

*Your nonprofit community news source since 1958*

# The Charlotte News

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 2022 | VOLUME LXIV NUMBER 14



**Margaret Aiken with her goats at Flower Gap Farm.**

**See story on page 7  
Photo by Lucie Lehmann**



## Jim Fox and Christa Duthie-Fox: A happy ending from paying it forward



Phyl Newbeck  
CONTRIBUTOR

It's not a stretch to say that the National Kidney Registry may have saved Jim Fox's life. His kidney was failing, none of his family members was a match, and the waiting list for a kidney was excruciatingly long.

Through the registry, his wife, Christa, was able to donate a kidney to a total stranger, and, in return, another total stranger donated a kidney to Jim. Paying it forward worked, and four months later Jim is back home with a new lease on life. In fact, he may be the person responsible for you reading this newspaper, which he began delivering in 2021.

Jim was only 15 when his kidney failed in 1965, but his father was a match and donated one of his. "This was in the early days when it was still considered an experimental procedure," Jim said. "It was part of a government-funded research project." Unfortunately, 15 years after the transplant, the donated kidney began to fail. "The University of Vermont had a fledgling program

for transplants," Jim recalls. "They had one surgeon who did the procedure." Jim received a cadaver transplant in 1980 that lasted for 40 years.

When his second donated kidney failed in May of 2020, Jim began the lengthy process of kidney dialysis, spending four hours at a time, three days a week, hooked up to a machine. Jim's brothers and a cousin volunteered to donate a kidney but neither was a match. UVM now has a well-established transplant program, but the waiting list for a kidney then was a minimum of five years.

That's when Jim and Christa turned to the National Kidney Registry. "A person donates a kidney which goes into a pool," Jim said. "It doesn't go directly to the recipient, but it triggers a chain of events that matches that person's donor to someone else in the pool. It's quite efficient and it shortens the waiting line significantly." Jim's first transplant had been at New York Presbyterian Hospital and he still had family in the New York City area. Since UVM is not part of the registry, he opted to return to New York for the procedure.

A teacher at Charlotte Central School at the



Left to right: Son James, Christa and Jim Fox.

Photo contributed

time, Christa immediately volunteered to donate a kidney. She went through a battery of tests and was told she could donate at her convenience. "It was a full evaluation of my

health," Christa recalls. "It felt like a gift to find out I was a very healthy 59-year-old."

SEE **FOX FAMILY** PAGE 2

## We reached our goal— thanks to you!

Dear Readers,

We live in a generous town.

On behalf of the board of directors, I am thrilled to report that we reached our fundraising goal for 2021—thanks to gifts from more than 350 readers.

These gifts will be matched by grants and pledges of \$16,000 from NewsMatch and \$10,000 from several friends of *The News*.



Looking ahead, our top priority is to hire the paper's next editor. Recent editors have told us it's a demanding job that needs more than the 20 hours a week allocated for attending and reporting on town meetings, copy editing and working with our community writers. Thanks to your gifts, we are now able to make this a full-time position.

Once our new editor is settled in, you can expect to see more coverage of town news and meetings, as well as stories that offer solutions to some of the tough challenges we face as a community. And from time to time, we expect to publish stories from new community writers. As always, we welcome your suggestions.

Thank you again for your support for *The Charlotte News*.

From all of us at the paper, best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year.

John Quinney  
Publisher and President

## Selectboard approves Vermont Commons highway access permit

*Two board members oppose decision to approve controversial driveway.*

Mara Brooks  
CONTRIBUTOR

The proposed Vermont Commons Education Center is one step closer to becoming a reality.

Despite the objections of multiple residents and Selectboard member Louise McCarren and Vice-Chair Frank Tenney, the board at its regular meeting Monday approved a highway access permit application for the proposed VCS Education Center. The decision follows the ZBA's Dec. 11 conditional use approval of the controversial development.

In past months, longtime resident Sarah Thompson has raised concerns about sharing her small, unpaved driveway with the school, despite VCS's plan to widen the existing curb cut by 25 feet. Thompson and other neighbors suggested VCS make a new curb cut for its own use to the south of Thompson's property and closer to the school's own parking lot.

The issue is that the existing driveway, Thompson's only access to her property, technically sits on the parcel now owned by VCS. Thompson does not hold an easement for the driveway, but the school has repeatedly stated it plans to give her one.

Those opposing the shared curb cut warn that poor visibility caused by a utility pole compounded by an influx of inexperienced student drivers will create dangerous traffic conditions along Spear Street.

"I'm not in support of the curb cut at all," McCarren said Monday. "There is a total



obstruction [caused by the utility pole], and we're going to have a lot of inexperienced drivers down there."

McCarren suggested the fix should be to "move the curb cut much further to the south or get the site of the utility pole changed."

Tenney pointed out that presently the curb cut is used by one resident, but the proposed change would include "two-way traffic" with an education center.

Member Matt Krasnow said that such issues were not the Selectboard's to address.

"That's largely an issue that is before the Zoning Board," Krasnow said. "The Selectboard's job is very narrow."

Neighbor Sara Shays said she was "very, very concerned" about safety issues involving Thompson's driveway.

"Sarah's lived there her whole life," Shays said. "It's safer for everybody to have their own access out."

Krasnow said it should be noted that VCS

SEE **HIGHWAY ACCESS** PAGE 3

## ZBA approves Vermont Commons development

*Proposed Spear Street education center can go forward, board decides.*

Mara Brooks  
CONTRIBUTOR

In one of its final acts before being replaced by the town's new Development Review Board, the Zoning Board of Adjustment at its Dec. 11 meeting approved the Vermont Commons School's application to build an outdoor education center on an agricultural parcel at 2369 Spear Street.

For the past several months, neighbors of the proposed development have raised concerns that VCS's site plans have evolved from what was originally described as a modest pavilion into a multi-use complex seeking to hold school sports competitions, overnight camping trips, and large graduation ceremonies.

Neighbors have also warned that the school's proposed shared driveway with longtime resident Sarah Thompson will introduce safety issues resulting from the road's poor visibility and an influx of inexperienced, student drivers.

In its deliberations, the board reviewed Land Use Regulations (LURs) and discussed the character of the area and the school's proposed hours of operation. The board determined that any VCS event attended by more than 50 people would require a permit and Selectboard approval, and that regular use of the site would be restricted to 25 parking spots.

Zoning board member JD Herlihy made a motion to approve the application, which passed unanimously.

## Town

## It's Girl Scout cookie time!

Cindy Bradley  
TROOP 30066 LEADER

This fun and energetic group of young ladies from Troop 30066 will be out and about selling Girl Scout cookies throughout the month of January. You may see them walking door to door, you may hear from them on the computer, they might call you directly from their phone.

Whatever the situation, won't you please help support their troop by buying a few boxes of your favorite flavors? We even have a new flavor of cookie this year, so make sure you ask them about that. Cookie sales are our troop's main fundraiser, and it is the money earned from these sales that allows us to explore, learn and participate in different activities that we might otherwise not be able to do.

If you haven't heard from anyone in the next couple of weeks and you would like to order cookies, please email Cindy at [cahbradley@yahoo.com](mailto:cahbradley@yahoo.com) and I will make sure we put you on a list. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

## FOX FAMILY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Christa decided to donate during the December 2020 holiday break. "It has to happen at a certain time," she said, "so the kidney can be implanted the same day." Christa's operation was scheduled for Dec. 16. She was supposed to have a single room but there were so many Covid patients that the wing was almost full. "The next day there was a big storm and all surgeries were cancelled," she said, "so we were lucky to get it done." Her kidney was

## Jr Lewis garage rebuild complicates challenging annual budget review process

Robert Bloch  
CONTRIBUTOR

The Selectboard met in a special session Monday, Jan. 3 to work on the town municipal budget, address several personnel matters and update progress on replacing the garage used by Jr Lewis for town road maintenance equipment, which was destroyed recently in a fire. The Selectboard's budgeting challenge was punctuated by the observation that the sum of all departmental budgets as requested by the various groups, including the Library and the quasi-independent Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service (CVFRS), and would yield a tax increase estimated at just under 30 percent, before any added expense for replacing the town garage. Although it was noted that the municipal portion of a property owner's total property tax "nut" is only around 10 percent, with around 90 percent consumed by education, there was general agreement by Selectboard members that this amount of increase would be very difficult for taxpayers to swallow.

Of course, the devil is in the details, and these details provide some perspective:

1. Charlotte's municipal budget has been held essentially flat for the three previous years.
2. A significant portion of the increase is

to pay for salary and benefit adjustments for town personnel, including library staff, the necessary change by CVFRS from an all-volunteer staff to one including some professional management staff, and the increase in Planning & Zoning staff to three full-timers.

3. Remaining increases are reflected in the budget requests of other town departments and committees—CVFRS, the Senior Center, Recreation, Trails, etc.

The additional financial impact of replacing the town garage and related equipment is unclear at the moment. Site evaluation and engineering studies are underway, and the potential budget impact of a likely bonding mechanism to fund the rebuild has yet to be determined.

The Selectboard requested that several additional analyses be conducted to help clarify certain costs and will reconvene on Jan. 10 to work further on the budget.

In other business, following executive sessions, the Selectboard voted unanimously to appoint Keith Osborne as Planning & Zoning Administrator beginning on Jan. 20 and approved a severance package for Carolyn Kulik of the Senior Center staff.

implanted in a 65-year-old New Jersey man, which jump-started the process of looking for a kidney for Jim.

"Because it was my third kidney I'm fairly well loaded with antibodies," Jim said. "It was a less than ideal situation. I would only match 15 percent of the available kidneys, but they found a strong match and I was scheduled for the transplant in May 2021." Fate intervened when Jim was bitten by a tick and contracted anaplasmosis. "That knocked me for a loop," he said. "I was in the hospital

for a week so they had to cancel surgery." In August, a new donor was found and Jim had surgery on Sept. 21. He has since been in contact with the Minnesota-based donor who entered the program in the hope that a friend of hers would be able to get a transplant. One complication for Jim's surgery was finding room for the new kidney without taking out an old one. The doctors removed his appendix to fit the kidney in place.

A former engineer in orthopedics at UVM, Jim believes he may be the longest living recipient of a kidney transplant. Having been through three operations, he recognizes how much the procedure has improved. He doesn't remember much about his first transplant but does recall that he was in the hospital for three months. After the second surgery, he was in the hospital for 10 days, but this time he was only in for three days. Similarly, when his father donated a kidney, doctors made an incision in his side and had to remove a rib, leaving an eight-inch scar. Christa's operation was done robotically and laparoscopically, leaving her with two small spots around her belly button.

"We are so grateful for all the steps along the way," Christa said. "The fact that I was healthy enough to donate, the fact that I was able to donate the day I did, and the fact I was able to take medical leave from school."

As part of the transplant program at New York Presbyterian, prospective recipients must visit the clinic several times a week for a period of months prior to surgery. Jim credits his cousin, who let him stay at her house an hour and a half outside the city, and his brothers, who took him in for his 7 a.m. appointments for making that process easier. Christa also stayed with the cousin, who took her to the hospital for her procedure. Jim was quick to praise his family for their roles in the process and even quicker to lavish praise on his wife. "This article should be about Christa," he said. "She's the real star. Her willingness to get involved at this level was immediate and without hesitation. I'm supremely grateful to her."



