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The Charlotte News

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Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge
Photo by Lee Krohn

Former ZBA member Ronda Moore serves FOIA request on the town



Mara Brooks
EDITOR

Former Zoning Board of Adjustment member Ronda Moore served a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request on the town, requesting “materials relating to my conduct as a member of the Charlotte Zoning Board of Adjustment.”

Moore resigned from the board on July 28 after serving less than three months.

The FOIA request, dated Nov. 1 and addressed to Town Administrator Dean Bloch, seeks materials prepared by town officials, board members and the town’s general counsel for the period beginning June 3 through Oct. 27 of this year.

The request also refers to news articles published by *The News* and *The Citizen* during the same time period.

In a telephone interview with *The News* on Sunday, Nov. 7, Moore said the FOIA request is “the first step, short of litigation, to get closer to the heart of the matter.”

The matter at issue involves public statements made last summer by ZBA Chair Lane Morrison and then-Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow that Moore had violated the town’s conflict of interest policy and/or “perceived conflict of interest” policy.

The trouble began when Morrison showed up at the Selectboard’s June 28 meeting and requested that Moore be removed from the ZBA for failing to disclose a potential conflict of interest with then-applicant, the Charlotte Health Center.

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

Selectboard Chair Matt Krasnow joined Morrison in criticizing Moore at the meeting, and in later statements to *The News*, describing her conduct as “unsettling” and “disappointing.”

At the meeting, Krasnow told Morrison that, according to ZBA rules, the Zoning Board, not the Selectboard, would have to vote on whether to remove Moore.

Moore said she was baffled by Krasnow’s comments about her.

“He made those statements when he had no proof that what Lane was saying about me was true, no evidence, nothing,” Moore said.

In the days after the June 28 meeting, the town consulted with general counsel about the issue, and an investigation was initiated into Moore’s conduct by attorney David Rugh.

At the July 12 Selectboard meeting, resident Stuart Bennett and Selectboard Vice-Chair Frank Tenney criticized Krasnow for his comments about Moore, which Bennett claimed had prejudiced the town against her.

On July 14, the day the investigation concluded, the ZBA—including Moore and



the town attorney—met in a closed session and decided no action would be taken to remove Moore. Moore had requested that the meeting be held in open session and that Lane Morrison recuse himself from the proceedings, but both requests were denied.

When Moore resigned from the ZBA at a Zoning Board meeting on July 28, Tenney attended the meeting and offered her an apology.

“I would like to apologize for what you had to go through,” Tenney said. “I feel it was unfair.”

On Sept. 23, Bennett penned an op-ed in *The News* urging officials to release the Moore investigation’s findings.

“Months have passed but nothing has happened,” Bennett wrote. “Matt [Krasnow] and Lane [Morrison] have never been held to account by the Selectboard for their demeaning, and apparently false, allegations which forced a volunteer off the ZBA.”

Four days later, at the Sept. 27 Selectboard meeting, Krasnow released a three-page timeline prepared by Town Attorney David Rugh that cleared Moore of wrongdoing.

“There were a few Selectboard meetings where they could have released it,” Moore said of the timeline. “I know *The News* asked [Krasnow] about that and he kind of danced around the issue.”

In an email to *The News* on Sept. 29, Krasnow wrote that the reason the timeline was not made public sooner was because the town did not receive it in time to warn it for the August 23 meeting. As for why it was not released at the Sept. 13 meeting, Krasnow said no one had “requested” an update.

Moore said she does not understand why, nearly three months after being cleared of wrongdoing, Frank Tenney’s apology remains the only one she has received from the Selectboard.

“Every member of the Selectboard has done the same thing, they have all turned their back on the issue,” Moore said. “They haven’t had the courage, except for Frank.”

Matt Krasnow agreed to answer questions from *The News* on Tuesday in the presence of David Rugh, the town’s attorney, and Selectboard Chair Jim Faulkner.

When asked if he had any plans to apologize to Moore, Krasnow said it would depend on what he was being asked to apologize for. “I stand by all of my statements that are on the record, as long as they were accurately recorded and written,” Krasnow said.

Wake Robin honors former CEO



Martha Maksym, current CEO of Wake Robin, stands with her predecessor Patrick McKee, who was honored for his years of service to the community with the planting of a dawn redwood tree on the property’s lower meadow.
Phoro contributed

Staff Report

A dawn redwood tree commemorates Patrick McKee’s service to the community

On Thursday, Nov. 4, residents, staff and board of Wake Robin joined together to honor former CEO Patrick McKee.

McKee, of Charlotte, served as the organization’s head from 2014 until 2020. A dawn redwood tree, planted on the property’s lower meadow, will act as a longstanding thank-you for his work.

Current CEO Martha Maksym said, from inside the community’s newly renovated Maple Leaf Café, “Like all the CEOs who have worked for Wake Robin, you were a strategically unique choice—an example of Wake Robin’s hallmark of actively seeking great leaders with varied and interesting backgrounds. Consistent with this philosophy, your leadership was the right style at the right time.”

She continued, “Your legacy is strong and revered at Wake Robin. On behalf of the community, our sincere thanks.”

Wake Robin is a nonprofit Life Plan Community offering the full continuum of living options for senior citizens.

Selectboard ratifies decision on library employee salaries

Shaw Israel Izikson
REPORTER

At the Selectboard’s meeting on Monday, Nov. 8, the board unanimously ratified a previous decision concerning employee salaries at the Charlotte Library.

Back at their meeting on Oct. 18, the board approved the salaries of three library employees: the Library Director’s annual salary for \$75,950, the Youth Services/Assistant Director at \$30.94 an hour, and the Tech Librarian/Assistant Director at \$30.94 an hour.

The salaries are effective retroactively to July 1.

At the Oct. 18 meeting, Selectboard member Louise McCarren said the reason for the board approving the motion for the salaries was because the board of the Charlotte Library did not feel that the salaries were “properly placed.”

At the Nov. 8 meeting, Chairman James

Faulkner made the motion to ratify the salary increases because “it kind of clarifies what the motion was before.”

Like the motion for the salary increase at the Oct. 18 meeting, Faulkner’s motion was not listed on the town’s website for the Nov. 8 meeting.

Faulkner’s motion was seconded by Selectboard member Lewis Mudge, and it led to a terse back and forth discussion between McCarren and Town Clerk and Treasurer Mary Mead.

“Can you tell us what error was corrected?” Mead asked.

McCarren said that “the town has outsourced this to [Gallagher, Flynn & Company] and Jim has provided that information.”

Gallagher, Flynn & Company LLP of South Burlington was hired by the town as an HR consultant, with company employee Dan Lyons working for the town.

RONDA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The former Selectboard chair said he felt he had been misquoted by the press, and that his statements had been mischaracterized both by reporters and by resident Stuart Bennett.

Attorney Rugh agreed, stating that “general inaccuracies in reporting” were to blame for the “confusion” around the Moore conflict of interest issue.

Rugh said that he “doesn’t know the specifics” about what those inaccuracies were because “I don’t read a lot of the news articles.”

Moore said she hopes documents produced in response to her FOIA request will shed light on why she was falsely accused and why, despite multiple requests from several constituents, the town has refused to clear her name and admit its mistakes.

“Look, nobody wants to turn the page on this chapter more than I do, believe me,” Moore said. “But I’m going to keep pursuing it until I get that apology.”

When asked if that could include litigation, Moore replied that “nothing is off the table,” but said she hoped it would not have to come to that.

“Charlotte has been my center of gravity all of my life. Yet, I have been treated very, very badly in the town that I love, where my family has lived for 65 years,” Moore said. “I grew up here, attended CCS and CVU here, had my first job here, was married here, buried my aunt, uncle, cousin, and my mother, father and my sister here. Charlotte was my lifeline, but no more. This is not the town I knew.”

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Thank you to Bradley Carleton, author of the “Sacred Hunter” column. His graceful writing helps me, a non-hunter, to appreciate the deeper meanings of hunting. His gentle reminder that for him “it is not about the kill,” but rather, “a deeper understanding of the animal.”

Deeper understanding... isn’t that what we could use in our world?

I look forward to reading more from Bradley.

Sandi Detwiler

North Ferrisburgh/Charlotte

Time for humble pie

I appreciate Dr. Levine’s honest answer at the governor’s press conference this week when asked why our state’s Covid-19 rates are so high, given that Vermont has the country’s highest vaccination rate. One reason he stated is that we have “low natural immunity.”

Are any reporters asking the follow-up questions here? How could this be? Our vaccination rate is the highest in the country! We were one of the “best” restricted states in the country during 2020-21!

Proudly we wear masks while sneering at the scarlet letter of those who go barefaced in the grocery store, and we gossip about Floridians and Texans as if they are the prodigal children of our country for their low vaccination rates and anti-mask stances. How dare they endanger the rest of us?

Biden’s “patience is wearing thin” for all those non-vaxxers.

In Vermont, we have missed weddings, funerals, graduations, Thanksgiving and many joyful gatherings for the common good (but we did gather to protest). Yet, we now have THE HIGHEST COVID-19 CASE RATE IN THE COUNTRY. Yes, the all caps are my yelling words. We masked! We hid in our homes! My friends could not access the non-Covid-19 healthcare they needed! I amassed copious amounts of toilet paper! I cancelled Thanksgiving! We vaccinated and we shunned other-thinkers.

Have you watched football games in Florida and Texas—with 80,000 people gathering and NO MASKS? NO PROOF OF VACCINES. Yet, at the Flynn Theater here in Burlington, Vermont, at a show for a few hundred people we are masking and forcing proof of vaccine (which might only be 50 to 75 percent effective as immunity wanes) or proof of a test showing that three days ago the patron did not have Covid-19. Not. Logical.

Yet the public here seems to be thrilled that they are with like-minded people who are “safe” because they got the jab and have a colorful mask. We have our badge of honor on a piece of paper that shows we have apparently waning immunity (according to the CDC).

Are we better off than Texas and Florida based on state Covid-19 rates? No. Texas and Florida schools have no masks. Vermont kids do. Still, lower rates! Texans and Floridians have been living life, attending weddings and school and getting exposed to Covid and getting “natural immunity” while we were hiding and creating a culture of fear and division for the haves and have-nots of the vaccine.

My solution is that we continue to encourage vaccines and masks but stop mandating and worrying about those who do not, and get back to living and fostering our “natural immunity.” Stay home if you feel sick. Wasn’t that always the consensus?

It is time to humble ourselves, to have grace for others who think differently than we do and move forward.

Kendra Bowen, MSPH
Charlotte, Vermont

To watch the Vermont governor’s press conference from Nov 9, go to:
<http://tiny.cc/tweluz>.



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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Copy Deadline: Friday, Dec. 13

Ads Deadline: Friday, Dec. 13

Town

LIBRARY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“But he has not provided that information,” Mead told McCarren.

“Well, it’s there,” McCarren said.

“Well, what is it?” Mead asked McCarren.

“We have outsourced this,” McCarren said. “I am not doing this.”

Mead proceeded to criticize the board for its handling of the salary increases of the library employees.

“After reviews of employee positions, job descriptions, etc., Gallagher and Flynn makes the recommendation to the Selectboard, which the board could agree to or make their adjustments,” Mead said. “At the point where the Selectboard is in agreement with the revised rates for all employees, the employees were promised and expected paperwork showing how and where their position had been placed, and the criteria that had been used to come to that pay rate. That communication never happened.”

