We shall see. But, no matter the weather, there are many courses to consider in September and October. And don't forget to check out the new carpooling excursion to Cold Hollow Sculpture Park below.

Courses starting soon

These courses are starting very soon, so please make a note of the registration deadlines. Longer course descriptions can be found in the printed Fall Schedule or on the website: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. Registration is only in person, by phone (425-6345) or by mail: CSC, P.O. Box 207, Charlotte 05445.

Book Discussion Group: *The Book of Joy*

Pre-registration required by 9/10; limit of 10. No fee.
Monday mornings, 10:30–noon. Dates: 9/13, 9/27, 10/11, 10/25, 11/8, 11/22 & 12/6.
We will be reading *The Book of Joy* by the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. Join us to discuss our musings as we read through this unique book together.

Books of the World

Register by 9/14. No fee.
Wednesday afternoons, 2:30–4.
Dates: 9/29, 10/27, 11/10, 11/23 (Tues.) & 12/8 (no mtg. 10/13).
Co-sponsored by the Charlotte Library.

The Art of the Poem

Register by 9/17. Fee: \$60.
Tuesday afternoons, 2:30–4.
Dates: 9/21–10/12 (4 weeks).

How to Tell Great Stories

Register by 9/17. Fee: \$60.
Wednesday mornings, 10–11.
Dates: 9/22–10/27 (6 weeks).

Drawing & Painting Inspiring Places

Registration and payment by 9/16.
Fee: \$100, for the series. Max. 6.
Four, 3-hour classes, 10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Dates: (1) Sept. 22 or 23; (2) Sept. 29 or 30; (3) Oct. 6 or 7 and (4) Oct. 13 or 14.

(Best weather report for either Wednesday or Thursday decides the day; rain dates, if needed.

Cold Hollow Sculpture Park

Register by 9/21. No fee.
Friday, 9/24. Meet at 10:30 a.m. to carpool.
Return time approx. 3:30 p.m.
Enjoy 70 sculptures sited on seven walking paths arranged across farmland in Enosburg Falls, VT. Park requests no dogs.

Mindfulness for Life

Tuesday afternoons, 1–2. New dates: 9/28–10/26 (5 weeks). No fee.
Walk-ins are welcome.

NEW ~

Watercolor—Fall Spectacular II with Lynn Cummings

Please register and pay by 9/30.
Fee: \$77.
2 Tuesday mornings, 9–12.
Dates: 10/5 & 10/12.

Exercise & health

These classes take place in our spacious Great Room. You're invited to come and check out a class one time—for no charge. These are ongoing throughout the year—you can join at any time. Stop by and fill out an address form; walk-ins are welcome.

Be sure to check the course descriptions in the Fall Schedule or see the website for details. Pay for a session series in advance, and receive a discount.

Chair Yoga – Mon., 9:30 a.m.

Gentle Yoga – Mon., 11:00 a.m.

Pilates Plus – Tue., 8:30 a.m.

Essentrics – Wed., 8:30 a.m.

Pilates – Thur., 8:30 a.m.

T'ai Chi for Beginners – Thurs., 10 a.m.

T'ai Chi Advanced – Thurs., 11 a.m.

Essentrics – Fri., 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday Talks at 1 p.m.

All Wednesday talks and events will be in person only. Masks are required for everyone. Please note that registration is necessary now, and you can call to sign up.

9/15: Greenbush—Music with John Creech & Cobey Gatos

As long-time 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. They seek out a personal connection with each tune, creating a unique and evolving version each time they perform.

9/22: Trip to Colombia—Birds, People & Crops with Hank Kaestner



This two-week bird-watching trip went from the Amazon rain forest to the very tops of the Andes mountains. We found more than 600 species of birds, all the while taking steps to avoid Covid! Learn about the wildlife of Colombia (which has more bird species than any other country)—and also about its geography, culture, and agriculture (think coffee).