### 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](mailto: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.

### Editorial Staff

**Managing Editor:** Anna Cyr  
([anna@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:anna@thecharlottenews.org))

**Contributing Editor:** Edd Merritt

**Copy editors:** Beth Merritt, Katherine Arthaud

**Proofreaders:** Edd Merritt, Mike & Janet Yantachka

### Business Staff

**Ad manager:** Christy Hagios

([ads@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:ads@thecharlottenews.org))

**Bookkeeper:** Susan Jones

([billing@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:billing@thecharlottenews.org))

### Board Members

**President & Publisher:** John Quinney

([john@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:john@thecharlottenews.org))

**Treasurer:** Margery McCracken

([treasurer@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:treasurer@thecharlottenews.org))

**Board members:** Bob Bloch, Susanne Davis, Ben Miller, Gay Regan, John Hammer (emeritus), Vince Crockenberg (emeritus)

**Technical advisor:** Melissa Mendelsohn, Orchard Road Computers

**Website:** [thecharlottenews.org](http://thecharlottenews.org)

### Subscription Information

*The Charlotte News* is delivered at no cost to all Charlotte residences. Subscriptions are available for first-class delivery at \$60 per calendar year.

Want a subscription? Please send a check payable to *The Charlotte News*, P.O. Box 251, Charlotte, VT 05445.

### Postmaster/Send address changes to:

*The Charlotte News*, P.O. Box 251,  
Charlotte, VT 05445 Telephone: 802-425-4949  
Circulation: 2,100

Copyright © 2022 TCN, Inc., dba  
Member of the New England Newspaper  
and Press Association, LION Publishers  
and the Vermont Press Association.

## Report from the Legislature

# New legislative session looks ahead



Rep. Mike Yantachka

On Tuesday, Jan. 4, the Legislature returned to Montpelier in person for the second half of the biennium. In a floor session that lasted about 45 minutes, resolutions were passed to allow the House and Senate to meet and conduct

business remotely until Jan. 18 because of the rising number of COVID cases due to the much more contagious omicron variant. The intent of the Legislature is to re-evaluate the situation mid-month to determine whether it will be okay to return in person. As we begin the third year of the COVID pandemic, we will have to remain vigilant to prevent its spread as much as possible

But legislative work must be done. On

Wednesday Governor Scott delivered his State of the State address to the Legislature. He laid out his priorities to increase housing, develop Vermont's workforce and use the federal assistance that the state received from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Infrastructure Act. His priorities match well with the priorities of the Democratic-led Legislature, which is to help families, businesses and our economy thrive. Building on the work we accomplished in 2021, we're ready to hammer out detailed proposals—and make significant investments—that make a real difference for Vermonters.

This will include taking smart, strategic action on climate. The Vermont Climate Council, created by the Global Warming Solutions Act passed last year, has delivered its report with recommendations on steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, sequester

carbon through agricultural and forestry land management practices, and adapt our infrastructure to the effects of climate change, and to accomplish these tasks with an eye toward racial and social equity.

We plan to resolve our pension crisis in a way that is fair to teachers, state employees and taxpayers; create greater equity in the way we fund our schools; increase access to healthcare, mental health and substance abuse treatment; and address many other critical issues as the session moves into high gear.

While unemployment has again fallen to pre-pandemic levels, there are thousands of jobs still waiting to be filled. This workforce problem affects all areas of the economy, including restaurants, retail, nursing, education, broadband and transportation, among others. While we try to grow our workforce from within the state, our future

also depends on attracting new workers to Vermont. A lack of affordable housing and available childcare opportunities are major stumbling blocks to young families who would like to become part of the Vermont community. The investments in housing and childcare we made in last year's budget will get more attention this year.

After two strenuous years of the pandemic, we must continue to do all we can to end it. Vaccines are the primary weapon in our arsenal. Wearing masks in indoor public places helps prevent the spread. Being cautious in our interactions with others protects us and them. We're all in this together and have to take care of each other. As always, I welcome your emails (myantachka.dfa@gmail.com) or phone calls (802-233-5238). This article and others can be found on my website (MikeYantachka.com).

## Town

### HIGHWAY ACCESS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

had agreed to make "two improvements to safety" by removing two trees to promote visibility and "significantly changing the sloping grade downhill on Spear Street" by extending Thompson's driveway.

"Based on the application and the conditions in the driveway, it seems like safety is being improved," Krasnow said. "I feel responsible to not take on the obligations and authority that should be considered by the Zoning Board, the Planning Commission, and the DRB."

But Thompson said when she attempted to discuss her concerns with the PC and ZBA she was told to take it up with the Selectboard.

"And now that I'm here, you're saying that's a Zoning Board or a Planning Commission thing," Thompson said. "So, I feel trapped. I feel like I don't have any options."

Thompson added that although the PC decided she should be given a right of way for the driveway, VCS had yet to provide her with one.

"So, I feel like my hands are tied for anything to do with the driveway," Thompson said.

VCS Head of School Dexter Mahaffey said it was true the school had yet to provide Thompson with an easement.

"It is a quid pro quo condition of that permit, so it is a requirement that we deliver [the easement] to Sarah if we want to act upon that permit," Mahaffey said. "So, we will deliver that as it's a condition that we must meet, and we fully intend to."

Thompson's attorney Joseph Obuchowski said he needed to "push back a little bit" on Mahaffey's statements.

"You can ask Sarah how long she's been negotiating with the school and how much process she's made [in obtaining the easement]," Obuchowski said.

Neighbor Gary Landrigan said he thought a curb cut to the south of Thompson's driveway was a better, and safer, option.

"The view line to the south is pretty good," Landrigan said. "The proposed alternative site would be between the two trees they're talking about taking down [to improve

visibility], and the grade correction is lesser."

Tenney said, while the Selectboard typically allows only one access point per property, there is no rule "that people can only have one access point."

Member Lewis Mudge pointed out that the Selectboard had not been asked to approve a second curb cut.

"We're not being asked to approve a second one; we're almost being asked to force it on landowners that don't want one," Mudge said. "I haven't been convinced from a legal standpoint we need to request this second curb cut. This [application] has passed the transportation agency's design guidelines."

ZBA Chair Lane Morrison defended the Zoning Board's decision to grant conditional use for the project.

"We reviewed the access. The Vermont Commons School has access to the north side of the property, [and] we requested to make it 25 feet wider," Morrison said. "There's a 500-foot visibility both north and south. Zoning recommended that there be no parking on Spear Street."

Morrison said that VCS has 60 students, or the equivalent to two buses, who will only visit the education center between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

"The driveway has been approved. Vermont Commons is good to go unless there's an appeal," Morrison said.

He said Thompson's concerns are her own to address.

"My feeling is it's the responsibility of the landowner, not the Vermont Commons School," Morrison said.

Mudge moved to approve the highway access permit. Tenney and McCarren opposed.

The motion narrowly passed 3-2.

Krasnow then offered to meet with Thompson to "get a sense of the different topics" causing her concern "and then maybe come back to the board to see if there's any areas where we could have positive movement."

Thompson said she would be interested in meeting with Krasnow.

Selectboard Chair Jim Faulkner told Thompson to contact Town Administrator Dean Bloch to set the meeting up.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

CVFRS is required by its MOA agreement with the Town of Charlotte to provide basic and paramedic level rescue services, and to do so with reasonable and appropriate expenditures. For the last two years, CVFRS has not used its entire budget appropriation; \$62,101 last year and \$25,000 the year before. CVFRS also pursued a \$30,000 grant last year on behalf of the town. This is a clear indication that the organization spends only what it needs and believes in fiscal discipline.

This year, CVFRS is asking for an 18% increase of \$148,415 in the organization's appropriation request to support its operating budget. The entirety of this increase is devoted to personnel expenses; wages and benefits. In order to provide full time ambulance coverage over the past 10 to 15 years, CVFRS has been transitioning from a volunteer rescue service to a paid rescue service. Currently, rescue is staffed by 3 permanent full-time employees and per diem employees, or 43% full-time employees and 57% per diem employees. This increase is to cover the added cost of benefits and payroll for replacing per diem employees with full-time employees. Competition for part time health care workers from a shrinking labor pool is increasing exponentially as a result of COVID, and changes to the overall health

care system. This trend necessitates the change to full-time employees to guarantee continued staffing coverage. The net result of this increase per \$100,000 of property value for Charlotte homeowners will be an increase of \$15.80 per year, or a dollar per month.

The budget request also includes \$50,000 for the addition of a full-time administrative position. CVFRS is currently managed solely by a single, part-time Business Operation Manager, and the rest of the entire management structure is volunteer based. As with the ambulance staff, the number of volunteer managers for the level of work the Board of Directors currently requires is also shrinking, while the administrative demands of the organization increase yearly as the health care system and government regulations get more complicated.

There are many moving parts to CVFRS, and I am sure many people have lots of questions. In the weeks to follow, CVFRS will be publishing a much more detailed explanation showing cost payroll information and these moving parts. In the meantime, please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,  
Fritz Tegatz  
President, CVFRS

## Opinion

## Charlotte: Where do we go from here?

Peter Joslin

FORMER PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR

Welcome, readers, to this new column focusing on the future of Charlotte, the seeds of which were precipitated by my tenure on the Planning Commission, recent significant changes as to how Charlotte regulates development and manages planning, and the fact that development has been a significant topic of discussion over the past few years. This was largely brought to the fore by the Planning Commission's Articles 6 and 7 last year and further highlighted by neighbors' appeal of the proposed Health Center in the West Village, residents' concern regarding the Vermont Commons School development on Spear Street, and conflicting opinions concerning the scale and location of the O'Donnell/Donovan major subdivision application on Lake Road. Most recently, after the terrible loss of Junior Lewis's garage and equipment, the Selectboard is in the midst of formulating plans for a Town garage. Add to the mix an ongoing study of the possibility of a community recreation center and the question is: How do we, as a town, move forward?

It is my opinion that Charlotte is at a crossroads. Competing opinions about development, how much and where, are underscored by these recent developments. Answering these questions requires significant community involvement, with focus and direction from the Planning Commission. The Selectboard, although not in the business of overseeing subdivision, also must play a substantial role in supporting the Planning

Commission and providing input about our town's future.

Looking back, beginning in the summer months of 2021 and continuing into the fall, the Selectboard held a number of public meetings to discuss the pros and cons of changing the current Planning Commission/ Zoning Board of Appeals model to a Planning Commission/ Development Review Board. After close to six months of substantial and enthusiastic discussion by the Selectboard, residents, ZBA members, Planning Commissioners, the Town Planner and expertise from Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, on October 25, 2021, the Selectboard, by a 4-1 vote (ayes: Jim Faulkner, Lewis Mudge, Louise McCarren, Matt Krasnow; nay: Frank Tenney), approved the formation of a Development Review Board.