Mead said that, in late August, new pay rates were assigned to all employees retroactive to July 1.

“Then, unexpectedly, certain library positions had to be revisited,” she said. “The library’s board of trustees had many conversations with Gallagher and Flynn to the point where they prepared their detailed analysis of the library director, youth librarian and technical librarian positions. Presented to Gallagher and Flynn were requested rate increases for those three positions. The Selectboard said Gallagher and Flynn had made a mistake, and it had to be corrected for those three employees. At the time, it was said to have been a tenure mistake, although no one could explain the mistake.”

Mead asked the board if there were similar mistakes with other town employees.

“That did not seem to be a consideration,” she said. “For example, Dean [Bloch, Town Administrator] and I have 24 and 28 years of tenure. Somehow, all three library positions are ranked higher, with much less tenure. Maybe the reason no one could explain the so-called mistake was because there wasn’t a mistake.”

“I’ve listened to a lot of meetings on Zoom, and after the fact, and there was a constant reference by the library to the Selectboard about the Supreme Court case of the Town of Hartford versus the Hartford Library, basically telling the Selectboard that trustees were in charge of pay rates and salaries for their employees, not the Selectboard.”

Mead said that, while there is a “desperate

need” for a market adjustment for all employees, she was hopeful that hiring an outside consultant “might help the Selectboard make good changes and create more equity for all jobs.”

“Unfortunately, applying special treatment to some employees has created more inequity than has ever existed,” Mead said.

Chairman Faulkner thanked Mead for her comments, and the board proceeded to unanimously pass Faulkner’s motion.

Municipal employees issue concerns over raises for library employees

At their meeting on Monday, Nov. 8, the Selectboard reviewed a letter of concern co-signed by six municipal employees regarding the board approving raises for three library employees.

The board voted unanimously on Oct. 18 to approve the raises for the library director, the youth services/assistant director, and the tech librarian/assistant director.

At the Nov. 8 meeting, the board voted to ratify their previous decision (see above story).

On October 25, six town employees co-signed a letter stating their concerns about the salary approvals for the library employees.

The letter was co-signed by Town Clerk and Treasurer Mary Mead, Assistant Town Clerk and Treasurer Sayuri “Sy” Koerner, Recreation Director Nicole Conley, Zoning Administrator and Health Officer Wendy Pelletier, Town Planner Larry Lewack, and Town Assessor John Kerr.

The six employees wrote that, originally, the Selectboard finalized pay rates for all town employees at an Aug. 23 meeting, which was made retroactive to July 1.

“With the Aug. 23 adjustment, the average increase for the Town Hall and Senior Center employees was 7.5 percent,” the six employees wrote in the letter. “The average percentage increase for the library employees [at the Aug. 23 meeting] was about 14 percent, almost double. After the second adjustment [at the Oct. 18 meeting] for the librarian, technical librarian, and youth librarian was approved, the total percentage increase in their salaries was 24 percent for the librarian, 46 percent for the technical librarian, and 48 percent for the youth librarian. These adjustments seem to be out of line with those received by other employees being employed by the town.”

The six employees requested that “in light of the changes that were made to accommodate the library employees, it seems appropriate

that the same principles be applied to the rest of the employees where applicable. It seems reasonable to conduct a meeting that includes Dan Lyons from Gallagher and Flynn to ensure that the compensation rates across all town positions have been developed taking into consideration all factors, including tenure.”

Previously, Gallagher, Flynn & Company LLP of South Burlington was hired by the town to be its HR consultant, with company employee Dan Lyons working for the town.

“These are legitimate concerns,” Chairman James Faulkner said at the Nov. 8 meeting in response to the letter. “They felt that maybe the library had special treatment, and it certainly gave the impression of that.”

Faulkner said that on the morning of Nov. 8, before the meeting, he and Selectboard member Louise McCarren met with two of the six employees who signed the letter, but he did not name the employees.

“We tried to come up with a way to solve this possible inequity that existed,” Faulkner said. “My suggestion is that we send [the salary rates] back to Gallagher and Flynn and have them look at them all over again.”

McCarren proceeded to make a motion for the company to review the salaries.

“I am very disappointed that our efforts to outsource and allow all employees to access an independent review has failed,” McCarren said.

“You have to understand that, with this review, Gallagher and Flynn may not make any changes at all,” Faulkner said. “But at least we will know that everyone has been treated fairly.”

“Taking this down to Dan is very well going to result in no change,” Selectboard member Lewis Mudge said. “So, we owe it to the employees to be straight about that.”

“We received a letter from a group of employees, and I think the Selectboard has been very consistent in saying that we are not qualified HR professionals,” Selectboard member Matt Krasnow said. “We went to

the premiere HR agency and have had a very equitable compensation market analysis for all the town employees.”

Mudge said that Lyons “was very clear” that he made a mistake on his salary analysis of the library employees in question.

“Dan said, ‘I made a mistake’ when we all got together,” Mudge said. “We all agreed a mistake was made.”

However, Koerner, who was in the audience, contradicted Mudge and told the Selectboard that Lyons told her that no mistakes were made.

“In talking with Dan, I asked him outright if he had made a mistake,” Koerner said. “With him as my HR representative, he said no, he didn’t make a mistake.”

“Let me get this straight,” Faulkner told Koerner. “You asked Dan if he made a mistake, and he said he didn’t?”

“Yes, he said he wouldn’t consider it a mistake,” Koerner said in response.

“Well, that doesn’t help much,” Faulkner said. “I have been led [to believe] that there was a mistake made and they had to go back.”

Eventually, McCarren chose to withdraw her motion because Koerner told her that Lyons had already reviewed the salaries.

Faulkner then read into the record a letter from Lyons, and said that “the Town Administrator [Dean Bloch] didn’t put it in the packet because the Selectboard had not reviewed it yet.”

As of Tuesday, Nov. 9, the letter from Lyons was still not on the town’s website.

According to Faulkner, in the letter, Lyons wrote that he reviewed each town employee’s salary and made a recommendation for a six percent increase for the town’s planning and zoning assistant’s salary.

Mudge made a motion to increase the salary of the planning and zoning assistant to \$21 an hour retroactive to this August.

The motion was seconded by Faulkner and was approved unanimously by the board.



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News from The News

Thank you, Susan

John Quinney
PUBLISHER & PRESIDENT

Susan Sim has stepped down from our fundraising committee, and we want to thank her for her selfless commitment to the paper over the years.

In 2013, Susan became a board member of Friends of the Charlotte News, the organization we established to receive tax-deductible gifts to the paper. She became an enthusiastic, hardworking and generous member of the Friends Board.

Susan worked closely with Susanne Davis, who wrote:

"All of our fundraising efforts were a group effort. We did whatever was needed—stuffing envelopes, editing copy, planning and hosting parties, making food, meeting with donors and prospects, and so on. Susan always hosted our meetings. I'll miss her."

Thanks in part to Susan's commitment and experience, the Friends met its fundraising goals every year.

When *The Charlotte News* received IRS 501(c)(3) designation earlier this year, Susan joined our fundraising committee where she helped plan our summer and year-end campaigns and made many phone calls on our behalf.

Thank you, Susan, for all your hard work on behalf of *The Charlotte News* over the past eight years. We wish you all the best.



Photo contributed

Thanks, Tom

Vince Crockenberg

Tom Tiller recently stepped down from our Board of Directors.

He told me recently that his father, when someone would do something right, would say to that person, "You're a good man, Charlie Brown."

Well, Tom did lots of things right during his four years on *The News* board. Among many other contributions, he organized and directed the work of the Strategic Planning Committee, which has given clear purpose and direction to the board's recent work. He generously hosted, along with his wife, Michelle, fundraising events at his home, which helped put us in a far more secure financial position, with the ability to withstand the financial pressures that have threatened the survival of local journalism elsewhere.

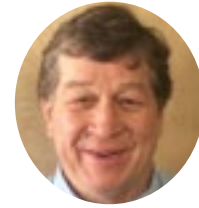
Perhaps most important, he brought an infectious can-do enthusiasm to the board's work, a sense that there was nothing we couldn't do if we worked together as a real team. And we could have fun doing it.

Tom's presence on the board these past four years brought out the best in all of us. Thanks, Tom, for being such a large part of our effort to make *The News* worthy of the community we live in. You're a good man, indeed.



Tom Tiller and wife Michelle
Photo contributed

NewsMatch update...and a cow manure tribute



John Quinney
PUBLISHER & PRESIDENT

You may have watched *Storm Lake Times*, which screened on Vermont PBS on Monday night. The documentary is about a community newspaper in northwestern Iowa and asks the question: Can American democracy survive without independent

local journalism?

Like small-town newspapers everywhere, *The Storm Lake Times* has lost readership and advertising revenues in recent years. At the same time, printing, health insurance and other production costs have kept going up. They are not alone. In the past 15 years, one in four U.S. newspapers has closed.

Here at *The Charlotte News* we have also seen a decline in advertising revenues over the past few years, while printing and postage costs are on the rise. Each issue requires upwards of \$4,500 to produce. But we still deliver the paper to every mailbox in town, for free!

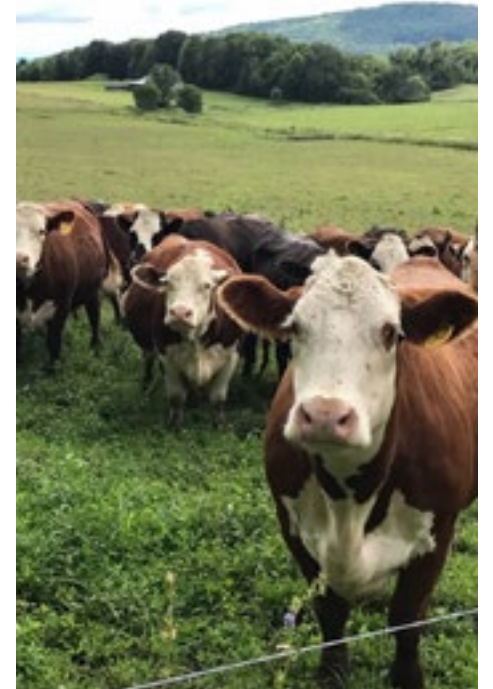
There is an important difference between *The Charlotte News* and many other small-town papers: each year our readers step up with donations that help keep the presses rolling.

By now, you may have heard that we've been awarded a prestigious NewsMatch grant—for the second year running. This grant matches the tax-deductible donations we receive during the months of November and December. Many people have already taken action.

If you have not already done so, please join them. Give now to double the impact of your contribution. Send a check to *The Charlotte News*, P.O. Box 251, Charlotte, VT 05445. Or use a card and donate on our secure website, charlottenewsvt.org.

Your gift is an investment in the Charlotte community for which we are all grateful.

And speaking of gratitude, it can show up in unexpected places here in Vermont. A Charlotte friend recently found reason to



Fat Cow Farm by Cindy Robinson
appreciate chilly fall days:

"I'm just grateful that Monday was not a warm, sunny autumn day.

I was driving north on Dorset Street, passing the dairy farm just before you reach the intersection with Cheese Factory Road. I glanced at the herd of cows that had just crossed over from the east to the westside pasture. The roadway appeared a bit sloppy with fresh tracks of mud and manure.

I was approached by a car traveling south and didn't think much of it. That car and mine intersected the cows' path at the same time. "Splat... splat!" Streams of chunky liquid splashed onto my driver's side door and window. Which, mercifully, was closed.