Lunch schedule

The meal schedule has changed again. There will be no Wednesday lunches in September. Monday lunches will be continuing.

The next Monday lunch will be on Sept. 13. Stop in—reservations are not required. Requested donation is still just \$5.

Menus ~

9/13
Autumn leek soup
Seasonal mixed green salad
Banana cream pie bars

9/20
Chicken salad Niçoise
Served with mixed greens
Apple cake

9/27
TBD

It's a good idea to call to check if lunch is served on a particular date. The information will also be posted on the CSC website: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. Our café is spacious and airy, and our porch has tables with big sun umbrellas.

Annual Senior Art Show

14th Annual Senior Center Community Art Show is just fabulous—if I say so myself. There are 66 works by 36 artists in a wide variety of styles. Mediums include watercolor, acrylic, oil, pastel, wood, glass, mixed media and prints. Most pieces are for sale. Because the gallery space in the Great Room is used for other activities, the best times to view art in September are: Tues. & Wed. after 2:30; Thurs. & Fri. after 12:30. The show will be ending a little early, so be sure to visit before 9/24.

About volunteering

Ever thought about becoming a volunteer?

There's a special spot for you whether you are available once a month for a couple of hours or on a weekly basis. This is a great opportunity to meet other people, make new friends and to be part of our community. Lori would love to meet you and talk with you about the possibilities of volunteering at the Charlotte Senior Center. She can be reached at email VOL4csc@gmavt.net or (802) 425-6345.

Notes on masks

If you'd like to visit or join an activity, there are some mask requirements to keep in mind. Plus, some activities, like Bridge and Mahjong, are requiring participants to be fully vaccinated because they take place over long periods of time and in close proximity. Please do call to check.

Here is where things are now at the Senior Center.

If you are . . .

Fully vaccinated:

No mask required – but strongly encouraged.
Social distancing advised.

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 after the mask guidance for the Senior Center is updated.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Please visit our website for expanded course descriptions and more information: 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 most welcome to enroll. Questions? Call or stop by between 9-4, or leave a message at (802) 425-6345.

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Library news



Margaret Woodruff
DIRECTOR

Library Reminders

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.

September is Library Card Sign-Up Month

Here's the word from the American Library Association:

Marley Dias, author, executive producer and founder of #1000BlackGirlBooks, is joining the American Library Association and libraries nationwide in promoting the power of a library card this September.

As honorary chair, Dias wants to remind the public that signing up for a library card provides access to technology, multimedia content and educational programming that transforms lives and strengthens communities. "A library card provides an opportunity for discovery and access to a rich and diverse world. It empowers you to make change and experience new stories," said Dias. Visit your library online or in person to see what's new and take part in the celebration. Libraries across the country are participating.

Do you have friends who don't have library cards? Invite them to sign up during September.

Happening at the Library

Grange on the Greens: Will Patton Trio Thursday, Sept. 9, 5–7 p.m.

The last concert of the season! Join us for live music on the town green. Activities for children provided by the Charlotte Children's Center, sponsor of the event.

Friends Book Discussion: *All Creatures Great & Small*

Thursday, Sept. 9, 7:30 p.m. via Zoom

Delve into the magical, unforgettable world of James Herriot, the world's most beloved veterinarian, and his menagerie of heartwarming, funny and tragic animal patients.

For over 40 years, generations of readers have thrilled to Herriot's marvelous tales, deep love of life, and extraordinary storytelling abilities. For decades, Herriot roamed the remote, beautiful Yorkshire Dales, treating every patient that came his way from smallest to largest, and observing animals and humans alike with his keen, loving eye. Copies



available at the library circulation desk. Register to join us on the library website.

Charlotte Seed Library Garden Chat Friday, Sept. 10, 11 a.m. via Zoom

The garden season is winding down. Share your triumphs and get answers to your garden puzzles with Linda Hamilton and Karen Tuininga. Register on the library website.