This substantive change delegates all development review functions, including conditional use permits, site plans, variances, and appeals of zoning administrator decisions to the DRB. The Planning Commission will now focus solely on updates to the Town Plan, Land Use Regulations (which the DRB applies to all development) and, most importantly, will plot a course for Charlotte's future relative to growth.

Soon after the approval of the DRB, the

Selectboard began interviews for board members and also one vacancy on the Planning Commission. After interviews and discussion, the Selectboard appointed the following to the newly formed DRB: Lane Morrison, Charles Russell, Christina Asquith, Gerald Bouchard and J.D. Herlihy. Robert Bloch was appointed to the Planning Commission. The DRB and modified role of the Planning Commission went into effect December 16, 2021. At its first meeting, DRB members elected Lane Morrison chair and Charles Russell vice-chair. The Planning Commission elected Charlie Pugh chair and Gerald Bouchard vice-chair.

Gerald serves on both the DRB and Planning Commission to promote continuity and communications between the two.

The DRB's February schedule filled quickly on consecutive Wednesdays for new members' orientation, review of procedures, and catching up on a backlog of sketch plan reviews, conditional use permits and variances.

On the Planning Commission front, Larry Lewack, Town Planner, created a spreadsheet of potential amendments to the Land Use Regulations and an accompanying, aggressive schedule for reviewing these through December 2022. This schedule includes potential joint meetings with the DRB and

Selectboard and is designed to complete required public hearings on proposed amendments to the LUR's by the Planning Commission and Selectboard in order to have them on the ballot for November 8, 2022, Election Day.

The potential amendments are broken down into four buckets: legislatively-mandated changes, technical updates, a.k.a., the "oops list," amended definitions, and policy changes. Mandated changes are just that: required changes to be compliant with state statutes. Technical updates and definitions are, as the name implies, technical in nature and fairly rote, similar to Articles 8 and 9 voted on at last year's Town Meeting. Potential policy changes are broken down into three sections: innovations, streamlining the review process, and increasing potential housing and commercial density in the village centers.

Which of these policy changes to pursue and prioritize will be decided by the Planning Commission and would be the most substantive amendments that may be put before the voters on Election Day. Changes that would promote increased density in the village districts and commercial village districts would certainly be the most controversial and would shine a light on the "elephant in the room," the fact that the overwhelming majority of development has, and continues to occur, in the rural districts, contrary to what the Town Plan stipulates.

Change is afoot in Charlotte—stay tuned.



## Invest in comfort



- ✓ Schedule an energy audit
- ✓ Invest in weatherization
- ✓ Air seal & insulate your home
- ✓ Save money & energy

Call to Schedule Your  
Home Energy Audit!

Solar ✓ Weatherization ✓ Construction ✓ Heat Pumps ✓

Call Today! 802-859-3384

A Vermont Owned and Operated Business  
Serving the Green Mountain State Since 1981



[www.BuildingEnergyVT.com](http://www.BuildingEnergyVT.com)



## The Charlotte Food Shelf and Assistance is deeply grateful for the warm support and generous contributions received in 2021.

**Many thanks to:**

Richard Pillard  
 Sharon and Douglas Weaver  
 Nancy Pricer  
 Karen and Dean Tuininga  
 Susan Leonard  
 Helen Toor  
 Aileen and Robert Chutter  
 Tessa Lawrence and Timothy Boesenberg  
 Mary and Tim Volk  
 Lesley Higgins  
 Jill Smith  
 Nancy McClellan  
 Laura Cahners-Ford  
 Anne Castle  
 Kathleen Nolan  
 Kevin Goldenbogen and Family  
 Marge and Robert Archer  
 Janet and Michael Yantachka  
 Elizabeth Bassett  
 John Pane  
 Susan and Hans Ohanian  
 William Lockwood  
 Molly Moroney  
 Deb Cook  
 Toni Sunderland and Richard Junge  
 Jane Ross-Allen and David Allen  
 Cynthia Marshall  
 Virginia Foster  
 Josephine and Benjamin Kaestner  
 Gerard Werle  
 Margaret Berlin  
 Jeannette Thibault  
 Merrie and Ron Perron  
 Diane Cote  
 Susan Crockenberg  
 Ronda Moore  
 Fr. James Zuccaro

Karen and Bill Doris  
 Lesley and Hugh Jr. Lewis  
 Irene and Jeff Horbar  
 Amanda and Christopher Fredricks  
 R. Uphold and M. Provencher  
 Janice Heilman  
 Wendy and Bruce Hawkins  
 Diane and Peter Rosenfeld  
 Rick Pete  
 Evan Metropoulos  
 Roberta Whitmore and Russell Fox  
 Jan Blomstrann  
 Teena and Richard Flood  
 Deborah (Raven) Davis  
 Beth and Ed Merritt  
 Nancy Wood  
 Barbara and William Benedict  
 Maj Eisinger and John Searles  
 Lisa Boyle and Julian Kulski  
 Heather and John Dwight  
 Julia Gilbert and Nathan Cleveland  
 Susan and James Hyde  
 Kathleen and William Posey  
 Eleanor Capeless  
 Lenore Sopher  
 Jeanne Ladue-Sudbay  
 Carolyn and John Kovac  
 Rex and Lell Forehand  
 Loretta and Kirk Walters  
 Anne Kelton and Thomas Casinuke  
 Nancy and John Barnes  
 Toni and Robert Monsey  
 Mary Mead and Maurice Harvey  
 Lynn and Greg Cluff  
 Peggy Eastman  
 Susan and Robbie Hall  
 Alexandra Lehmann  
 Linda Gundel

Carleen Tufo  
 Susan and Christopher Davis  
 Cynthia and Josef Schnell  
 Aileen Kraus  
 Donna and Remo Pizzagalli  
 Rocki Lee Dewitt  
 Tonya Bates and Don Helgesen  
 Susan Hong  
 Elizabeth and Tom Scatchard  
 Susan Raber-Bray  
 Jana Granzella  
 Tai Dinnan  
 E. Kiley  
 Christy and John Hagios  
 Anonymous

**We thank the following organizations and businesses for their support:**

Charlotte Congregational Church and Congregants  
 Charlotte Central School Staff, Students and Parents  
 Charlotte Children's Center  
 Charlotte/Shelburne Rotary  
 Charlotte Fire and Rescue  
 Charlotte Library  
 Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Parishioners  
 Chittenden South Education  
 Flying Pig Book Store  
 Charlotte Grange #398  
 Horsford Gardens and Nursery  
 Spear's Corner Store  
 WOW Toyz  
 Rise 'n Shine  
 Backdoor Bread  
 Vermont Foodbank  
 Community Gardeners  
 Rice Lumber

Kiley Corporation  
 Shelburne Market  
 SCHIP (Shelburne Charlotte Hinesburg Interfaith Projects)  
 Champlain Valley Telecom  
 Nordic Farm  
 Aerodyme Corporation  
 The Vermont Community Foundation  
 Windham Foundation  
 Anonymous

**Special Thanks** to retired Board Members Cindi Robinson and Peter Richardson, Diane Cote for 11 years of penning Thank You notes to donors, and Susan Ohanian for authoring the Food Shelf articles placed in the Charlotte News.

**We Are Grateful** to Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen and the Charlotte Congregation Church for providing the Food Shelf with a home. We recognize Hadley B., Quinn M., Leslie M., Thayer M., Luke B., Simone G., Henry B., Matilda M., Eleanor M., Lewis M., Mairi G., Libby G., Kenison B., Grace B., Natalie B. and Eliza B. who staffed the Children's Summer Lunch assembly team. Hadley Abernathy, Glen Findholt, Elizabeth and Louisa Langfeldt, Rachel, Mark, Sarah and Hannah Stein, Jordan, Noah and Luke Blacker, Nancy Warren Farley, Kim Findley and Jeanie MacDonough of the Charlotte Congregational Church also provided invaluable support.

**We Honor** the memory of our faithful volunteer Ron Purdum.

**This list is as large as our gratitude. If we have omitted anyone, we apologize and do appreciate you! Some supporters (including those who filled the drop off boxes) remain anonymous; we thank you as well.**

**With gratitude from the Charlotte Food Shelf Volunteers:**

John Lavigne  
 Nancy Bloch  
 Anne Marie Andriola  
 Peggy and Jim Sharpe  
 Liz and Giles Anderson  
 Mary Volk  
 Elaine Ittleman  
 Marcia Vogler  
 Tai Dinnan  
 Louise McCarren

Cindy and Toby Tyler  
 Rosemary Raszka  
 Alaina Murphy  
 Cindi Robinson  
 Jim Hyde  
 Karen and Bill Doris  
 Liz DesLauriers  
 Liz Foster  
 Janet Landrigan  
 Garrett Sadler  
 Susan Ohanian

Maj Eisinger  
 Laura Iglehart  
 Jon Davis  
 Wolfie Davis  
 Kelly Stockwell  
 Holly Rochefort and the Charlotte Bakers  
 Nina Falsen and Ken Oboz  
 Hadley Abernathy  
 Dean Leary

**With thanks from our Board Members:**

Karen Doris, President  
 Nancy Bloch, Vice President  
 Cindy Tyler, Treasurer  
 Margaret Sharpe, Secretary  
 Anne Marie Andriola  
 Michael Russell  
 Giles Anderson

*"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate action of its members" — Coretta Scott King*

**THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**

# Stronger Together

## Charlotte Grange: our values and vision



Linda Hamilton  
and Trina Bianchi  
CONTRIBUTORS

*Honoring  
Charlotte's  
agricultural  
roots and  
helping to build  
a sustainable  
future for all*

Welcome to our new monthly column. We hope you will enjoy learning more about the Charlotte Grange and how it is building on its proud 100-plus year history in town and revitalizing its role in our community.

### Background

The Grange is a uniquely American organization established in 1867 to support farming families after the Civil War, when U.S. agriculture changed in important ways. Most people lived in fairly isolated communities, without effective ways to voice their concerns to state or federal government, while corporate interests were gaining influence and pushing for agriculture to produce in greater volume for distant markets. Traditional agriculture and rural ways of life were destabilized by these outside forces, and farmers struggled to adapt and survive.

Enter Oliver H. Kelley, a charismatic, self-made man who farmed in Minnesota. He was acutely aware of the strains being placed

on small farmers and began to promote the formation of "agricultural societies" for the mutual improvement of farming practices through the sharing of information among farmers and training in new technologies. When the U.S. Department of Agriculture was established in 1862, he eagerly sought a position there, and in 1865 he was given the special assignment of touring the South to collect detailed information on the condition of farming. Seeing that region's agriculture in disarray further convinced him of the need for farmers to band together to better understand and address their common problems.

Building on the rise of labor unions and other organizations promoting mutual support in this post-Civil War era, Kelley and a few others established a national farm fraternity they called the National Grange Order of Patrons of Husbandry, with state, regional and local units known as granges. Kelley was a Mason and understood the strength and appeal of fraternal organizations with clear values, membership requirements and rituals. Powered by his personal zeal, the first grange was formed in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1868, and the idea spread rapidly from there. Within five years, there were 9,000 Granges across 31 states, with an estimated 700,000 members. By 1875, membership was at 858,000. Vermont formed the first state-level grange in New England in 1872, in support of the local granges springing up in many Vermont towns.