That's because it was a cloudy, chilly day in the 40s."

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Education

Parents raise concerns over school district’s COVID-19 protocols

Shaw Israel Izikson
REPORTER

A group of five parents voiced concerns over aspects of the school district’s COVID-19 protocols at the Champlain Valley School District’s Board of School Districts regular meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 2.

According to the school district’s website, as of Wednesday, Nov. 3, 58 members of the school community have tested positive for the virus so far during this school year, including 10 active cases.

The website stated that the majority of cases originated from the Williston schools, which have had 42 cases since the school year started.

Meanwhile, CVU reported eight COVID-19 cases since the school year began, Shelburne Community school reported five cases, and Hinesburg Community School reported four cases.

Charlotte Central School has not reported any cases since the start of the school year.

Jessica Phelan, a parent of two students at Williston Central, was the first to speak out about the district’s handling of the pandemic.

“I am concerned by the wait-and-see approach that we followed, and the time that it took the administration to act with stronger in-school protocols when our caseloads climbed this past September,” Phelan said. “I know that I am not alone in contacting the administration on multiple occasions when it comes to demanding many things: reinstatement of the state mask mandate and increased Covid protocols in schools. I want to feel confident that this governing body will proactively advocate for us in the future when the community is raising collective concerns like we are doing today.”

Phelan asked several questions of the board, including what the school district’s Covid protocols would be for the rest of the year and what the district’s academic response would be for students who lost learning days as a result of being quarantined.

“I have two children who are in Williston Central, and they have been quarantined

a total of five times this year due to being identified as close contacts,” Phelan said. “They have lost a total of 22 days of in-school learning.”

The board did not answer Phelan’s questions, but other parents attending the meeting raised similar concerns with the board, including Caroline Dahlstrom.

“I have a fourth-grader, a kindergartener, and a three-year-old who gets IEP [Individualized Education Program] services through the school district,” Dahlstrom said. “My youngest [child] is medically fragile and is at high risk for Covid. Because of that, my family has had to take enhanced precautions.”

Dahlstrom said that while her family felt safe during the last school year, this year they do not.

“This year, my fourth-grader has missed 25 days so far, and my kindergartener has missed 15 days, and that is just in the first two months of the school year,” she said. “My three-year-old has only been able to have three in-person therapy sessions. They have all been on our

front porch because he cannot yet go to the school safely. Despite the absolutely amazing efforts of his teacher, we still don’t have a plan for how to get my fourth-grader back in person in school.”

Dahlstrom said, “I thought I was going to lose my child on more than one occasion.”

“I am asking for enhanced protections for contact tracing guidelines to go back to what they used to be,” Dahlstrom said. “The larger pool of kids so that we can capture every child who is exposed. Right now, we are missing children who were exposed and are sick. They are given the opportunity to expose other children.”

On Oct. 29, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized the emergency use of the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid vaccine for children five to 11 years old.

The state’s Department of Health has set up a section on their website with information about the vaccine, along with a list of vaccine clinics, at: healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/vaccines-children.

Concerns have been raised about the Champlain Valley School District’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) program

Shaw Israel Izikson
REPORTER

During a Board of School Directors meeting on Oct. 19, Charlotte resident Mary Golek read into the record an email on behalf of the Charlotte Community DEI Committee.

In the email, the Charlotte Community DEI Committee is described as “a group of concerned parents, caregivers, and community members.”

“It has come to our attention that all five of the CVSD DEI coaches have resigned,” Golek read. “We are writing to inquire as to the reasons and the process for replacement. We are very concerned that all of the coaches who began this work last year have now resigned.”

The committee wrote that “it is very important that parents and caregivers be involved in the selection process and that the CVSD community has a better understanding of the job descriptions and support provided to these individuals.”

Board members at the Oct. 19 meeting did not respond to Golek’s reading of the committee’s email.

At the school district’s Board of School Directors meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 2, Christina Deeley, Librarian for Champlain Valley Union High School, spoke of her concerns.

Deeley said that she was a DEI Coach for the high school.

“I am speaking today to provide some clarity around my decision to resign from that position,” Deeley told the board. “Over the past few weeks, I have seen several district-wide emails referring to the departure of almost the entire equity team.”

Deeley said that only two of the original 10 team members remain and the team is without the director.

“I have listened to mention of it at these board meetings, but I’ve heard little interest in understanding why we are where we are, even as you prepare to hear yet another presentation about equity this evening,” Deeley said, referring to an equity presentation by Dr. Luvelle Brown scheduled for later in the meeting.

“For the past year, the DEI team has worked tirelessly to put equity at the forefront in

the absence of a director, or any leadership from district administration,” Deeley said. “The team put together professional development opportunities. They helped

facilitate discussions and growth opportunities for faculty and staff. They reached out to

SEE **DEI PROGRAM** PAGE 7

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Around Town

Sympathy:

is extended to family and friends of **Theodore Braun, Jr., M.D.** of Shelburne who died Oct. 23 at the age of 87. Prior to moving to Shelburne, Ted was a longtime resident of Charlotte. In 1970 he and his wife Joan, plus their children, moved to Vermont where he joined the faculty of the University of Vermont College of Medicine. An obstetrician-gynecologist, he served in that capacity for 27 years, whereupon he retired as an Emeritus Associate Professor. Ted was medical director of the Board of Directors of Planned Parenthood of Vermont in the 1970s and was named one of the “Best Doctors of America.” After retiring, he worked with Habitat for Humanity and the Charlotte Senior Center. He is survived by his wife, Joan, plus three sons and five grandchildren. The family asks that, in lieu of flowers, donations in his memory be made to the Cathedral Church of St. Paul or to Habitat for Humanity.

is extended to family and friends of **Lindsay Mae Sheehan** who passed away Nov. 4 at the age of 33 after struggling lifelong with cystic

fibrosis. Lindsay was raised in Charlotte, where she attended Charlotte Central School and graduated from CVU High School in 2007. She was long known for her pleasant presence and industriousness at Spears Corner Store where she started working at the age of 14.

Lindsay’s accomplishments in her relatively short life are numerous. She learned to drive tractors, which she did on Charlotte farms. From that start, she moved on to driving commercial vehicles, including fairly large tankers.

Switching gears, she earned a degree in Dental Hygiene four years ago. Two years later she gave birth to a daughter, Brynn, whom she was raising with her partner, Anthony Cain. She has a number of surviving relatives in the area, including a son, Thomas, mother Vivian, stepfather Kevin Kagle, sisters Courtney, Emily, Chelsea and Marie, plus a number of extended family members.

The family asks that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, cff.org.

Charlotte Girl Scout Troop 30066 holds bridging ceremony



Charlotte Girl Scout Troop 30066 held their annual bridging ceremony on Monday, November 15. New girls were welcomed and invested into the troop, returning girls were welcomed back and rededicated themselves to always strive to do their best to “live by the Girl Scout Law,” and girls moving from one level of scouting to the next received their bridging bars and walked across the “bridge,” eager to begin their new adventures on the other side.

Above: The newest Brownie Scouts from Troop 30066, L to R, Emily Jagger, Isabella Rice, Marissa LaClair, Mia Paquette and Josephine Webster-Fox.

Below: Colbie Curler and Kierstan LaClair lighting a candle as part of their bridging ceremony as they prepare to bridge from Brownie to Junior Scouts.

Photos by Cindy Bradley





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Education

DEI PROGRAM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

community groups and facilitated events in their schools.”

Deeley said that DEI team members participated in the hiring committees for the superintendent and DEI director positions.

“The women on the DEI team, particularly the women of color, bore the brunt of this important work with minimal compensation and regular opposition from some administrators,” Deeley said. “Pushback and micromanaging from principals across the district were common for many coaches. It is not unexpected for white leaders to slow progress and pace for privileges. But this year, the principals at Charlotte Central School crossed a line for me.”

Deeley went on to make accusations against members of Charlotte Central School.

“They attempted to control DEI work, to handpick their new DEI coach, circumventing a process that gives access to all faculty and staff,” she said. “This raised serious concerns for our team. The principal’s subsequent attack of the women of color leading this work was completely unacceptable. Words, such as ‘white supremacist,’ were used to describe the actions of our lead DEI coaches and the superintendent, who are all people of color. When Superintendent [Rene] Sanchez refused to bring these actions to account, or to require an equitable and transparent process in the selection of new coaches, I made the decision to resign. So where are we today? Many of the women of color leading this work have left these important roles. Their skills, passion and drive are not replaceable.”

Deeley said the two remaining women on the DEI team are “left with a heavy burden.”

“This comes as the district gears up for its equity audit and its third attempt to hire a permanent DEI director,” Deeley said. “So, who will replace those of us who have left? Specifically, the women of color. I am doubtful there are any educators of color wanting to fill these positions, in part because our district employs so few people of color. Will the principals in our district be more willing to listen to their straight white equity coaches? I’m not sure. The only thing I am sure of is that I cannot stay silent. If I have learned anything over the past few years, it is that real progress requires accountability and the willingness to experience discomfort in search of growth.”

In an email to *The News*, Superintendent Sanchez responded to Deeley’s accusations.

“District leaders are meeting with both groups to determine a mutually agreed-upon outcome and a path forward,” he said. “The district views this situation as an opportunity to practice our commitment to equity—which includes becoming less conflict-averse by acknowledging differing perspectives and working with all those involved to reach a resolution.”

Sanchez added that the board and the school district will be reviewing their community speakers’ policy for board meetings.

“Our implementation of the policy will be to prevent community speakers who attempt to identify specific individuals and issues that are covered by privacy concerns,” Sanchez wrote. “Public meetings are not the venue for such conversations. Rather, if there are personnel issues that need to be addressed, they should follow the normal course of business within the school district processes.”

In recent months, during the public comments portion of Board of School Directors meetings, concerns have been raised over the way the school district has handled issues concerning alleged incidents at Champlain Valley Union High School and COVID-19 procedures.

Meanwhile, via school district Communications Director Bonnie Birdsall, Charlotte Central School Lead Principal Stephanie Sumner, Co-Principal Jen Roth, and Special Education Administrator Cassandra Townshend released a joint statement addressing the accusations made by Deeley. The statement read, in full:

“We would like to clarify and set the record straight regarding misrepresentations of our actions and our words. We write this with the intention of building collective understanding based on the timelines and facts of the months-long process that is still open regarding our DEI coaching position at CCS. We write this to speak our truth and share the impact of the public statements made about us, fully cognizant of our own identities.

We’d like to address how Christina represented the use of the term ‘white supremacist construct,’ as it was inaccurate. We did not use that term to describe the actions of the DEI coaches. We stated in an email that we had been told last year, across settings where our Equity work was happening, that delaying this work was a white supremacy construct—we wanted to be clear that we understood this barrier to equity and were trying not to perpetuate that construct by being actionable within our building. In Christina’s address to the board, it was stated that there was a ‘subsequent attack on the people of color leading this work.’ The communications we sent, repeatedly requesting to meet with the superintendent and the lead coaches supporting this process, went unanswered. It is deeply troubling that the interpretation of our requests for meetings to move this work forward was characterized as an attack on people of color. Stating publicly that we made an attack on other professionals is an inaccurate and serious accusation.