Media Literacy: A Conversation with Journalists in Town

Tuesday, Sept. 14, 7 p.m. via Zoom

Sources of media, from CNN to Reddit, have never been more abundant. Just in our town, residents can read the *Charlotte Bridge*; the *Charlotte News*; the *Citizen*... plus Front Porch Forum, Facebook and local email groups. Yet more freedom of information also brings more opportunities for *disinformation*, declining trust in established news organizations, and increasing popularity of conspiracy theorists.

Join us for a conversation on media literacy with Adam Davidson, Christina Asquith and Jesse Wegman, national journalists and founders of *The Charlotte Bridge*. Adam co-founded Planet Money and has been a staff reporter for the *New York Times* and the *New Yorker*. Christina reported for newspapers and radio for 20 years before founding her own nonprofit news organization, The Fuller Project. Jesse is an editorial board member of the *New York Times*. Register here: <https://bit.ly/38bA127>

The Great Vermont Dragon Egg Hunt Beginning Wednesday, Sept. 15

Traditionally, every September in Killington, Vermont, there is a celebration of Vermont public libraries at the Vermont Fairy Tale Festival. Unfortunately, it has been cancelled this year. But, in its place, over 100 Vermont libraries will host The Great Vermont Dragon Egg Hunt. Watch for clues to find the Magic Egg here in Charlotte. The lucky person who finds the egg will bring it to the library to claim the prize, a Folkmanis Dragon puppet.

Stop by the library after Sept. 15 to pick up your first clue. Dragon take-and-make kits will be available at the library all month to continue the celebration.

Men's Book Group: *A Libertarian Walks into a Bear*

Wednesday, Sept. 15, 7 p.m.

A Libertarian Walks into a Bear is the sometimes funny, sometimes terrifying tale of what happens when a government disappears into the woods. Complete with gunplay, adventure and backstabbing politicians, this is the ultimate story of a quintessential American experiment—to live free or die, perhaps from a bear. Copies available at the library circulation desk.

Mystery Book Group: *A Body on the Beach* Monday, Sept. 20, 10 a.m.

Sensible Carole Seddon doesn't have the tolerance to deal with her new bohemian neighbor Jude. But Jude doesn't seem so bad when Carole discovers another addition to the neighborhood: a dead body on the beach bearing two wounds on its neck. Copies available at the library circulation desk. Join us via Zoom. Find the link on the library website charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Climate Action with 350.org

Tuesday, Sept. 21, 5:30 p.m. via Zoom

This summer we are seeing the climate crisis get frighteningly and increasingly severe. Scientists are telling us that the window for preventing runaway climate change is closing fast. We must act boldly now to protect communities today and safeguard a viable future for our children and grandchildren.

Share your thoughts and learn what Vermont is doing about the climate crisis. Your voice is needed to ensure that we take meaningful and effective action!

Vanessa Rule, co-founder of Mothers Out Front and Better Future Project and 350Massachusetts, and now Lead Organizer of 350Vermont, will talk about the state's plan for action, why it is critical for Vermonters to raise their voices and be engaged in the process, and how we can do that. Join the conversation: <https://bit.ly/38nNQdU>

Practical Earth-Honoring Skills for Everyone

Wednesday, Sept. 29, 7 p.m. via Zoom

How can we create an ecological civilization without cultivating an ecological psyche first? At its foundation, developing an ecological psyche involves reclaiming and diversifying

our sense of relational intimacy. Nutritive and connective, this class is for anyone feeling fatigued or overwhelmed about climate change. Basic earth-honoring skills decentralize humans from the global story and wake us up through joy and relatedness. Kendra Ward is a local traditional Chinese medicine practitioner who teaches and writes about the cultivation of an earth-honoring worldview as it relates to our health, well-being and sense of deep belonging. You can learn more about her work at kendraward.com. Register for this program here: <https://bit.ly/3jgvku9>.

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
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Email: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org



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