Charlotte Grange #398 was established in 1908 and became a solid part of our community. In 1940, there were about 200 members (almost one in five Charlotters). After several temporary arrangements, in 1958, when Charlotte schools were consolidated and the Lyceum Schoolhouse in East Charlotte was no longer needed, the Grange was able to purchase it as its permanent home. Today Charlotte Grange has about 25 members.

### Core grange values

National Grange quickly became known and respected for its promotion of cooperatives to buy or sell farm supplies in bulk, mutual aid for neighbors in need, education on new farming techniques and tools, lobbying state and federal government for policies and assistance favorable to agriculture and rural communities, and enriching social interaction among families who would otherwise be isolated. They were forward-thinking in many ways, including supporting women in grange leadership roles even before the country allowed them to vote. National Grange was instrumental in establishing landmark federal programs such as the Cooperative Extension Service, the Farm Credit system, and Rural Free Delivery of mail.

As the interests of communities changed over time, so has grange. Formal grange structure and meeting rituals 150 years ago added a welcome uplift and stability to the hard lives of farm families. And opportunities to share conversation, concerns and food with neighbors were otherwise rare. Today's local granges are flexible regarding both traditional formalities and the programs they focus on—reflecting the contemporary nature and needs of their communities while staying true to the core values of grange: *faith, hope, charity and fidelity*. We are still a non-partisan support and advocacy organization working on behalf of rural communities and the agriculture that supports us all. We remain a "fraternal" organization—not in the sense of a "brotherhood," but rather, in the sense of an inclusive "kinship circle" of community members who care about the well-being of the land and our fellow residents. Membership and leadership roles are open to all. And no matter what else, we still offer regular opportunities to share conversation, concerns and food with neighbors!

### Our vision for Charlotte Grange

Today, even though Charlotte's population

and economy are multi-faceted, our connection to the land remains strong and we care about it and each other. We know we are stronger together as we face life's challenges, and grange nurtures that strength. Our mission is to support learning and helping each other especially around:

- *food production and access, and other agriculture-related issues;*
- *sharing of creative arts and music;*
- *enhanced understanding and appreciation of the natural environment and our relationship with Nature;*
- *healthy activities for all ages which promote personal development, community cohesion and resilience;*
- *timely and reliable information on issues related to the community's ability to evolve and thrive sustainably;*
- *civic engagement;*
- *civil dialog, social interaction and fun!*

We have a robust Program Committee, and despite the restriction on group gatherings due to COVID, we are finding ways to offer more programs and activities each year. In 2022 we anticipate not only more music concerts on the Town Green, clothing collection for Food Shelf families, Words for Thirds dictionaries for third graders, farmer round-table discussions, honoring of military veterans on Memorial Day, open mic events for budding artistic talents, speakers/book discussions/candidates nights etc., but also some new ventures including more service projects. And...if COVID restrictions allow, our popular rummage sales will be back!

We have big hopes and plans for our sturdy little Grange Hall in East Charlotte, aka the Lyceum Schoolhouse. But that is a story for next time!

This winter we look to expand our circle of members and supporters so our programs can grow and reach more people. Consider this your invitation to join in! Become a member and/or get involved periodically as you can. Contact us at [charlottegrangevt@gmail.com](mailto:charlottegrangevt@gmail.com) to learn more and explore ways you can help. Or call Linda Hamilton at 802-425-5795. Thank you!

*Long-time Charlotte residents Linda Hamilton and Trina Bianchi are members of Charlotte Grange.*

## Farm Series

# Kidding around is serious business at Flower Gap Farm

Lucie Lehmann  
CONTRIBUTOR

Discarded Christmas trees are usually a sad punctuation mark to the holiday season.

Not, however, at Flower Gap Farm, a small artisanal operation that sells raw goat milk products on Mt. Philo Road. It welcomes donated trees as a source of nourishment and delight for owner Margaret Aiken's 17 hungry Nigerian Dwarf goats. The gentle and friendly animals set upon them eagerly when Aiken, 43, drops them into their pens. The trees are rich in vitamin C, which is welcome in their winter diet, especially when the does are pregnant, as nine of them are this year.

Though it is the dead of winter, kidding season is not far off, judging from the visible side bulges on the does. It's less than two months away, according to Aiken, who pegs Feb. 20 as the first due date in an intense, often sleepless period that will end by mid-March and add 20 to 30 new kids to the farm. After that, it won't be long before Aiken resumes selling the butterfat-rich raw goat milk, yogurt and cheese that have earned her an enthusiastic following in the four years she's been offering them on the small farm in Charlotte.

Aiken studied horticulture, not animal science, and worked at Virginia Tech researching herbaceous perennials before arriving in Vermont five years ago with her husband and five goats she had raised near Roanoke. When the couple divorced, she kept the goats and settled in Charlotte on the one-acre property she lives on today, working as a full-time caretaker for the family who owns it and expanding the herd a little at time. "They're great for people wanting a small homestead-type situation, because they produce enough milk per family, but they don't take a lot of space," she explains of the Nigerian Dwarf breed. Some of Aiken's farm income comes from selling kids to other small dairies and private families. "That's why I started out with them. And then I realized how delicious the milk is. This breed in particular has the highest butterfat content, and so it tastes really rich and sweet."

Unlike cow's milk, consumption of goat milk is on the rise in America, according to the American Dairy Goat Association. It attributes this increase in part to the fact that goat milk is more easily digestible than cow's milk and is slightly lower in lactose. "The fat globules are smaller than those found in cow milk and



Margaret Aiken, Proprietor of Flower Gap Farm. Photo by Lucie Lehmann.

the curd is softer and smaller, making the digestion easier. Those who are allergic to cow milk may tolerate and thrive on goat milk," the website claims.

The upward trend encouraged Aiken to begin selling her goats' milk and try her hand at yogurt and cheese production, things she mostly taught herself and which she says are fairly simple because they don't need pasteurization. Fortunately, Vermont is a good state to experiment in. According to the University of Vermont, it's "one of 28 states that currently allow the sale of raw milk for human consumption. State laws require that the milk be sold directly from the farm." Other farmers have also taken note: the Department of Agriculture listed 46 goat dairy farms in the state in 2021, up from 42 in 2019. Most of them are small farms like Aiken's.

Aiken's is a niche market for now, and she knows there will always be people who are opposed to raw milk for health and safety reasons. "It's not without risk," she acknowledges. "It's unpasteurized milk... and it carries a risk. But I feel like I do all I can to mitigate that risk with my sanitation procedures and keeping really healthy goats." She's required to keep a log of all her customers, save samples of the milk batches and get the goats tested every year. To date, she's never had an issue or a complaint. If anything, she can't keep up with demand, and she'd eventually like to increase her production and expand her entire operation, including into a commercial kitchen. "I can see having a herd of 60 to 100 of these guys and having the volume to be able to stock store shelves," she says.



Above: Nigerian Dwarf goats have an eating frenzy of Christmas trees at Flower Gap Farm. Photo by Margaret Aiken

Right: Margaret Aiken greets two of her Nigerian Dwarf goats at the farm. Photo contributed

Of the products that Aiken offers, "the yogurt is the biggest seller; that's the thing that people go nuts for," she says. It's delectably thick and rich and comes in several flavors, including lemon curd, maple and plain, which she sells in refrigerated glass pint jars for 6 or 7 dollars. During peak production periods, Aiken uses 25 to 30 gallons of milk weekly. She isn't using all that the goats produce, however, as she prefers dam-raised kids to bottle-fed ones. Other goat breeds produce more volume but can't match the quality of the Nigerian Dwarfs, she contends, and so she intends to stick with them. "I really love this breed. I love their personalities and I love their milk."

Standing in the small barn surrounded by her does (the two bucks are off in another pen), Aiken points them out by name, one by one, from oldest to youngest. Even without admitting that "it's easy for me to just make the goats my life," it's obvious how much she loves and cares for her animals. The barn is immaculate, the kidding stalls that she built herself are ready for another season, and the cameras she installed to keep watch over her expectant mothers are already live-streaming video to her phone. This year, she even wants to add visits with the kids as one of her



offerings.

To further expand her farming operation, Aiken would have to find a bigger piece of land—one that she could afford, which is notably difficult in Charlotte. Still, she would prefer to stay in the area. "I feel like I've really formed a community here, which is great. So, we'll see what the future holds in terms of that, but goats will definitely be in it."

*Flower Gap Farm will likely begin selling raw goat milk and artisanal yogurt and cheese again in March. For more information, contact Margaret Aiken at 540-929-4785.*

## Update the look of your home or business

- Quality Craftsmanship
- Courteous Customer Care
- Interior & Exterior Painting
- Free Estimate
- Lead Certified
- Fully Insured

802-345-2038 or  
classicshadespainting@gmail.com  
Local references available.



High quality work  
at an affordable price

## Around Town

### Congratulations:

to **Mark Powers** of Charlotte who earned his doctoral degree in Earth and Atmospheric Science from Mississippi State University December 9.

to **James T. Fox** who finished his senior year at Champlain College on the Dean's List with a 3.6 GPA. During his tenure at Champlain, James has been part of a collaborative team between the "Arete Incident Response" and the "Leahy Center." He will graduate with a major in Cyber Security and a minor in Law. He is the son of Jim and Christa Duthie-Fox.

to **Vaughnesa Jipner** of Charlotte who earned placement on the Dean's List at Plymouth State University, New Hampshire. Vaughnesa has not declared her major.

to **Barry Finette** of Charlotte who along with his co-founder Barry Heath and their company THINKMD (a healthcare technology firm) received a \$2.3 million award from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. THINKMD is aimed at providing pediatric information to healthcare workers without the same training as pediatricians, information that allows them to reach conclusions similar to those of the physician 80% of the time.

to **Patricia O'Donnell**, owner of Heritage Landscapes in Charlotte, who was awarded the Louise du Pont Crowninshield award by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Patricia is the first landscape architect to win this award in the 60 years it has been given. Patricia prides her work for its changeability. Her landscape designs do not remain the same forever, but change as the areas history changes.

to **Lydia Clemmons** and her parents for celebrating Kwanzaa on the Clemmons Family Farm in Charlotte. The farm is noted as one of very few Black owned farms in Vermont, and by celebrating Kwanzaa through storytelling, the Clemmons bring Black culture to this area where it becomes a unique feature taught to participants through literature.

### Sympathy:

is extended to family and friends of **Bette Mae Russell** of St. George who passed away December 18 at the age of 87. Her surviving family includes her son Wesley and his wife Paully of Charlotte. There will be a private gathering this spring at the St. George Cemetery.

is extended to family and friends of **Linda Henzel** of Montpelier who passed away December 9 at the age of 71. Linda served as the Coordinator of the Lewis Creek Association for 10 years where she assessed water quality, working in that capacity with volunteers, students and teachers. Those wishing to donate in her honor, please consider a Montpelier organization, to Vermont's Nongame Wildlife Fund or to the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation.