A final point to address is in regard to ‘our appointment’ of a DEI coach and the accusation that we were interfering with and controlling the DEI work. We do not have a coach yet. We put it out many times, we have one applicant that we support, and we’re waiting for Rene to complete the process or tell us to go back to the drawing board. It is unfortunate that an actual conversation, or calling in, wasn’t initiated to discuss concerns. What has been stated regarding our work with our DEI coach last year and the DEI work we’ve supported and led collaboratively with our faculty, staff, and community members was misinformed. We continuously ask for faculty and staff input and respond to it while we learn alongside them. Sometimes that is hard feedback, but it keeps the work honest. The characterization offered in Christina’s statement was not honest or accurate, and there was no attempt to ask for the truth of what was or was not in place with our coach or our equity work at CCS.

There is much to be discussed about intention, impact, and implicit bias here—for all of us. We continue to work on our own understanding and actions, daily. We welcome communication and collaboration to work together in moving this work forward. We are committed to this work and will provide the supporting evidence to publicly correct the shared misinformation for our community and board upon request.”

Hi, Neighbor!

Lee Krohn: The man behind the camera



Phyl Newbeck
CONTRIBUTOR

The name Lee Krohn is not unknown to readers of *The Charlotte News* since his photos often grace our pages. Although his day job as town manager of Shelburne now takes up most of his time, Krohn makes sure he never

leaves the house without a camera to snap pictures of the beauty around him.

“I got my start as a young boy when my father gave me a half-frame 33mm camera,” Krohn recalled. “I fell in love with the concept of image making. In high school I got some part-time work and my parents took me to a big camera store in New York City. I bought my first camera and launched what has remained a personal and professional passion.”

Krohn has taught photography workshops, both on his own or through organizations like local nonprofits. “I’m always asked what I think is the best camera,” he said, “and I always say that the best camera is the one you have with you. You never know when you might find a magical moment that won’t last long.” Krohn compared cameras to bikes or skis. “Equipment matters,” he said, “but it’s the skill and perspective we bring to it, not the particular device. Good gear helps but you have to have the skill to use it.”

One of Krohn’s specialties is photographing sporting events. “It’s not just about the



Lee with his wife Carol Talley.

pictures,” he said, “but about knowing the sport and where the action might be. Some of it is serendipity and being in the right place at the right time.” An avid athlete in his own right, Krohn thinks that background might be helpful in terms of not just understanding what is happening at a particular time but anticipating what might come next. He likens it to wedding photography, which he used to do with more regularity. “You need to be aware of what’s going on,” he said. “Things you might not expect might be the most magical moments.”

Krohn is also known for his fire department photography. Years ago, while at the dump at his then home of Manchester, someone told him there was a fire in town. He drove over and took some photos, which he later shared with the fire department. “They loved it,” he said, “and I started showing up at incidents, and at one point they gave me a pager. One thing led to another and the next thing I knew, they invited me to join the department.” Recognizing that he would be more helpful if he had firefighting skills, Krohn went through the Firefighter 1 training course. “I didn’t want to just be a guy on the sidelines,” he said.

When Krohn moved north in 2013 to take a job with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, he joined the Shelburne Fire Department and has been with them ever since. “That’s been a whole unexpected journey,” he said. “It’s a unique aspect of photography where I never would have had that level of access. It’s telling the story of a whole realm of other experiences.”

Since 2018, Krohn has been the town manager of Shelburne. “That’s another fascinating journey,” he said. “I enjoy helping to build and strengthen community.” Krohn admits the job isn’t an easy one. “I enjoy the challenges,” he said. “I enjoy trying to make the world a better place, solve problems and help us get



Lee takes a selfie with the late, great Ollie the camel.

back on an even keel as a community and try to move forward in civil, respectful ways to find creative solutions and stay ahead of the curve. The variety is endless.”

Krohn has been a resident of Charlotte for the last three years. “I love the peaceful beauty and the landscape, as well as the access to good roads for cycling and the lake for paddling,” he said. For Krohn, his home in an intentional neighborhood is an added benefit, as is his proximity to work, the firehouse, and the orchard for apples and cider donuts.”

“Photography has taken me to some pretty remarkable places,” Krohn said, noting that when he lived in Manchester, he was able to photograph musicians like B.B. King, when they played at Riley Rink. These days, most of Krohn’s work is nature photography or volunteer efforts for nonprofits. “I’m grateful for the opportunity to share a unique, creative perspective,” he said. “I love to help nonprofits like Make-a-Wish, Sailing for Cancer, Run Vermont, and Girls on the Run, and if it helps keep our local independent papers going, that’s a wonderful thing. It feels really good to help in any way I can.”

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Town

Charlotte Hand-Me-Downs a success!

Staff report

The Charlotte Hand-Me-Downs project builds on the long-standing tradition of winter clothing provision by the Charlotte Food Shelf.

What do you do with the clothes your children grow out of? This fall, 19 Charlotte families donated their used clothing and winter gear to neighbors in need. Large bags of clothing, along with a coat, snow pants, boots, hat and mittens were given to each child served by the Charlotte Food Shelf.

Charlotte Hand-Me-Downs started last

spring when Charlotter Tai Dinnan realized there was an abundance of high-quality used clothing being given away by Charlotters and many families who would benefit from avoiding the high costs of outfitting their growing children.

Dinnan, a member of the Charlotte Grange and volunteer for the Charlotte Food Shelf, collaborated with both organizations to gather, sort and bag up used clothing for each child served by the Charlotte Food Shelf. This fall, Charlotte Grange members volunteered for the expanding project and diligently found wonderful homes for the surplus donations in neighboring towns. We hope to continue our efforts to match used clothing and gear with neighbors who need it. Keep an eye on Front Porch

Forum each spring and fall for donation information.

Thank you to the Charlotte Grange for sponsoring this project, providing a sorting site, and for the wonderful volunteer support. For more information about Charlotte Grange, visit [https://](https://charlottegrangevt.wixsite.com/website/about)

charlottegrangevt.wixsite.com/website/about or contact charlottegrangevt@gmail.com. Thank you to the Charlotte Food Shelf for providing support to our neighbors with food and assistance. To learn more, visit charlotteuucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf



Volunteers Linda Hamilton and Trina Bianchi at the Grange.

Photos by Sally Wadhams.

Charlotte Recreation Winter schedule 2021-2022

Nicole Conley
CHARLOTTE RECREATION DIRECTOR

Youth basketball

Practice will take place weeknights between 6 and 7:30 p.m.

Kindergarten – Teams will practice once a week.

1st - 2nd Grade – Teams will practice twice a week.

3rd - 6th Grade – Teams will practice twice a week, with games on Saturdays.

Teams are dependent on roster size and volunteer coaches.

Practices will be posted as coaches determine their availability.

Registration Fee: \$55

T-shirt: \$7

Adult pickleball

Indoor pickleball will take place on Mondays and Thursdays starting Nov. 29 at 7:30 p.m. at Charlotte Central School. You must register online to participate in this program.

Pick-up basketball

Pick-up basketball will take place on Mondays and Wednesdays starting Nov. 29 at 7:30 p.m. at Charlotte Central School. You must register online to participate in this program.

Safe Sitter courses

Safe Sitter® prepares teens to be safe when they're home alone watching siblings or babysitting. The course offers four main content areas: Safety Skills, Child Care Skills, First Aid & Rescue Skills, and Life & Business Skills. Lessons are filled with fun activities and role-playing exercises. Teens will practice choking rescue and diapering. Register



for one date that works best for your child. Register with the town offering the program. Grades 6 to 8. Time: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Hinesburg - Saturday, Dec. 11

Williston - Thursday, April 21

Charlotte - Saturday, May 21

Ski & Ride program

Parent information meeting will take place on Thursday, Jan. 6, at 6 p.m.

Full and partial scholarships are available for all youth programs.

For additional information on all our programs, as well as updates on our Covid-19 policies, visit our website at: charlottetec.com.

Nicole Conley, Recreation Director,
Recreation@townofcharlotte.com

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Charlotte History

The Greenbush Road underpass

Dan Cole
CHARLOTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[Burlington Free Press, August 8, 1905]

A horrible accident occurred here this afternoon...

[Frank W. Weston and his son, Leslie Earl Weston] were driving from the north, approaching Charlotte Four Corners. They had reached the Bora's crossing and either did not hear or see the train approaching or else their horse became unmanageable and dashed upon the track just as the train reached the crossing. The horse was lifted in the air and thrown into a lot 50 feet away. The carriage was broken to splinters. Both men were hurled from their vehicle and landed on the cowcatcher of the engine. The engine did not stop, but proceeded on its way to the Charlotte station ...

The carnage found on the cowcatcher was described in graphic detail. An investigation cleared the railroad engineer of any wrongdoing, blaming negligence by Frank Weston. Later information indicated that the train's steam whistle completely unnerved the horse, which became wild and uncontrollable and raced into the path of the engine.

The Rutland-Burlington Railroad went into operation in 1848. At that time, railroad design engineers were only concerned with building the rail, and the safety of a horse and carriage was not a consideration. As time passed and the population grew, many of the highway-grade crossings became more dangerous to carriages—and ultimately to motorized vehicles. On July 27, 1910, the Weston accident was the driving force behind the selectmen of the Town of Charlotte, Herbert Thorp, Joseph Bora and Frank Smith,

hiring A.W. Sherman of Charlotte to file a legal petition before the Vermont Public Service Commission against the railroad, complaining that Bora's crossing on what is now Greenbush Road was hazardous and that mitigation was required.

The board met in Charlotte and determined the crossing was "among the most dangerous" in the state and ordered an underpass that necessitated a substantial alteration of the roadway.

The Rutland Railroad is hereby ordered to construct an underpass with suitable concrete abutments, spanned by a bridge of steel girders with ballasted floor, suitable to carry the railroad traffic. Said underpass shall at every point be at least twenty-one feet wide from face to face of the abutments; and shall have a clearance of at least thirteen feet from the crown of the finished roadway to the lowest part of the spanning bridge; and, to accomplish this, the grade of the railroad at the underpass shall be raised at least four feet. [13th Biennial Report of the Public Service Commission of the State of Vermont; June 30, 1910 to June 30, 1912, pp. 106-108.]

A great amount of earth was removed, the underpass and road were constructed, and the terrain and box culvert under the railroad on the north side were altered to accommodate the new roadway. The houses on the north side were once nearly at road level. Time passed and memories faded. Frank Weston and his son rest in Union Cemetery in Morrisville, New York; today's travelers have no knowledge of the change. As you drive north, across from the entrance to the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge, the old roadbed is still visible as it rises toward the tracks, and the road continues beneath what was once known as Bora's crossing.



Early 20th century photo of the Charlotte Station with a steam engine, comparable to the one in the article. The engine would have stopped at approximately this location after the accident.

(Credit Charlotte Historical Photos, compiled by the Charlotte Land Trust, produced by Perceptions, Inc., 2003)



Original 1848 underpass on Belden Falls Road in New Haven, Vermont. Note the stonework, which is what identifies it as original. The cement section over the top occurred when the rail bed had to be raised for more road clearance.