### Robert Ralph Titus

Robert R Titus, age 89, of Charlotte, passed away peacefully at Helen Porter Nursing Home with his family by his side.

This farmer, sugar-maker and family man had a real passion for horses. From a very young age, he would tell stories of breaking a pony for neighboring girls, along with stories of using teams of horses on the family farm for logging and tilling the land. As an adult he



Robert Ralph Titus and great granddaughter Colbie Curler. *Photo contributed*

grew to love Arabians and had one of his very own that he raised from a colt. "WA Flare" was his pride and joy.

Robert spent his early life in Stowe Hollow farming alongside his parents and other family members. He spoke often of his memories and shared many wonderful stories of growing up in Stowe on the farm they called Grass Lands, with Pinnacle Mountain in his backyard. Later he joined the Air Force and was stationed in Rapid City, South Dakota. There he met Bernice. They married in August 1956, in South Dakota. They spent several years in South Dakota, where Laurie and Jeff were born. Later they moved back to start their own farm in Charlotte, where they continue farming and sugaring.

Robert was born on April 20, 1932, in Stowe (Stowe Hollow) to Blanche and Floyd Titus. He is survived by his wife Bernice of 65 years; his daughter Laurie and husband Peter Curler; grandsons Bobby and his wife Genia; great-grandchildren Colbie and Levi; Bradley and wife Kari and great-grandchildren Remi, Reese, Emerson, Wylie and Leland; daughter-in-law Lorraine Titus, and her son Ryan and his wife Jenn (of South Carolina); his brother Doug and his wife Debbie; and several nieces and nephews. Robert was predeceased by his parents Blanche and Floyd, infant daughter Diane, his son Jeffrey Titus, brother Wesley Titus, and sister Darlene Murray.

Robert loved working with his son, daughter, and son-in-law Peter, spending many years overseeing the family farm. He also enjoyed local fairs, such as Addison Field Days, and especially Eastern States. Over the years he and Bernice traveled yearly to South Dakota, and around the United States, visiting family and many special sites along the way. He enjoyed Sunday rides around the countryside and visiting with friends and family. He especially enjoyed seeing his grandsons and great-grandchildren playing and enjoying the family farm life.

Many thanks to the staff at Helen Porter for the care given to Robert.

In spring of 2022 when the tulips are in blossom there will be a celebration of Robert's life.

*Advertise with us and let us create your next ad!*

The  
**Charlotte News**

Contact [ads@TheCharlotteNews.org](mailto:ads@TheCharlotteNews.org)

*Sacred Hunter* .....**January lessons**Bradley Carleton  
CONTRIBUTOR

To live passionately is to embrace all our experiences with fascination and respect. When I graduated from high school, I tried out for the U.S. Freestyle Ski Team as a top-ranked mogul skier. I came close, but not close enough.

When I moved to New York City to pursue an acting career, I frequently attended the Metropolitan Opera and studied with Maestro Carlo Menotti and theater with Lee Strasberg. I have stood in front of hundreds of people on an off-Broadway stage and experienced standing ovations for performances. I wanted to feel successful. Then, switching careers to win the love of a woman, I became a stockbroker and worked in the World Trade Center. I don't mean to brag about having these opportunities, but the memories often remind me that although I may not have achieved the greatness I imagined, I have been left with some remarkable experiences. I often look at them and think, "My God! How could I be such a failure?" What have I got to show for it? Experience and perspective. I applied myself to each of these careers with passion and learned many valuable lessons. When I look back at my efforts, I see that they taught me that, no matter how many times I didn't achieve my dream, I was rewarded with the wisdom of the experience and a tempering of my ego.

One common thread that weaves itself through my journey has been a deep desire to feel as if I belonged to something greater. I thought that others' admiration would make me feel that. I thought that if I could find someone who genuinely loved me, I might finally believe in myself and my spirit would be complete. It was deeply painful to feel as though I needed something or someone to feel complete. With a lot of inner work, I was able to let that go, and I serendipitously met my future wife when she found my ad in the Free Press looking for a roommate. Having let go of my expectations, I found the two most cherished loves of my life: my wife Katie, and my love for the outdoors. To this day, I still need a reminder that I do, indeed, belong to something greater. Ice fishing is a good reminder.

Last week, Ozzie, my fishing buddy, and I decided we needed to get outside for some fresh air on a frozen lake. We pulled into the access of a small lake, and a fellow angler from St. Albans joined us in the parking lot. He asked us if we had fished this lake recently. Ozzie grunted, "Not yet." The gentleman introduced himself and, with a short and very particular dialogue, it was clear that he knew the game. We departed the access and headed 300 yards to the southeast, testing the ice all the way. Eight inches of good, solid black ice made us both comfortable. Our friend headed out to the middle of the lake, crossing a small pressure crack that we later discovered was only four inches thick on the sides. We decided that we would not go further, and set up the shanty, the propane heater and the fish finder. Of course, the thermos of French roast coffee and the ubiquitous donuts were set on the shelf in front of us.

As I sat in the shanty and stared down the cylinder of ice that I had drilled, I fell into a transcendental state of bliss. It was as if all my thoughts, judgements and fears poured out of me and emptied into that hole in the ice. I baited my lure with spikes (to the uninitiated, they are maggots—thought by most civilians as the lowest possible earthly life form) and let the weighted lure drop down into the aquiline environment. It bounced off the bottom and the two-pound test fluorocarbon line coiled slightly. I reeled up just one turn and let the



Ozzie and his perch.

*Photo by Bradley Carleton.*

weight of the lure tighten the line. I gently jigged the rod by twitching my wrist and then letting it rest. I repeated this over and over with no results. Nonetheless, I was content. The frigid north wind whipped snowflakes around us just outside the door.

We were surrounded by other hearty souls who embrace misery as if they are proving that they thrive under adverse circumstances. We tried different colored lures, jiggling faster or slower, or just moving a few yards to one side, drilling a new hole, and trying again. This is the essence of ice fishing. It's called perseverance. Some say it's foolish to keep trying when clearly nothing is working. But we are driven by passion.

After a few hours of this, Ozzie and I—having had meager success—retreated and dragged the shanty and all our equipment back to the vehicle. One dozen medium yellow perch and a half-dozen bluegills were all that we were taking home. This did not live up to our expectations, and that, my dear readers, is the most powerful lesson that the outdoors teaches. When we remove our expectations of what success looks like and instead are present for whatever happens, we open the door to joy. Sometimes it means taking home just a few fish. Other times it means you've just spent the most valuable commodity we have, time.

When we returned home, I jumped on one of the many Vermont ice fishing forums on the internet and was struck by a picture of a guy who had a half-bucketful of 14-inch yellow perch. I copied the picture and send it to Ozzie via email with the subject line, "Do you recognize this guy?" After a little web sleuthing, I realized that this was the guy from the access parking lot. At first my juices got flowing and I felt jealous! I compared my catch to his and thought that his catch was my idea of "success." Then I caught myself and thought about the lovely perch and bluegill I had ready for cleaning. And what about having shared this wonderful moment with my friend?

After a day on the ice, I recognize that none of my experiences have been failures. Living with passion is exemplified by embracing the miracle of being in the moment. That exhilarating moment when the tip of my rod gets tugged violently downward toward the hole. My line is the thread of life that binds me to another living being and is at least as exciting as watching Luciano Pavarotti belt out *La Traviata* at the Met.

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



# THANK YOU

to the sponsors who helped  
make the magic of  
Winter Lights 2021 at  
Shelburne Museum!



Lake Champlain  
CHOCOLATES®



Community  
Bank N.A.



National Life Group  
Foundation



encore  
RENEWABLE ENERGY®



PC

Benoit Electric  
Cabot Creamery Co-operative  
Greenbacker Capital



## Home

## The joys of decluttering

Joan Weed  
CONTRIBUTOR

Inevitably, as the holiday decorations are making their way to the attic, my mind goes to continuing with the decluttering and cleaning of cupboards and drawers. Actually, I've been working on this for a few years now. If one thinks of all

that one must do to downsize and simplify, it seems awesome and like too much work. However, in an effort to save my kids from having to dispose of certain items, I keep it in my mindset all year long. I've been aware of opportunities and keep an eye out for other ways to dispose of possessions I no longer need.

"Front Porch Forum" is a great resource for connecting with people, as well as classified ads in local papers. A new-to-me resource is "Buy Nothing," which I see on Facebook—a great way to share nicely-cared-for clothes, household/garden tools and furnishings with others. No money is involved, and the taker usually picks up the items. Photos are necessary. When the Grange had rummage sales, I shared many items. The Charlotte Library's yearly book sales took a lot of our books and even puzzles.

I believe my first giveaway was to the mother of a young girl who wanted a toboggan for her eighth birthday. Didn't we have one hanging in the garage collecting dust? Arrangements were made and her grandpa restored it, including a new pad. Another friend sought a sewing machine to teach her daughters to sew over the summer. Though I used mine occasionally, I realistically knew that she needed it more than I did at this age. A woman pleaded for a globe on a stand. Again, that would have been one of my difficult homes to find for an item too nice to toss. She collected it and a small 1940s tin globe pencil sharpener. She used the globe for her daughter's wedding. I kidded that my little globe was a cake topper.

I have kept notes on my pass-alongs and love the many stories and new friends I have met in the process.

Other items that found a home with neighbors: binoculars for a new birding enthusiast, a leaf blower (electric!) for a dad who helped neighbors, a computer and printer for a 12-year-old for his very own, a forehead thermometer to a school admin for her work, horseshoes to the Charlotte Rec Department and silk ties to a quiltmaker.

Stony Loam Farm has our aluminum garden cart, a friend's kids have my old camera, and a

CD player went to other kids.

One delightful story involved a 20-something young man who asked for wood tools. He came to look at our collection with a friend. They left happily with a table vice and rock maul. One of the guys took a very old wooden toolbox, which he lovingly cleaned up and restored. He kindly wrote to say he had spent a whole Sunday working on it.

We had leftover medical supplies from a procedure and many pairs of old eyeglasses. I read of an eyeglass collection for a group heading to Honduras. I offered the glasses and suggested the medical supplies, which were new and unopened. Yes! They went along with the group.

Another fun contribution was to a newly established preschool. The founders wanted wooden toys. We had quite a few. One item was a homemade seesaw from the 1930s. It was in excellent condition but difficult to store, and my own family was older now. I was sent a photo of children playing on it and knew it had found a good home. They also got wooden blocks and puzzles.

Even my old fur coat found a new home, thanks to a classified ad. Recently, a young student needed period props for the play she was putting on. A 1980s desk telephone? Wouldn't you know we fulfilled her wish.

One year, very close to Christmas, a notice appeared in "Front Porch Forum." Anyone have any Flexible Flyer sleds hanging around? We had three! So, I offered one and the young man came and measured it and pronounced it perfect. Hmmm... It made me ask, "What will you be doing with this?" He said, "Making my dad a Zamboni for Christmas." I could only imagine.

There are many more items and stories. The process has been rewarding and fun, and my kids are grateful.

The most recent pass-along was to a young mother whose worldly possessions were packed up, as they were building a new home. She had no idea where the Elf on a Shelf was at present. Did anyone have a brown-haired one? You guessed it. Happy New Year!

*For moving large objects that may or may not be functional, try 1-800-GOT-JUNK or Grunts Move Junk (gruntsmovejunk.com), which aids veterans with the profits. Locally and more personally, Ellen Gurwitz (802-598-363) will help you break through your clutter and organize your spaces. She is non-judgmental and practical; found at decluttermevt.com.*

## Sports

## CVU's Elise Berger pitches in the US Women's National Baseball Development Camp

Henry Bushey  
CONTRIBUTOR

Shelburne native and CVU sophomore Elise Berger has been attracting a lot of national attention for her prodigious baseball skills. Just a couple of months ago, she was one of only 40 girls from around the nation attending the US Women's National Development Camp in Florida. There, she trained with some of the top female baseball players in the country and was invited to stay and workout with the US WND Team after. Around a month later, she went to the MLB Girls Baseball Breakthrough Camp in Arlington, Texas, to further her baseball education. "It was a truly amazing experience. It was both an honor and was humbling to play against the best women in the country in Florida and the best girls in Arlington," Elise wrote. The players would wake up, eat breakfast at the hotel they were staying at, and then go for a morning workout at the training facilities. "Typically, we would split into groups and work fielding/pitching, hitting and conditioning. That would usually take three hours, and we would get lunch after, followed by heading to the stadiums and getting ready for pregame," Elise said. "Once the games finished up, we would talk with our teams and have a classroom session with the coaches and/or other speakers who came."

Opportunities such as these don't come often, and they open up a ton of new avenues to success. "I have made a lot of new connections, a bunch of new friends, coaches and mentors. A lot of the coaches have tons of connections in the baseball world and are more than happy to help any of us in any way possible. Being able to play with them in the future and the lifelong connections you make are huge opportunities that got opened up to me just this fall," Elise added.

When asked what she thought was the most helpful thing she learned in attending these national camps, Elise said, "Learning from the coaches. We learned about everything from nutrition and recovery to scouting to all the different skills in the game. I would say that the classroom session where we got to talk to the coaches and ask questions about things past the physical parts of the game was really important. I have pages of notes that I took during those sessions and took away more new information to implement in all aspects of my game and life to get better every day and



Elise Berger pitching at the US Women's National Baseball Development Camp.

Photo by Jenna Hiscock,  
USA Baseball photographer

plan for my future. The connections are also big connections that are both helpful now and in the future. Having people that I know will support me and help me in every way they can is an amazing feeling."

To receive an invitation to camps such as these is an amazing accomplishment, as making it into one means that Elise is one of the top female ballplayers in the nation. Remarkable on this, Elise said, "It's definitely an honor to be there and play at these camps. It's amazing to watch everyone play at such a high, competitive level, and to be a part of that. I know that everyone has worked hard and has faced adversity to be there. It drives me to get better and to compete harder every time that I show up to another camp. I definitely still have a lot of work to do to play with the national team. But being there just shows how hard you need to work and how willing everyone is to do that."

According to Elise, her favorite part of the camps was, "definitely playing the games and hanging out with everyone. To see girls and women be super competitive and driven in the game, all while having fun with each other is amazing. Even once the games were over we would hang out until curfew, even if we had just met each other a day or two prior. We get to play baseball with people who have the same passion and there's really nothing better."

**Fenn & Company**  
A BUILDING PARTNERSHIP

New Construction  
& Renovations.  
Quality Work.  
Cheerfully Done!

Peter Fenn  
734-0353

Sports

# In women's basketball, Rice shuts down the Redhawks' 57-game win streak



Edd Merritt  
CONTRIBUTOR

CVU women hoopsters saw their 57-game regular season winning streak, dating back to 2018, come to an end last Friday. The Green Knights of Rice took advantage of their home court to defeat the Hawks by 14 points, 34-

for Rice led to the win.

This was the sixth game of the season for the Hawks, and hopefully improvements will come and show up by tournament time.

Shelby Companion led CVU, scoring with 11 points.

The Redhawks came off a strong win (50-17) over Burr and Burton to end 2021 and lead into the 2022 season against Rice.

## Nordic skiers hit the trails at Sleepy Hollow

Both men and women Redhawk Nordic skiers hit the trails at Sleepy Hollow recently in a classic event. For the women, a second-place team finish behind Burlington High School was led individually by Emma Crum, who placed second, and Corina Hobbs, who placed eighth.

Matthew Severin led CVU men with a fifth-place finish to pace the Redhawk team to a third place behind Mount Mansfield and Burlington.

## Men's and women's hockey hit the ice on Saturday

The combined women's team from CVU/Mount Mansfield discovered that a lone goal was enough to defeat Middlebury 1-0. Hannah Schmid's goal came in the second period and held.

The South Burlington and CVU men went scoreless.

20. Both coaches praised their teams' efforts. Rice's Aurie Thibault was quoted in the Jan. 9 *Free Press* as saying that her team's "defensive effort was one of the best she's seen as a coach."

The tempo of the game went Rice's way from the beginning. Their offense moved rapidly and created open shots—a number of them three-pointers. Redhawk coach Ute Otley felt that the loss could well be beneficial. "We have a lot of work to do. We have to get better." Both speed and defense

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

# Area Calendar Events

Calendar compiled by Mary Landon.  
Please send event listings to  
[calendar@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:calendar@thecharlottenews.org).

COVID and weather guidelines for venues are available on individual websites.

## Through Jan. 31

Stop by the **Pierson Library** in Shelburne to view the **current art show** featuring works by Adrienne Ginter and Lawlor Schmidt. On display are hand-cut paper pieces that tell stories from nature, and monotypes that reflect the interconnectedness of all life, respectively. For more info: 802-985-5124 during library hours.

## Various dates in Jan. and Feb.

**Online French classes** for all ages and levels. Maybe this winter is the time to learn, refresh and practice with classes through **Alliance Francaise!** For more info: [aflcr.org](http://aflcr.org) or [education@aflcr.org](mailto:education@aflcr.org).

## Fridays, Jan. 14 and 21, 3-8 p.m.

Every Friday when the weather cooperates, **Cochran's Ski Area** in Richmond has a tradition of hosting **Friday Night Lights**, a community dinner and inexpensive skiing for ages 6 and up. A fun event for all levels. For more info: [cochranskiarea.com](http://cochranskiarea.com) or call 802-434-2479.

## Saturday, Jan. 15, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Dinosaur Discoveries: Ancient Fossils, New Ideas** opens to the public at Burlington's **ECHO Leahy Center**. The exhibit showcases the world of modern paleontology. New technologies reveal how dinosaurs lived, moved, and behaved. See dinosaurs walk, run, and move their long necks in fantastic computer simulations. For more info: [echovermont.org](http://echovermont.org) or call 802-864-1848.

## Saturday, Jan. 15, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Join **Outreach for Earth Stewardship** staff outside the **Shelburne Farms Farm Store** for an up-close visit with wild avian ambassadors. This **Raptor Hangout** could include a live owl or hawk! OFES offers unique educational programs with the help of live raptors who serve as wild ambassadors. The OFES mission is to strengthen respect and understanding for wildlife through education. Free,

outdoors and weather-dependent. For more info: [shelburnefarms.org](http://shelburnefarms.org) calendar or call 802-985-8686. More info on OFES at [ofesvt.org](http://ofesvt.org).

## Saturday, Jan. 15, 10:30 a.m.-noon

**Winter Discovery Hike for Families:** Connect with the natural world on the trail at **North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier**. Dress warmly for outdoor adventure and discovery. This event is appropriate for families with children ages 6 and up. Registration is required for this free program, which is led by a NBNC Teacher-Naturalist. To register, or for more info: [northbranchnaturecenter.org](http://northbranchnaturecenter.org) or call 802-229-6206.

## Saturday, Jan. 15, 5-9 p.m.

**Adventure Dinner: Smoked Meats and Party Treats:** Adventure Dinner is an event company that dreams up and hosts secret dinners in unexpected Vermont locations. Each event is bespoke and showcases Vermont chefs, food producers and locations for one-of-a-kind gatherings. This dinner event takes place at **Basin Harbor Club** Main Lodge in Vergennes.

Here's an opportunity to dust off your fancy party attire (encouraged). For more info: [adventuredinner.com](http://adventuredinner.com).

## Sunday, Jan. 16, 2-4 p.m.

Attend an in-person movie screening at the **Middlebury New Filmmaker's Festival** at the Town Hall Theater. Today's documentary, rated PG, is **From the Wild Sea**. Geared toward families, with G or PG ratings, the theme of the film series is **Humans and Animals: Shared Experiences, Intersecting Worlds**. A different film screens each month through May. For more info: [midfilmfest.org](http://midfilmfest.org) or call 802-382-9222.

## Monday, Jan. 17, 10-11:30 a.m.

Stop by, meet the teachers and tour the classroom at the **Hinesburg Nursery School Open House**, for families with children between ages 3-5. Please RSVP: [info@hinesburgnurseryschool.org](mailto:info@hinesburgnurseryschool.org) or call 802-482-3827.

## Monday, Jan. 17, 12-5 p.m.

ECHO Leahy Center, the Clemmons Family Farm and other local organizations collaborate for a day of free, online, family-friendly activities at the **Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Celebration**. Celebrate King's life and legacy with music, stories, history and discussion. Event will be streamed via YouTube. For more info: [echovermont.org](http://echovermont.org) or call 802-864-1848.

## Wednesday, Jan. 19, noon

**The Vermont Historical Society** hosts Ojibwe writer and historian Jean M. O'Brien for an online talk: "**Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England**," based on O'Brien's book of the same name. This free talk is part of the **VHS Winter Speaker Series**; pre-registration required. For more info: [vermonthistory.org](http://vermonthistory.org) or call 802-479-8500.

## Thursday, Jan. 20-Saturday, Jan. 22, 7-10 p.m.

**Banff Center Mountain Film Festival World Tour:** This exhilarating and provocative collection of films explores a variety of the world's mountains, remote cultures and adrenaline-packed sports. The film series is held at the **Dudley H. Davis Center at the University of Vermont**, with different films each evening. Doors open at 6 p.m. For tickets or more info, see [skirack.com](http://skirack.com) or call 800-882-4530.

## Saturday, Jan. 22, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

**Family Art Saturday:** Get creative and make art together! Families are invited to drop by the **Burlington City Arts Center** location on Church Street and participate in an art activity inspired by current exhibitions. Free and open to the public. For more info: [burlingtoncityarts.org](http://burlingtoncityarts.org) or call 802-865-7166.

## Monday, Jan. 24, by 5 p.m.

**Don't forget!** Charlotte Town Officer **petitions and Consent of Candidate forms** are due in the Town Clerk's office no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 24, in anticipation of March Town Meeting. Town Clerk Mary Mead has information on any positions up for election. For more info: stop by the clerk's office on Ferry Road, or call 802-425-3071.

**KLC**  
**KILEY LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION**  
Full Service Landscape Installation  
Stone Work—Walls, Steps, Walks & Patios  
Plantings  
Tree Spade  
Excavation—Ponds, Waterlines, Grading, Land Clearing, Mini-Excavation on Call  
Est. 1993  
Deedle Kiley • 425-2882

Four Seasons | Sotheby's INTERNATIONAL REALTY  
Dreaming of a new kitchen?