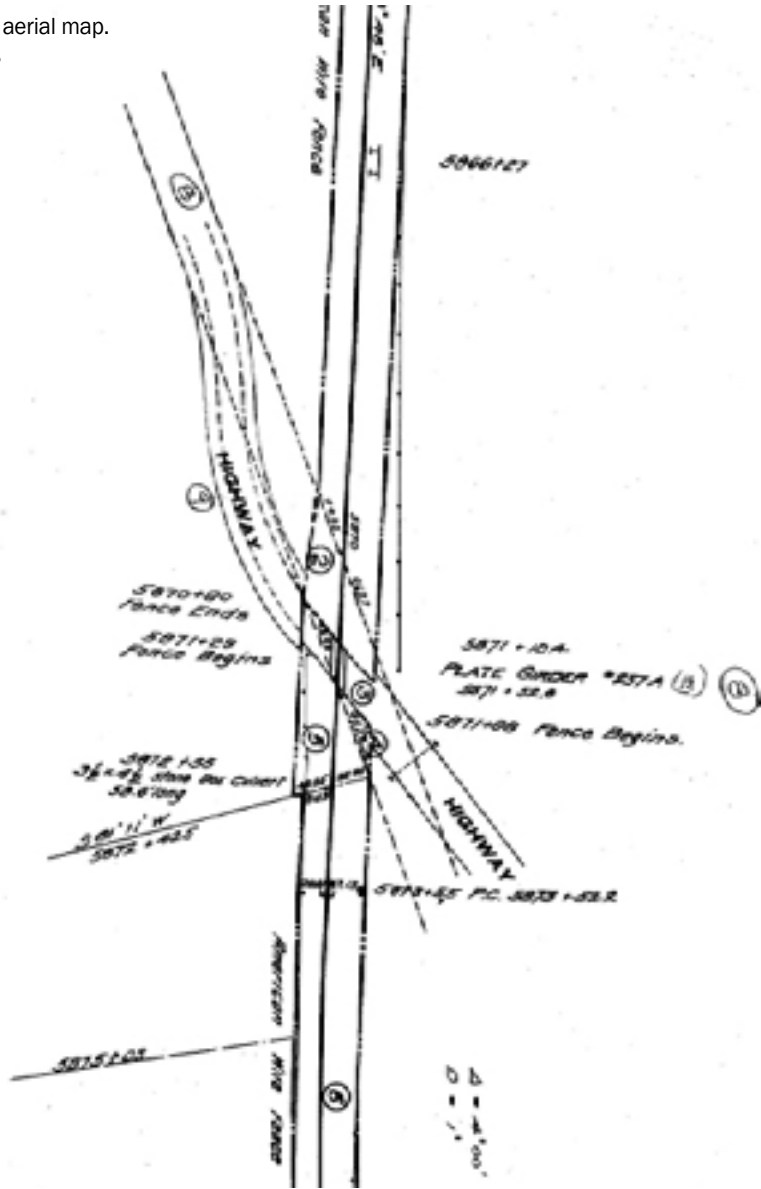
Photo by Dan Cole



Original 1848 culvert off Bostwick Road in Shelburne, Vermont. The stonework, which is virtually identical to the underpass in New Haven, identifies it as original.

Photo by Dan Cole

1942 VTrans aerial map.
Credit VTrans



This Old Barn When the dream started and where it led to

This is a first in a series of articles by Peter Demick, who is in the process of refurbishing an old barn that lived its first 250 years in Brandon and is now being reconstructed in Shelburne. This project started with deconstruction for three weeks in October, took a pause while the foundation was created, and continued in November for the reassembly.

Peter Demick
CONTRIBUTOR

It was 1990 or so when I first thought about constructing a building for my business, Vermont Walkways and Stone Preservation. I knew what size I wanted when by chance I ran into John Hauenstein of Early Preservation, who asked me, “Have you ever considered an old barn?” to which I replied, “Why no, I haven’t.”

Soon started my love affair with old barns!

At the time it was John McEntee and me in the business. John Hauenstein was there for the assembly. What looked like an expensive pile of firewood was brought back to life as a late 1700s, 30-by 40-foot English barn with a 10-foot addition to the front. I was hooked. Next came the construction of a 20-by-30-foot wing from an 1840 barn.

Fast forward to today. We are currently assembling our 64th barn, which came from the Arnold District Road in Brandon, just across the Leicester town line, relocating it in Shelburne. This stunning little 24-by-32-foot barn has bents every five and a half feet. (Bents are the two king posts on the outer edge with a carry beam that spans the building as one piece of wood—typically 8 by 10 inches.) This early barn also has a five-sided ridge beam (an eight-inch tall, five-sided stick of wood 32 feet long, with notches to receive the top rafter that is pegged into it). Most special is the 34-inch-wide roof boards that were 12 feet long. In my 30 plus years of exploring Vermont’s old barns, I had never seen boards this wide. The vertical siding boards on the north

side had been protected and were the original boards with their two rose head nails. These nails were handmade on site and have a characteristic odd shape on the top. The plate, 32 feet long, holds all the bents together and overhangs the barn by two inches, so that a groove exists to receive the boards, meaning no nails were needed. The rafters sit into the plate, and the nine pair were not pegged with wooden pegs or tree nails, nor were they nailed, but, rather, sat in a five-degree pocket. This barn dates to the 1770s and was so carefully built that I suspect it was built by someone with boatbuilding experience.

After taking down the main frame, I wanted the sill plates (base of the frame that rests on the stone foundation) and floor joists for extra material, only to find they had been used before. These joists had tree pegs that once held down the floorboards before nails were used in Vermont. What a find that was!

Now we are standing the barn is in Shelburne on the corner of Dorset and Barstow where it will live long into the future. It is amazing that this piece of history survived for so long in one place. Trees that grew in the 1500s were used to create this beautiful structure, built by hand from the virgin forests of what was to be Vermont. My crew and I got to take it apart and keep its life going.

I am humbled by the opportunity to keep Vermont barns alive. All the barns we take down in Vermont stay right here.

My goal is to save Vermont barns. They are usually in need of work, sometimes significant work. Owners typically can’t afford or don’t have the knowledge or time to repair them, much less restore them back to their glory. So my goal is to create a nonprofit to restore these barns for their owners and keep them where they originally put down, in stone and wood.

Stay tuned for next time to hear about a barn that got away from Charlotte.



Taylor Demick on left with John McEntee on right. Photos contributed



Pete standing in roofless barn.



Barn rising

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.

November 27
CVU Craft Fair
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
CVU High School, 369 CVU Road, Hinesburg
Over 140 Vermont Vendors, all indoors
Good Eats!
Free entry, free parking
Support Student scholarships
Besides shopping locally, it has become a nice opportunity to visit Hinesburg or run into someone you have not seen for some time. Hope to see you there.
Note: The Fair is organized through CVU Venue. Any questions about logistics or becoming a vendor should be directed

to CVU Venue (cvuvenue@cvsdvt.org).
Jan. 11
Book discussion
Sustainable Charlotte and the Charlotte Library are jointly hosting a book discussion of Paul Hawken’s newest book, **Regeneration: Ending the Climate Crisis in One Generation**. We’ll begin, via Zoom, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. and continue for the following 10 weeks. Each section of the book is filled with amazing information and deserves its own discussion. For more information, please contact the library: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org or 425-3864. Please register in advance by Dec. 16: <https://bit.ly/2ZRbbEp>.

Sports

Redhawk Football gives Essex a run and a pass for its money



Edd Merritt
CONTRIBUTOR

It was not that long ago when CVU was known as “Soccer Central” and football did not exist at the high school level.

Well, that has changed. The top division title game played in Rutland Saturday saw CVU

against Essex. Over the course of a 7-3 season, the Redhawks saw much of their offense propelled by quarterback Max Destito passes, and that remained unchanged Saturday. The weather, however, played a bigger role as Essex’s running game made out better between the flakes than did CVU passes. The Hawks, in turn, came very close to the Hornets, losing only by two, 21-19. CVU scored twice in the second quarter, once on a rush, once on a pass. They began the second half only one point behind, 14-13. Destito hit 15 of 30 passes from 197 yards.

New England Cross-Country Championships see Redhawks in the woods at Thetford Academy

CVU freshman Alice Kendell finished 10th among women in the New England championships on Saturday to lead Redhawk runners to a fourth-place finish as a team. The Hawks women were the last Vermont team to win this tournament in 2019.

Second place in the state holds sway for Redhawk teams

In addition to football, soccer and volleyball also placed second in the state. The men and women volleyballers have led this sport for several years, until 2021, when the men fell to Burlington and the women to Essex.

And so, what had been “Soccer Central” for the Peter Coffey era...CVU gave up that moniker and now may be known as “CVU—Number 2!”



Field goals alone didn’t make it in the state championship game.

Photo by Al Frey

World Series champions crowned

Henry Bushey
CONTRIBUTOR

With the World Series over and the champions crowned, the 2021 Major League Baseball season play is officially over. Most of us know by now that the Atlanta Braves have won the 117th Fall Classic in somewhat of an upset. The Braves won only 88 games, which was a worse record than four of five teams in the AL East (those being the Rays with 100 wins, the Red Sox and Yankees, 92 apiece, and the Blue Jays, who had 91) and seven less than their opponent in the National League Division Series, the Milwaukee Brewers. However, that record was deceiving,

as they would prove.

After finishing off the Brew Crew in four games, Atlanta advanced to the National League Championship Series to face the then-reigning World Champion Los Angeles Dodgers. LA was a 106-win juggernaut who had just barely managed to knock off the rival San Francisco Giants on a somewhat questionable check-swing call by the umpires. Most people saw the Braves’ chances to beat LA as slim at best. However, Atlanta powered through on the backs of two walk-off wins, great starting pitching and a home run barrage.

Braves left fielder Eddie Rosario was named

the NLCS (National League Championship Series) MVP, after batting an incredible .560 for the series and having himself a dominant Game 4, where he went 4-5 with 2 HRs and 4 RBIs, while also being only a double away from the cycle.

Fresh off their second upset of the postseason, the Braves flew to Houston to take on the 95-win Astros. Atlanta outfielder Jorge Soler set the tone by crushing the third pitch of the World Series into Houston’s left-field Crawford Boxes, a solo home run, setting the Braves up 1-0 instantly. The Astros managed to put up a strong showing in Games 2 and 5, but in the end fell short as Atlanta bested them four games to two. The Braves would not have made it there, however, if they hadn’t acquired an outfield trio of Soler, Pederson and Duvall, all of whom produced down the stretch and had big moments in the



postseason.

Henry Bushey is a CVU student with an interest in journalism, particularly in sports writing. He lives in Charlotte.



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On Books

Art, antiquities and adventure

Katherine Arthaud
CONTRIBUTOR

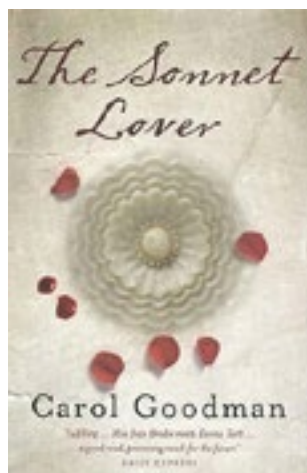
Today, as it turns out, was a good day to read. Rainy, blustery, cold—perfect November weather. Perfect, as long as you didn't have to be outside, which (happily) was the case for me for the *second* half of the day. The morning,

however, I spent out in the elements, holding (with icy, unmitten hands) a handmade poster advertising a community food drive. The rain held off, but by noon I was cold and stiff and beyond ecstatic to hurl myself into my little silver car with the heated seats. Once back in my house, I read, and read, while the rain poured from the sky and the wind rattled the windows. I felt I deserved it.

The book that I read that blustery afternoon, once I thawed myself out enough to think, was *The Sonnet Lover* by Carol Goodman. I want to say that this novel is a “Gothic romance,” yet I'm not sure it fits the exact criteria. It seems that Gothic romances are technically a type of novel popular in the late 18th and early 19th centuries; mysteries, usually, tinged with elements of the supernatural and, more often than not, set in haunted castles or medieval ruins. A Gothic novel tends to include a woman in distress, a man who carries a burden, the presence of a ghost, dreams and nightmares, and bad weather.

While the timing of *The Sonnet Lover* doesn't quite fit the criteria (it was published in 2007), I would say that it checks about 100 percent of the other boxes. I mean, not *all* the weather is bad—there are some sunny intervals and temperate, moonlit nights—but there is most definitely a scene or two set against heavy downpour and overcast skies. And there is no lack of women in distress—the principal one being the protagonist, Rose Asher, comparative literature professor at Hudson College, where (on a beautiful spring day in Washington Square Park) the novel begins. But readers do not spend long on the New York City campus and are soon whisked off by airplane to Italy, to La Civetta, a lemon-scented Tuscan villa, where Rose (we soon learn), two decades prior, found and then lost a great love.

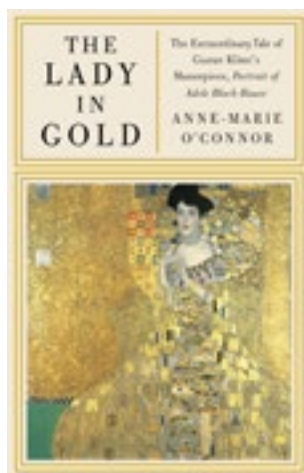
Professor Rose's romantic life is a key theme of this novel, but it is just one layer of a textured and ornate drama that takes



the dear reader far back in time to the 16th century, when others (like Ginevra de Laura, the stonemason's daughter) experienced passion, betrayal, heartbreak, loneliness, cruelty and longing. There are some lost sonnets, an unfolding mystery having to do with William Shakespeare and his Dark Lady, hidden treasures, nuns, dark niches from which to spy on unsuspecting suspects, ancient tapestries, greedy Hollywood moviemakers, troubled undergrads, aborted affairs, midnight gardens, secret fountains, moonlit plays, shopaholics, broken sculptures...accidents, murders, lies, revelations...this book does not disappoint.

Filled with intrigue and romance and the highs and lows of love, this book is also chock full of references to Renaissance poets, along with detailed and quite beautiful descriptions of Italian architecture, art and gardens. I know this author slightly and hear that she did a lot of research in the writing of this book, which to me makes it a few cuts above your typical “Gothic romance,” whatever that is exactly. Soliloquies and abandoned rose gardens... austere, swaying cypresses... spiral staircases and dusty archives, glasses of milky green absinthe, Romeo and Juliet, Puck from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, dubious parentage, and a peppering of sonnets (written by Goodman's own husband, Lee Slonimsky)...what could be better for a rainy day? Or a cold and snowy one. Pardon me while I book my ticket to Italy.

I am generally more of a fiction reader, but lately have read some gripping and worthwhile non-fiction books, one being *The Lady in Gold* by Anne Marie O'Connor



(who, interestingly, like Carol Goodman, is a Vassar alum). You have probably seen at some point in your life the painting upon which this book is based: Gustav Klimt's 1907 portrait of Viennese Jewish socialite Adele Bloch-Bauer.

I was told about *The Lady in Gold* by one of my oldest and best friends, whose husband so loved this book that, on his birthday this year, asked only that they visit together the gilded portrait at the Neue Galerie in New York City. Once there, he proceeded to spend several hours just simply...well, beholding it, my friend said. We are talking, literally, *hours*.

And boy, if only paintings could talk...

Painted during Klimt's “Golden Phase”—in which he created a series of paintings using ornamental gold leaf and a flat, two-dimensional perspective reminiscent of much earlier Byzantine art—this gorgeous, glittering, golden portrait was pillaged by the Nazis during World War II and became, after many years, the much-coveted pawn in a decade-long dispute between the heirs of the painting and the Austrian government.

This is no Gothic romance, but that is not to say that there isn't plenty of suspense, big fancy houses, distressed women, burdened men and mystery—but in this case, real-life. Writes O'Connor, “With the gold portrait, Adele was frozen as a symbol of the enlightened turn-of-the century Viennese woman, imbued with the opulence Klimt disdained and thrived on. The Habsburgs would borrow Adele's gold portrait for exhibitions, to present the regal face of an empire that was modern, sophisticated and decidedly urbane.” “(Adele) is delightfully dissolute, attractively sinful, deliciously

perverse,” a reviewer at the time wrote. She was the symbol of a new Viennese woman—ahead of her time, free of many of the intellectual and social limitations of women of the day, a friend to artists, poets and philosophers, a true patron of the arts.

It is shocking and troubling to read the story of Klimt's portrait and its magnetic subject, an enlightened, articulate, highly educated woman whose life, along with the lives of her friends, family members and community, was destroyed almost overnight. A whole society—successful, progressive, prosperous, cultured—driven from their homes, wrenched from their livelihood and forced into exile and death camps—their belongings and treasures stolen, pillaged, looted, hidden and carted away by the Nazis—furniture, paintings, tapestries, sculptures, jewelry and horses...plundered...in many cases, never to be returned again, even after the war was ended.

“The public wrangle seemed a strange fate for a work of art so intimate,” writes O'Connor. “The portrait of Adele is not a field of lilies or a starry night. Here, in her naked eyes, lies a story that is more diary than novel. A painting comes from a time and place. Those who have heard the story of the portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer can never again see her as a ‘lady in gold.’ Frozen in Vienna's golden moment, Adele achieved her dream of immortality, far more than she ever could have imagined. And that,” concludes O'Connor, “is the power of art.”

A beautiful painting. A mysterious model. A horrifying, complicated, sobering, eye-opening story...alas, all true. Highly recommend.

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In the Garden

Putting the garden to bed



Joan Weed
CONTRIBUTOR

This year, in late November, we are still enjoying the colors of autumn and the last treats from the vegetable garden. This is uncharacteristically late even for the Champlain Valley. Not complaining, as it allows a bit of extra

time for the fall chores. With my helpers (needed at an advanced age), we are getting the job done. It's satisfying to be tucked in and know that we'll be clear for the springtime emerging of ephemerals and bulbs.

Speaking of bulbs, there is still time to plant tulips, alliums, daffodils, camassias, and minor bulbs of all sorts. Garlic can be planted now, too! Peonies also! It may seem like a bother, but nothing delights me more than anxiously awaiting the nubs of fresh foliage several months from now. This is especially true when your memory fails you and you can't remember exactly what you planted where. The rodents also rearrange the tinier offerings. You never know just where they will pop up. After a very long dark winter, this is a treat.

And while we're on bulbs, it's time now to lift summer tender bulbs. Dahlia tubers should be dug and stored. Don't wash, but pack in paper bags or boxes. If available, apply some sphagnum moss or such to enclose the tubers. If you think of it, over the winter try a light spritz to hydrate, but



not much. I don't break apart the tuber clusters till spring. Other tender summer bulbs are gladiolas, eucomis (pineapple lily), zantedeschia (calla lily), caladiums, peacock lilies and elephant ears. Store in similar fashion and be sure to label, especially for cultivars.

Cleanup of garden beds is a point of much discussion among horticulturalists. It would be okay to leave spent foliage and fallen leaves where they are. However, come

spring, a huge chore awaits. Also, there is the possibility of smothering treasured plants or harboring the wrong sort of wildlife. Choices must be made. I do something halfway—the majority of leaves are cleaned up. Since I don't do it myself anymore, I have to leave the process to paid helpers. If I were still in my prime, I would chop some leaves and use the "leaf mulch" to protect the precious soil and the most tender of herbals. It's free mulch and soon-to-be compost.

Clipping of perennials is a science all its own. Some seeds are left to feed wildlife—and birds in particular. These might be rudbeckia (brown-eyed Susan) and echinacea (cone flowers). Rose hips are a favored treat for some. It might be the birds' last meal before the journey south. And others are left to fall in place. In my case, I would leave orange annual poppies, verbenas bonariensis, feverfew, lobelia cardinalis (but not blue lobelia or phlox). The reason for editing blue lobelia is that the thousands of tiny seeds are too much, and it becomes a one-note garden soon. Enough fall to the ground anyway to keep it going. The scarlet lobelia doesn't seem to have this tendency. Various loosestrifes are also prone to want to take over. The yellow lysimachia has to be carefully watched. Divide or edit to keep

in bounds. Gooseneck lysimachia is a treat for bouquets and as a garden ornamental, but also can be a thug. Oenothera (evening primrose) spreads by runners and is easy to edit with a simple tug. A similar grower is physotegia (obedient plant). All of these are clipped to about two inches. A small cluster of fallen leaves will appear to protect the crowns. Some insects overwinter in stems or clusters of grasses. Many are pollinators and should be honored with a shelter.

Trying to explain all the various clipping patterns to assistants is a lesson in itself. Neatness isn't our only aim here. Sometimes we must have courage and clip away something beautiful. Other times we must leave a not-particularly-lovely remnant for its value to the garden or wildlife. Time and experience show us which path to take.

Other chores related to the garden, but not gardening per se, are storing furniture, garden objects, and hoses, and turning off water sources. Don't forget to bring out those bird feeders and lay in a supply of seeds, peanuts and dried fruits. You might want to switch over this coming week from mums and pumpkins to greens and berries and twinkling lights.

Enjoy the wonderful weeks of holidays to come.

Photos by Joan Weed

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Antique American Federal, Biedermeier, Victorian, Adirondack, Chippendale, and 20th C Furniture including dining tables and chairs, wicker sofa and chairs, sideboards and credenzas and game tables, slant front desks, bookcases, camp furniture, chests, upholstered sofas and chairs, Pennsylvania 18th/19th C corner cupboard, primitives and more.

19th and 20th C Art including large group of late 20th C abstracts by Marlene Housner, numerous (100+) works on paper from the Margaret Brown (1908-1957) Gallery on Dartmouth St in Boston, Indian paintings on silk, prints by Louis Fink 1926-1980, watercolors and oils and more.

Oriental Carpets from room to scatter size, marble pedestals, costume jewelry, vintage clothing department, numerous trunks from doll size to coffee table, several sets of andirons, child size workbench, coat and hat racks, and much more.

Table lamps and floor lamps from 19th C to Mid Century, advertising crates, etc, etc, etc.

Out Takes

What are writers’ and readers’ responsibilities when it comes to journalism?



Edd Merritt
CONTRIBUTOR

Civil rights leaders are a pain in the neck

Can’t hold a candle to Chang Kai Shek

How do I know? I read it in the Daily News

“Daily News by Tom Paxton

Well, there has been some written debate recently about journalism’s role in digging out data, putting it in a context to help the reader interpret what the data means, and, finally, giving it back through publication or hearing to as wide a public as possible so that they can then make sense of it for their own means.

Whew! That seems to me to be a tough, but valuable, task. I don’t think I fell into it accidentally. I chose it, but it wasn’t until I had tried it on for fit that I realized the cape size. Singer Paul Simon’s “Capeman” probably would have chuckled knowingly had he seen what I was hoping to accomplish.