It is a **SELLERS MARKET!**  
We can help sell your home and find you a new kitchen.  
We sell property from \$200,000-\$2,000,000 successfully!  
Meet us at our website [KathyOBrien.com](http://KathyOBrien.com)  
Our care, experience and connections offer you exceptional results. Our energy and expertise will ensure the best possible experience while selling your home.

**O'BRIEN O'CONNELL**  
NORTHERN VT REAL ESTATE GROUP

550 HINESBURG RD. | S. BURLINGTON  
802.343.9433 | 802.578.9552  
[FourSeasonsSIR.com](http://FourSeasonsSIR.com)  
Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated.

Contact us today for a **free consultation!**

## On Books

# A motley bouquet



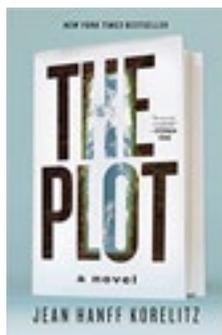
Katherine Arthaud  
CONTRIBUTOR

It's a new year. 2022. Wow. The old year is behind us, never to be repeated. And many I have heard saying, good riddance. Yes, 2021 was a tough one for many, that's for sure, but as someone who had just penned a gratitude list

for the outgoing year told me recently, she was surprised to remember that good things happened too. I admit I paused upon hearing this, but decided that, yes, I had to agree, good things happened too. I hope this has been your experience, I do.

At the very least, I can absolutely say that I read some very good books. And, for me, the act of reading itself has been a grounding, comforting constant through all the old year's ups and downs, goods and bads, lockdowns, respites, adventures, recurrences, etc. Reading has allowed respite, escape into another world, the ability to share in the thoughts, ideas and visions of other minds in a quiet, alone/not alone way...and more. Yes, reading is near the top of my list of things for which I am grateful as I look back, and, also, ponder the year that stretches out ahead like a field of fresh, untrodden snow.

Happily, I have recently read a motley bouquet of books that I feel are worthy of mention, the most recent of which is *The Plot* by Jean Hanff Korelitz. Stephen King called this book "insanely readable" with a suspense quotient that is "through the roof." And yes, it is indeed a suspenseful read, with



a compelling and satisfyingly twisted and twisting plot, but unlike many of its genre, this novel doesn't rush into things. Much of its beginning has to do with acquainting the reader with narrator/anti-hero Jacob Finch Bonner, creative writing teacher and once-promising author of a "New and Noteworthy" (*New York Times*) bestselling novel. Bonner's ego (we learn early on) is bruised and unsteady, his confidence shaken, his hopes dimming with each passing month...as each passing month brings zero forward movement in his writing career—which is particularly sad because being a writer is all Jacob Finch Bonner has ever wanted:

"Ever, ever, ever; all the way back to suburban Long Island, which was the last place on earth a serious writer of any kind ought to come from but where he, nonetheless, had been cursed to grow up, the only child of a tax attorney and a high school guidance counselor" (who were less than encouraging). "He knew that he had chosen his lane and begun swimming, and he would not stop swimming until he held his own book in his own hands, at which point the world would surely have learned the thing he himself had known for so many years: He was a writer. A great writer. That had been the intention, anyway."

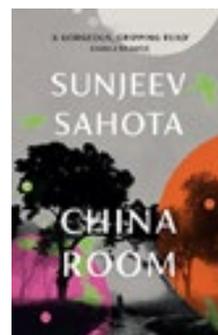
As you can see, the writing here is unusually good for the suspense genre. Clever, all the way around, including the title. Plot (noun) means: 1. a sequence of events in a narrative, as in a novel, for example; 2. an immoral or illegal plan; 3. a designated section of land for a gravesite. I don't want to say more for fear of ruining the fun, the surprise of reading this book. It is a real treat—a page-turner with a literary bent—a novel within a novel—well-written, rich, textured, and surprising. Treat yourself.

Another very good book is *China Room* by

Sunjeev Sahota—very different from the forementioned novel in almost every respect except that it too involves a twist, a mystery, a slow-to-unravel truth. Mehar, a young bride in rural Punjab (1929) is married off, but get this: not to one man, but to three brothers, in a single ceremony. She goes to live in a new home where she shares quarters with her new "sisters," both of whom are also married to a brother, but, like Mehar, know not which. The three young women work in the family's "china room," seldom interacting with their husbands (except at night) or their bossy, domineering mother-in-law, who put the marriages into motion in the first place and seems to be pulling everyone's strings. The prevailing question for Mehar becomes: which one of the brothers is her husband? She thinks she knows; there are a few clues—but...

Again, I don't want to tell too much. But I will say that interwoven into this novel is another story, which takes place 70 years later, about a young Englishman battling addiction and undergoing bone-quaking withdrawal far from his home. He ends up holing up at an abandoned farm, where he discovers an old china room, barred from public view and entry. And lo, another mystery begins to unfurl. Beautifully written, compelling, evocative, moving. You will love it.

One more: *Oh William!* by Elizabeth Strout. *The New York Times Book Review* proclaims that Strout "illuminates both what people understand about others and what they understand about themselves." Ann Patchett says this may be her favorite of all Strout's

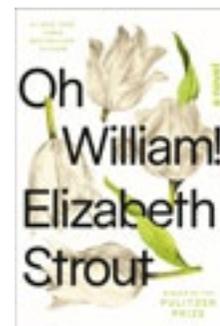


books. It really is a masterpiece. Slow-moving, sensitive and deceptively simple, it's a different kind of love story that makes an impact and goes deep.

The focus here is on Lucy Barton, a writer (a very different sort from *The Plot*'s Jacob Finch Bonner), whom many of us met years ago in *My Name is Lucy Bonner* (Strout's 2016 *New York Times* bestselling and fifth, novel).

The book opens with: "I would like to say a few things about my husband, William. My second husband, David, died last year, and in my grief for him I have felt grief for William as well. Grief is such a—oh, it is such a *solitary* thing; this is the terror of it, I think. It is like sliding down the outside of a really long glass building while nobody sees you. But it is William I want to speak of here."

Deep, spare, sad, tender and poetic, I think this book will speak to anyone who has lost someone they have loved, whether to death, to divorce, to time...or to all three. It is honest and direct, yet layered and surprising—a tad ironic at times, and even playful, in a kind of delicately plodding, endearing way. A lovely and loving book. Elizabeth Strout is a genius. Reading *O William!* makes me want to go back and reread all her novels. That's an idea for the new year. But not a resolution. I don't make those.



Cheers to all of you. Please stay healthy and happy and remember—as you look back over the difficult, circuitous path we have walked this past year—good things have happened too. Here's to a new beginning and the ongoing pleasure of reading good books.

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

To advertise your business contact [ads@TheCharlotteNews.org](mailto:ads@TheCharlotteNews.org)

**Go Solar with AllEarth Renewables**

[allearthrenewables.com](http://allearthrenewables.com)

Customer-driven solutions designed, engineered and built in Vermont, with over 3,000 installations in the state.

CALL 802.872.9600 x122



[www.DeePT.com](http://www.DeePT.com)

23 San Remo Drive  
SOUTH BURLINGTON | 865.0010

166 Athletic Drive  
SHELburnE | 985.4445

52 Farmall Drive  
**feel good again!** HINESBURG | 482.3333

**BRUSHHOGGING**  
by Adam

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

**(802) 578-8347**

# Town

## Library news



Margaret Woodruff  
DIRECTOR

Happy New Year!

**Recycling resolutions?**  
You can now recycle the following items at the library:

- Batteries and cell phones
- Electronics
- Plastic film and wrapping (restrictions apply, see drop-off container for instructions)

• Corks

Join us in helping to keep landfills less land-full! Paid for with the assistance of the Climate Catalysts Innovation Fund of the Vermont Council on Rural Development.

### Increased Digital Content for 2022!

As of January 2022, all Charlotte resident patrons can now borrow up to five items on their Hoopla accounts. The change takes place on Jan. 1.

If you're a Libby user, you'll be happy to know that we are also expanding our Advantage title purchases. This means shorter wait times for popular ebooks and audiobooks.

Interested in getting started with Hoopla or Libby? Start here for directions: [charlottepubliclibrary.org/online-resources/#read](https://charlottepubliclibrary.org/online-resources/#read).

This project is made possible by a grant from the Association for Rural & Small Libraries through the generosity of a regional partner foundation.

### More digital news: Introducing Hoopla BingePass

There's a new way to access content on Hoopla using your Charlotte Library card! Hoopla BingePass gives you unlimited access to great online content for seven days—all with a single Hoopla borrow.

### The new BingePass includes:

- Hoopla Magazines: read the current issue of 50 popular magazines for all ages and interests, such as Elle, HGTV, Men's Health, Popular Mechanics, Runner's World, Time for Kids, Woman's Day and more.
- The Great Courses Library Collection: explore more than 300 courses, each containing numerous lectures—all with one borrow.
- More to come!

Find out more about how to access BingePass on our **Online Resources page**.

### Winter Reading Challenge!

The Winter Reading Challenge: Read for a Better World (All Ages) is available for pre-registration now on the Vermont libraries Beanstack page at [vermont.beanstack.org](https://vermont.beanstack.org). The challenge starts Jan. 1 and ends Jan. 31. This challenge is available for free to all Vermonters and could be a simple way for public libraries to engage readers this January!

Readers of all ages are encouraged to read for at least 20 minutes a day and log their minutes using the Beanstack website or the mobile app. Participants can read books of their choosing, log minutes, participate in simple activities, and earn digital badges. Participants are encouraged to explore diversity, empathy and action through literature by choosing books and stories from an array of diverse authors and topics.

Need help setting up a Beanstack account? Please contact the library: [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org).

### Operations Update

In the ongoing interest of community health and well-being, the Charlotte Library Board of Trustees would like to remind all visitors to the library of our current COVID protocol. The Library will continue to follow CDC guidelines (the latest information can be found here: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/)

[if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/daily-activities.html) and here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/daily-activities.html>).

We ask that all visitors to the library join the staff in the following safe practices:

- Wearing a mask when indoors at the library regardless of vaccination status
- Maintaining a safe distance from other people
- Refraining from visiting the library if you have any COVID symptoms

We still maintain our Porch Pick-Up service, so feel free to request any materials to be set out if you prefer not to enter the library. You may request materials online through the library website, [charlottepubliclibrary.org](https://charlottepubliclibrary.org), or by phone 802-425-3864 or via email at [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org). Thank you for helping to keep our library community safe and healthy.

### Happening at the library Book Chat is Back!

#### Fridays at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom

Join Margaret on Friday mornings 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 on the library website.

#### Short Story Selections

#### Tuesdays, 1 p.m., Jan. 13, 20 & 27

Join Library Director Margaret Woodruff for a three-part discussion series, featuring short stories old and new. The reading list will include a variety of authors, and one story will be featured each session. Materials will be available prior to the first meeting. Co-sponsored by the Charlotte Senior Center.