Nonetheless, our *Charlotte News* has provided a locally focused publication to get news to its public, who, in turn, can use it to debate with their neighbors (who may also be friends) about matters that affect their town governance in particular. (*The Free Press* on the other hand uses the data to advertise beer. But, again, that is an editorial choice put into practice. Beer halls, apparently, get more readership than national issues.) That’s where the *The New York Times* falls into my lap. I happen to think that variety of publication gives a working journalist a broader perspective on

what he or she writes and is a healthy part of that person’s work. *The Times*, of course, views itself as a purveyor of national and international news as well as arts, sports, business—whatever type of news they feel will enhance their coverage of world events. Their observations and comments are often quoted by other news media.

So, what does this say about *The Charlotte News*’ investigative reporting? Individuals in town appear to have differing opinions. Stuart Bennett, a lawyer by practice, says on Front Porch Forum, “Please don’t blame the messenger.” He feels *The News*’ stories are based on questions asked, which is as it should be. He goes on to say that, based on the answers to what reporters ask, the paper then comes up with the issues with which it deals. Stuart says that the cause of some of the stories not being pleasant is because the facts don’t lend themselves to pleasantries. He wishes it were otherwise, but it is not, and by digging up these issues through accurate data, the paper provides a service to the town.

Lee Weisman, a Charlotte resident, feels somewhat differently. His concern is with ways in which the issues are presented in the paper. He says they can be “vindictive, mean-spirited, confusing and not fun to read.”

My sensitivities are neither wholly one side or the other. I read my editor Mara Brooks’ piece in Front Porch Forum. In it she says she gets many emails about what is posted in that forum—as she should, being the head of a similar one. She was shocked by the response to *The News*’ inquiries into Matt Krasnow’s resignation and Ronda Moore’s findings. Matt apparently felt that



Stock image

investigative inquiry from the news media ought to happen only in open meetings. Ms. Brooks felt that this showed a dramatic change in Krasnow’s philosophy about responding to the press. Speaking for herself and her fellow journalists, she “thought the situation was worth reporting on.” She goes on to say that, as reporters, our staff first “needs to gather information.” After that, the paper decides whether it is worth opening to the public, which means reporting on it and perhaps suggesting actions to take or solutions to a problem.

It is a bit unfortunate that Mara goes somewhat beyond the process to suggest that

adulthood is a stage of life that brings about knowledge (“as any adult knows”). But that is a personal bias, not an editorial one. I believe that being open to journalistic inquiry is a given right, and that investigation to back up what comes through as reportage with data is an important element in what I have chosen to do. If not, we don’t have a right to promote a decision. We might as well stick to the golf course or the tennis courts where, for many of us (myself included), our swings leave much to be desired.

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Health Matters

Why go to a physical therapist?

Mike Dee, P.T., SCS

Why should I go to physical therapy? Why did my nurse practitioner, physician assistant or doctor send me to physical therapy?

That is a fair set of questions and ones I hear often. I think the real questions is, “What does a physical therapist do?” and also, “How will they help me?”

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) defines physical therapists:

“Physical therapists are movement experts who improve quality of life through prescribed exercise, hands-on care, and patient education. ... A physical therapist examines each person and then develops a treatment plan to improve their ability to move, reduce or manage pain, restore function, and prevent disability.”

Movement experts

Physical therapy education is like that of an M.D., with anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology. However, we stop short of the complexity of all illnesses and medications. We understand them, but don’t necessarily deal with all of them or prescribe medications.

Human movement is our wheelhouse, and, boy, do we thrive on it. Nobody considers the entire person and their movement dysfunction like a good P.T. While teaching the Doctor of Physical Therapy students at the University of Vermont today, I reflected to them that they had observed and measured so much of their fellow students and knew so much about their movement systems while never having to do anything invasive or take an X-ray.

Patients often come to physical therapy because of a basic problem with moving. We need to know all the body’s systems that contribute to our ability to move: the nervous system, the musculoskeletal system, the cardiopulmonary and integumentary systems, how one creates energy, how one sees and hears, and how one reacts to the physical space around and underneath one.

Our approach to an injured athlete is the same for an octogenarian with a total knee replacement and the 60-year-old with Parkinson’s disease. How is this person moving? Where are they on a timeline of onset, tissue repair and remodeling, or the progression of the disease process? We evaluate to find out the following: Is there a stiffness or mobility issue, or is there a weakness and stability issue? What is the status of the nervous system on this patient’s movement problem? As we assess these questions and observe basic human movement, we consider our intervention. But first we must get to know our client. And know them we must.

Therapeutic alliance

All healthcare providers must listen and qualify what their patients are saying. It is not about us, but them. Physical therapists ask patients what their movement goal is. We need to know that first. Is it to have less pain? Climb stairs? Walk with a friend? Compete in a sport? Stand, sit or sleep with less discomfort? Play with grandchildren?

With that information we conduct our examination and determine what the limiting factors are and what can be done about them. We ask patients to take time out of their day, perform therapeutic exercises, and / or change the way they move related to a functional task. We don’t prescribe a pill to

take two times a day; rather, our prescription is a very specific task or set of exercises that require time and effort. Patients need to understand this, and we need to understand them. It goes both ways and works best when we are allied. Patient engagement and education are pillars of our care.

The physical therapy “connection”

No limb or joint in the human movement system operates independently of its neighbors. Often a runner with insidious knee pain has a limitation in their ankle or hip. A good physical therapist uses the science to evaluate the entire lower extremity and to design a therapeutic intervention to address the ankle or hip problem while addressing the local knee problem. And sometimes this knee pain will have a remote relationship to weak abdominals. The research bears that out.

Our patient with Parkinson’s disease has a progressive condition. The P.T. knows this and considers how that patient is functioning at present and how they can optimize their current status. Balance and stability exercises work wonders as we recruit core muscular strength, thereby allowing a better level of movement for the arms and legs. A P.T. even considers ankle stiffness from an old ankle fracture in the same client. This is what makes physical therapy work so well. We connect all aspects of the entire movement system.

A “good P.T.”

The APTA uses this moniker in our promotional literature. The science and scientific literature for physical therapy has arrived and is growing. You want a P.T. who uses the latest scientific evidence, not the newest method or disproven interventions.

A “good P.T.” can explain complex anatomical things to you in terms you can understand and use. You should ask for articles and or links to references on the therapeutic intervention. Is your P.T. listening to you and engaging you in the therapeutic path taken? Are you getting a simple set of home exercises? That is our “jar of pills” and it should be that simple.

The APTA has Clinical Practice Guidelines that are available online. These guidelines are comprehensive scientific literature reviews that weigh the efficacy of certain movement problems and our interventions. They serve as an excellent starting point for our intervention.

Choose P.T.

In Vermont you can access a P.T. directly. However, some insurance carriers require a physician’s referral. Check with your P.T. or your insurance carrier. The physical therapy intervention and its positive outcomes are now required before an MRI is considered in some cases. If physical therapy is performed the way we teach it, you will see some benefit.

A good resource is APTA.org. Consider a group with board-certified physical therapists.

Choose P.T. and choose to move... a little better.

Mike Dee, a P.T. and an APTA Board Certified Sports Certified Specialist (SCS), is co-owner and practices at DEEPT in Chittenden County, which is the Clinical Faculty Practice in support of the UVM Doctorate of Physical Therapy program. He lives in Charlotte with his wife, Justine.

Charlotte Cooks

Attention, Charlotte cooks! Do you have a favorite recipe you would like to share with our readers?

The Charlotte News welcomes everyone to submit their favorites. Email Anna Cyr: anna@thecharlottenews.org.

Sweet Potato Casserole with Toasted Pecan Topping

From *Dishing up Maryland: 150 Recipes from the Alleghenies to the Chesapeake Bay* by Lucie Lehmann Snodgrass (Storey Press, 2010)

6-8 large sweet potatoes
1 cup butter
¾ cup milk, heated



1 tablespoon vanilla extract
½ tsp. salt
2 cups pecan halves
½ cup flour

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Prick the

sweet potatoes and place them on a foil or parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake in the oven for one hour or until soft. Remove and cool for 30 minutes. Reduce the oven temperature to 350 degrees.

Cut the sweet potatoes open and scoop the flesh into a large mixing bowl. Add one stick of butter, warm milk, vanilla and salt. Beat on low speed until the butter is melted and the mixture is smooth. Spoon into a large, buttered baking dish. Cover with foil and bake for 25 minutes.

While the casserole is baking, make the topping. Melt the remaining one stick of butter and let it cool for five minutes. Mix the pecans, brown sugar and flour into the butter.

Remove the casserole from the oven, uncover it and spoon the topping over it. Return to the oven, uncovered, and bake 15 minutes longer. Serve immediately. Makes 12 servings.

Basic Cornbread

Makes 12 servings

Basic—not boring. Use a round pan and cut into wedges or bake in a square pan and cut into thirds in one direction and fourths in the other. Or use as the basis for cornbread stuffing.

1 lb. Nitty Gritty Cornbread Mix package
1 cup milk or milk substitute
4 tablespoons canola oil
1 egg, lightly beaten

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly coat an 8-inch round or square baking pan with vegetable cooking spray. Measure all ingredients into a large bowl and stir with a wooden spoon until evenly moist. Turn into baking pan. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until top is golden and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Outdoors

Great horned owls in the ‘hood



Elizabeth Bassett
CONTRIBUTOR

About 10 days ago, as I drifted toward sleep, a deep echoing *hoo-hoo* floated through the open window. A few seconds later, another and then another. It seemed early in the season for the great horned owl to be calling in the night in search of a mate, but this eerie sound is unmistakable. There was only one voice, likely the male. While the female great horned owl is larger than her mate, the male has a deeper voice. As mating season unfolds, pairs will call together, the two pitches rolling together through the cold darkness.

A few fun facts about great horned owls, which are fairly common in Charlotte:

They are fierce predators that eat rodents and frogs, as well as larger prey, including crows and other owls. Their clenched talons require 28 pounds of pressure to open. This strength can sever the spine of large prey.

The great horned owl is the most dangerous predator of the American crow. Crows take their revenge by mobbing and harassing owls for hours. If nearby crows are cawing loudly, be on the lookout for a great horned owl.

Final fact: the oldest great horned owl on record was at least 28 years old when it was found in Ohio in 2005.

Beavers are back

After a long absence, beavers have returned to Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge, taking residence in the northwest corner of the property. On a recent Sunday, Bob Hyams of Habitat Restoration Solutions and CPWR Oversight Committee member and volunteer Julian Kulski slogged upstream in a waist-deep tributary of Holmes Brook. Wearing fishing waders, they deployed ski poles and long sticks to keep their balance on the invisible footing below. The pair were taking measurements and assessing the impact of nature’s engineers on the landscape.

Beavers are a keystone species, meaning that they create an environment that attracts other species. They create wetland or edge habitat, where species richness is

the greatest. Their labors slow the flow of water, turning a stream into a series of ponds and wetlands. The slower flow increases percolation of groundwater and decreases erosion and sediment entering Lake Champlain. Hyams notes, “Just since last spring, beavers have reestablished bank-full conditions within the stream channel and have created 4,800 square feet of inundation in five separate ponds.” He adds, “Pond depths can reach up to four feet—pretty incredible considering that last year this was an intermittent stream that could be difficult to locate within the dense vegetation.”

The CPWR volunteers plan to clear invasive vegetation this winter so that visitors can view the beavers’ handiwork more easily.

Snakes

As our climate changes, winter is arriving later. Local manifestations this fall included late foliage and frost and the latest recorded freeze date for Mount Mansfield. While bird migrations are triggered by daylight hours and temperature, cold-blooded snakes respond exclusively to ambient temperature. On warm days, some snakes are still active. They need a warm place to overwinter, a shelter below the frostline. As many as 100

snakes can cohabitate in a *hibernaculum*, a winter den where they intertwine to retain heat. Another fun fact courtesy of the Vermont Center for Ecostudies: snakes slow their metabolism and stop eating, allowing species that would ordinarily eat each other to cohabitate without incident.

Red-tailed hawks

Most raptors that summer in Vermont began their southern journeys a few months ago.

Responding to climate change, a growing number of red-tailed hawks are wintering farther north in warmer years, a good number in the Champlain Valley. With a four-foot wingspan, these large birds of prey are easy to spot as they soar overhead, floating on wind currents to conserve energy as they hunt for rodents and other prey. In the coming months, keep an eye out for these red-tailed winter residents.

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The **Charlotte News**

Town

Charlotte Senior Center news

Senior Center Staff

Senior Center's Winter Schedule out soon

The Winter 2021-22 Schedule (December through February) will be included in the Dec. 2 issue of *The Charlotte News*. The schedule will be posted on the Center's website, CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org, by Nov. 29, and registration for classes will open then. You can register in person at the Center, by mail, or by phone: 425-6345.

The first Wednesday event of the winter schedule falls on Dec. 1. Join us at 1 p.m. to help decorate the Center's Christmas tree. Following the tree trimming is a hands-on session at 1:30 on how to make holiday caramel corn, a special holiday treat.

In the same spirit, don't miss Wrap up a Good Read, the library staff's annual review of notable books, on Wednesday, Dec. 8, at 1 p.m.—you'll come away with a helpful list of book gift suggestions for all ages. Books available to purchase at the Flying Pig Bookstore in Shelburne.

Lunch schedule

The next Monday lunch will be on Nov. 29 from 11:30–12:30. Suggested donation is still just \$5. Our café is spacious and airy. Take-out may be requested.

Nov. 29 Menu

Chili and cornbread
Salad
Chocolate cake

Menus are also posted on the CSC website: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org.

Blood drive

The next American Red Cross blood drive is scheduled for Dec. 9 from 2 to 7 p.m. at the Senior Center. If you wish to donate blood, please visit RedCrossBlood.org, or call 1-800-RED-CROSS to sign up. Covid health protocols will be followed for the safety of those participating in this event.

Ongoing exercise classes

You're invited to come and check out a class one time—for no charge. Exercise classes take place in our spacious Great Room and are ongoing throughout the year; you can join at any time. Some courses use chairs, others use mats, some use weights. There is something for everyone. And you may check out several different classes. Stop by and fill out an address form. You are always welcome to call with questions or stop in.

You can find the course descriptions on the Center website: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. Register in person or by phone at 425-6345.

Chair Yoga – Mon., 9:30 a.m.

Gentle Yoga – Mon., 11 a.m.

Pilates Plus – Tues., 8:30 a.m.

Strength Maintenance – Tues. & Fri., 11 a.m.

Essentrics – Wed. – 8:30 a.m.

Chair Yoga – Wed., 10 a.m. - NEW

Pilates – Thurs., 8:30 a.m.

T'ai Chi for Beginners – Thurs., 10 a.m. (now back on Zoom)

T'ai Chi Advanced – Thurs., 11 a.m.

Essentrics – Fri. – 9:30 a.m.

Meditation – Fri. – 7:30 a.m. - NEW

Please note that the Center will close for the Thanksgiving holiday at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 24, and will reopen on Monday, Nov. 29, at 9 a.m.

Art news

The November art exhibit

Jonathan Silverman's "Visual Dancing: The Interplay between Intent and Spontaneity" is still on display this month. His artwork ranges from landscape and abstract watercolors and pastels to functional and non-functional pottery inspired by Japanese aesthetics. His work explores juxtapositions of color,



balance, form and movement that illustrate the dance between intent and spontaneity.

The best times to see the exhibit are:

Tues. & Wed. 2:30–4 p.m.

Thurs. & Fri. 12:30–4 p.m.

Please call to check for other days/times.

About volunteering

Interested in volunteering? This is a great opportunity to meet other people, make new friends and to be part of our community. There's a special spot for you—whether you are available once a month for a couple of hours, or on a weekly basis. Contribute your ideas for courses or activities, or perhaps lead a group. Stop in to find out more.

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 be fully vaccinated because these take place over long periods of time and in close proximity. Please do call to check if you want to join a new activity.

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.

Social distancing required (6 feet).

Not vaccinated and 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.

Questions? New to the area? Thinking about volunteering?

Stop in and say hello—we love to show people around. We are located at 212 Ferry Road in Charlotte, across from the Post Office. Hours are Monday to Friday from 9 to 4. Or give us a call at 425-6345. Residents from other communities are always welcome. Our mission is to serve those over 50.

To learn more about the Senior Center, other courses, and upcoming Monday menus, please visit our website: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Nominate your neighbor!

Know someone interesting in Charlotte?

We want to interview them and share their story.

Email
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The Charlotte News



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Town

Library news



Margaret Woodruff
DIRECTOR

Climate Catalyst Grant awarded to Charlotte Library

The Charlotte Library received \$1,000 to implement upgrades to the plastic and e-waste recycling program. Be on the lookout for our new recycle bins!

Paid for with the assistance of the Climate Catalysts Innovation Fund of the Vermont Council on Rural Development.

Charlotte Library received national grant for small and rural libraries

\$3,000 grant will help the library continue Community Resilience Project

The Charlotte Library has been selected as one of 100 libraries to participate in round three of Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries, an American Library Association (ALA) initiative that helps library workers better serve their small and rural communities. The competitive award comes with a \$3,000 grant that will help the library and community partners continue the resilience assessment and discussion in our town.

Charlotte Schoolhouse Story Walk® featured!

The library's October Story Walk®, which chronicled the history of Charlotte's 14 schoolhouses, is featured this week on the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services "Story Walk Week" promotion. Thanks again to Jenny Cole for putting the outdoor "exhibit" together. You can check out an online version of the walk here: <http://tiny.cc/tweluz>.

Library book sale continues

Book sale continues in the Library Program Room through Nov. 30

Stop by during library hours to shop from the carefully curated collection of books. Many are in like-new condition and perfect for gifts in the upcoming season. Donations are no longer accepted, but there are plenty of great titles to choose from!

Back by popular demand!

The Friends of the Charlotte Library are holding the second annual Get Cozy Raffle to provide cheer and goodwill. The centerpiece is a beautiful and comfy quilt made by Amanda Herzberger and an assortment of great books surrounds it.

Tickets are \$5 each, or five for \$20.

Raffle dates: 11/3-12/16

The drawing date is 12/16 at 12 p.m. The system will randomly draw the winner. We will notify the winner by email and will also announce the winner on social media.

To enter the raffle, go to this page: <http://go.rallyup.com/3a8686>.

All proceeds will benefit the Charlotte Library.

Happening at the Library

Book Chat is back!
Begins Friday, Nov. 19, at 9:30 a.m.

Join Margaret on Friday mornings at 9:30 to discuss new books, old books and books we might have missed. Each week, Margaret selects a theme and highlights related titles from the library collection. Register for Book at www.charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Agricultural Literacy Week: Nov. 15–21

Agricultural Literacy Week, hosted by NOFA-VT and the Vermont Department of Libraries, offers programming to highlight and celebrate local farms and the food system. This year's theme is **Land Connections**.

We will showcase the "Seeds of Food Sovereignty" project, coordinated by the Nulhegan Abenaki Tribe. Sign up to learn more about the Abenaki Land Link project in a virtual discussion with tribal leaders and supporters on Nov. 18. You can find details about this events on the NOFA-VT Agriculture Literacy Week calendar here: <https://nofavt.org/events/agricultural-literacy-week-2021-we-are-land>.

More information about the Land Link "Seeds of Sovereignty" project can be found in this article from *Seven Days*: <https://bit.ly/3nFGeKS>.

Bundle Up Story Time Tuesday, Nov. 23 at 10 a.m.

Join us for the late November Story Times on Nov. 23 at 10 a.m. on the Charlotte Library Porch. Please dress for cold weather. This event will be cancelled if it is too blustery.

Book Discussion: We Are What We Eat by Alice Waters Fridays, Dec. 3 & 10 at 11:30 a.m.

Alice Waters' latest book, *We Are What We Eat*, is a very readable comparison of the values and assumptions embedded in fast food and slow food. How important is "fast, cheap and easy" and how important is "beauty, biodiversity and seasonality"? Join Seed Library Coordinator Linda Hamilton for a two-part exploration of this timely topic. Co-sponsored by the Charlotte Grange. Register here: <https://bit.ly/3EsZzG9>.

Wrapping Up a Good Read Wednesday, Dec. 8, at 1 p.m.

Join us at the Charlotte Senior Center for a book show-and-tell session, just in time for the holidays. Staff from the Charlotte Library share their favorite selections for all ages.

Books available to purchase at the Flying Pig Bookstore in Shelburne.



The Quinlan Schoolhouse in 20221.

Photo contributed

Book discussion of Paul Hawken's newest book, *Regeneration: Ending the Climate Crisis in One Generation*

Sustainable Charlotte and the Charlotte Library are jointly hosting a book discussion of Paul Hawken's newest book, *Regeneration: Ending the Climate Crisis in One Generation*. We'll begin, via Zoom, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. and continue for the following 10 weeks. Each section of the book is filled with amazing information and deserves its own discussion.

This is a hopeful book, filled with fascinating and inspiring stories of regenerative activities from around the world, and anyone can find something that will urge them into some new action.

Penguin Books, the publisher of this book, writes: "*Regeneration* weaves justice, climate, biodiversity, equity, and human dignity into a seamless tapestry of action, policy, and transformation. It is the first book to describe and define the burgeoning regeneration movement spreading rapidly throughout the world—an inclusive and multifaceted undertaking that aims to end the climate crisis in one generation. As Jane Goodall writes in her foreword, '*Regeneration* is a rebuttal to doomsayers who believe it is too late.'"

In this book, Hawken states:

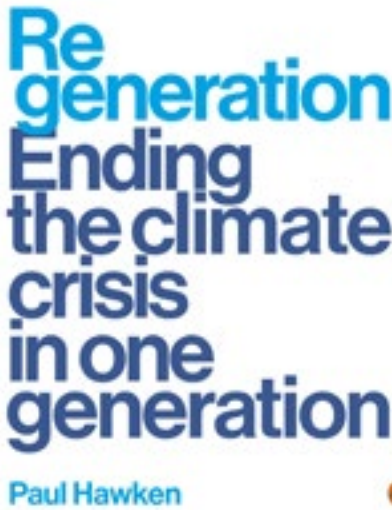
- To reverse the climate crisis, the

majority of humanity needs to be engaged. 98 percent of the world is not.

- To get the attention of humanity, humanity needs to feel it is getting attention.
- To save the world from the threat of global warming, we need to create a world worth saving.
- To succeed, climate solutions must directly serve our children, the poor, and the excluded.
- This means we must address current human needs, not future existential threats, real as they are.

For more information, please contact the library: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org or 425-3864. Please register in advance by Dec. 16: <https://bit.ly/2ZRbbEp>.

For more information about Sustainable Charlotte, either go to the website at sustainablecharlottetvt.org or contact Ruah Swennerfelt at ruahswennerfelt@gmail.com.



The Charlotte Library will be closed Thursday, Nov. 25, and Friday, Nov. 26, for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Classifieds

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

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