Please pre-register so reading lists can be shared. No fee.

#### Health Research Literacy with Jim Hyde Thursday, Jan. 13, 7 p.m.

10 questions to ask yourself when you see in the media "the research shows that..."

Bring with you an article or clipping from the news, a magazine, or other source and we will discuss and dissect it using the answers to ten simple questions.

Jim taught epidemiology and biostatistics at Tufts for more than 35 years. While at Tufts he helped establish and directed the Tufts masters degree program in Health Communication, taught in the MD/MPH joint degree program, and directed several research studies. Prior to going to Tufts he was the Director of the Division of Preventive Medicine at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Register in advance for Zoom link.

#### Mystery Book Group: *Dead by Morning* by Dorothy Simpson Monday, Jan. 17, 10 a.m.

A snowstorm in a quiet English village ends in death in this "skillfully plotted" mystery

starring the beloved Detective Inspector Thanet (*Publishers Weekly*).

Over the last year, Superintendent Draco has turned the little police station at Sturrenden upside down. A hard-driving, fiery Welshman, he has breathed new life into a stagnant police force, and Det. Inspector Luke Thanet has been forced to admit that even if he's difficult to work with, Draco gets results. But when a body is found in the little village of Sutton-in-the-Weald the morning after a heavy snowstorm, Draco insists on overseeing the investigation—which means finding the killer won't be Thanet's only problem. *Copies available at the library.*

Join Zoom Meeting: [us02web.zoom.us/j/84467010512](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84467010512)

### Regeneration Book Discussion

#### Tuesdays at 7 p.m. beginning Jan. 18

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, on Jan. 18 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. As Jane Goodall writes in her foreword, "*Regeneration* is a rebuttal to doomsayers who believe it is too late."

#### Men's Book Group: *Hamnet*

#### Wednesday, Jan. 19, 7 p.m.

Drawing on Maggie O'Farrell's long-term fascination with the little-known story behind Shakespeare's most enigmatic play, *Hamnet* is a luminous portrait of a marriage, at its heart the loss of a beloved child.

Warwickshire in the 1580s. Agnes is a woman as feared as she is sought after for her unusual gifts. She settles with her husband in Henley Street, Stratford, and has three children: a daughter, Susanna, and then twins, Hamnet and Judith. The boy, Hamnet, dies in 1596, aged eleven. Four years or so later, the husband writes a play called Hamlet. *Books are available at the library.*

Join the Zoom discussion.

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

### Library Contact Information

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

**Featuring Environmentally Friendly Flooring Solutions**  
Hardwood • Bamboo • Cork • Marmoleum • Rubber • Wool

Locally Owned & Operated • 802-658-9336  
257 PINE STREET, BURLINGTON • [www.NEFCVT.COM](http://www.NEFCVT.COM)

# Town

## Charlotte Senior Center news



Lori York  
DIRECTOR

Happy New Year! I am very excited to be at the Charlotte Senior Center as the new director. I feel so very fortunate to spend time in such a beautiful space with a very welcoming group of volunteers and participants.

Our winter programming for people age 50 and over has started up again after the lull of the holidays, and there is a wide range of activities for the new year. If you haven't visited our center, stop by, take a tour, attend a lecture, class or meal, or just hang out for a while. For those who start the year off with New Year's resolutions, we have many opportunities to get a head start. Check out our website for more details on the programming that is being offered for January and February at [CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org](http://CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org).

### Ongoing exercise & health classes:

**Chair Yoga:** Mondays at 9:30 a.m.

**Gentle Yoga:** Mondays at 11 a.m.

**Pilates Plus:** Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m.\*

**Strength Maintenance:** Tuesdays at 11 a.m.

**Essentrics:** Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m.

**Chair Yoga:** Wednesdays at 10 a.m.

**Mindfulness Meditation:** Wednesdays at 2:30 p.m. on Zoom

**Pilates:** Thursdays at 8:30 a.m.\*

**T'ai Chi (Beginners):** Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. on Zoom

**T'ai Chi (Advanced):** Thursdays at 11 a.m.

**Meditation:** Fridays at 7:30 a.m.

**Essentrics:** Fridays at 9:30 a.m.

**Strength Maintenance:** Fridays at 11:30 a.m.

\* Note that both Pilates classes are hybrid, in person and on Zoom.

### Snowshoe Expeditions Around Charlotte

Weather permitting. Wednesday mornings 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Dates: 1/19, 2/2, 2/16. Bring your own equipment, snacks and water.

Registration required—sign up by emailing Susan Hyde at [susanfosterhyde@gmail.com](mailto:susanfosterhyde@gmail.com).

No fee.

### Meals and conversation:

Currently most Senior Center courses, events and talks are in person. Our masking and vaccination requirements are posted at the front door and on our website, [CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org](http://CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org). If you are

in doubt, please call 802-425-6345 before coming.

**Monday lunches:** Our Monday lunches are served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with a suggested donation of \$5. Take-out is an option. Upcoming lunch menus:

**Monday, Jan. 24:** Lentil soup with salad, rolls and chocolate chip cookies

**Monday, Jan. 31:** Baked ziti with sausage, French bread, salad and brownies. A special thank-you to the Charlotte Grange for providing our lunch.

We are still looking for a few additional volunteers so that we will be able to offer lunch on the third Monday of the month. If you are available to help with prep or cooking, please give us a call at 802-425-6345.

**Open Café:** We are now offering an Open Café on Wednesday mornings in January from 9:30-11:30 for some conversation and refreshments provided by Friends of the Senior Center.

A great opportunity to make new friends!

**Gents Breakfast:** Once a month, on the second Thursday, from 7 to 9 a.m., the men gather for breakfast and conversation. Please register by the second Tuesday to attend. The suggested donation is \$5 for breakfast. Our next Gents Breakfasts will be on January 13 and February 10.

### Wednesday Lecture Series at 1 p.m.:

*Currently our Wednesday lectures are in person; audiences are limited to 35 people and masks are required.*

### Jan. 19 - Understanding Chronic Pain with Justine Dee

More than 25 million Americans live with daily pain that impacts quality of life. Justine Dee is an associate professor in the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at UVM and an orthopedic clinical specialist physical therapist. She will discuss factors related to chronic pain development and strategies to manage symptoms and reduce pain.

### Jan. 26 - What Style Is That Old Building? with Frances Foster

Join architectural historian Frances Foster for a presentation of Vermont's most prevalent architectural styles of the 19th century.

Frances will show slides of buildings ranging from the Federal style through the late 1900s Colonial Revival. This lecture will take about 80 minutes.



Senior Center's Monday volunteer cooks served a wonderful Tuscan sausage and vegetable stew with wedge salad and cake for dessert. From L to R: Sue Foley, Andy Hodgkin, Bev Burley, Carol Strobeck, Marjorie London and Karina Warshaw. Photo by Lori York

### ARTS programming:

#### Oscar Nomination Screenings with Sean Moran (note new dates/time)

Sean Moran will screen a to-be-announced movie or documentary from the list of Academy Award nominations. Thursdays, Feb. 10 & 24 from 1-3 p.m.

Registration required. No fee.

#### Watercolor Workshop with Lynn Cummings

Tuesdays 9-noon on 2/1, 2/8, 2/15. Fee: \$100  
Please register and pay by Jan. 25 to hold your space.

#### Exploring Color Workshop with Jonathan Silverman

Wednesday, Feb. 2, 10-11:30 a.m. Fee: \$5.  
Registration required.

This 1.5-hour visual arts workshop is open to all artistic levels.

Co-sponsored by the Charlotte Library.

#### Fiber Arts Group

Thursday mornings, 9:15 a.m.-noon.  
Ongoing. No fee.

Bring your handwork, whether it be rug hooking, knitting or other fiber projects to work on.

#### Arts Group on Fridays

Friday mornings, 10 a.m.-noon. Ongoing. No fee.

You are invited to bring whatever you are working on and enjoy the conversation, ideas and encouragement that this friendly, relaxed group has to offer.

#### Questions? New to the area? Thinking of volunteering?

We would love to meet with you. We are located at 212 Ferry Road, Charlotte, just across from the post office. Hours are Monday to Friday from 9-4. Or give us a call at 802-425-6345.

Residents from other communities are always welcome. Our mission is to serve those over 50. And if you don't see what you are looking for, reach out and we may be able to add it to our schedule.

## 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](mailto:ads@thecharlottenews.org).

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

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

Need a fresh start to 2022? Let **Lafayette Painting** give your home a beautiful new look. Our painters can do a lot in a day. **LafayettePaintingInc.com** or call **802-863-5397** to hear about our winter discount.

**Send us your photos!**

Charlotte events, people or places. We want to publish your photos. Email them to: [news@TheCharlotteNews.org](mailto:news@TheCharlotteNews.org)

**The Charlotte News**

# A big thank-you to our town volunteers

Hundreds of Charlotters volunteer in many different capacities for a diverse range of organizations in town and beyond. We all benefit from their generosity, which helps make the town of Charlotte a healthier and more vibrant community.

Volunteers prepare and serve lunches at the Senior Center, give their time and expertise to the Charlotte Land Trust, the Food Shelf and the Grange, and respond to emergency calls that come in to Fire and Rescue. They shovel snow for neighbors, bring meals to friends who are sick, chop vegetables in the Charlotte Central School kitchen, write for *The Charlotte News*, and much more besides.

Below, we want to recognize and thank a special group of volunteers—those who serve on town boards, commissions and committees, and at town organizations. Your selfless contributions make a huge difference here in Charlotte. Thank you. Thanks also to Dean Bloch for supplying *The News* with this list.

## **Elected officials**

### **Selectboard**

James Faulkner (Chair since October 11, 2021), Matt Krasnow (Chair until October 10, 2021), Frank Tenney (Vice Chair), Louise McCarren, Lewis Mudge, Carrie Spear (until March 2, 2021).

### **Auditors**

Kelly Devine, Mike Dunbar (resigned May 11, 2021), Robert Mack (until March 2, 2021), Richard Mintzer.

### **Cemetery Commission**

Jim Laberge (Chair), Dan Cole, Robert Mack (until March 2, 2021).

### **Champlain Valley School District Board**

Lynne Jaunich, Peter Martin (until March 2, 2021), Meghan Metzler.

### **Justices of the Peace**

Jill Abilock, Gregory Cluff, Maurice A. Harvey, Lorna Jimerson, Mike Krasnow, Patrice Machavern, Robin Reid, Margaret Sharpe, Ed Stone, Lucas Trono, Peter Trono, Seth Zimmerman.

### **Library Trustees**

Jonathan Silverman (Chair), Robert Smith (Vice Chair), Nan Mason (Treasurer), Anne Marie Andriola, Katharine Cohen.

### **Town Meeting Moderator**

Charles Russell.

### **Appointed officials**

#### **Canine Control Officer**

Dale Knowles (resigned September 30, 2021), Isiah Moore.

#### **Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge Oversight Committee**

Jessie Bradley (Co-Chair), Susan Smith (Co-Chair), Jenny Cole (resigned May 10, 2021), Dorothy Hill, Julian Kulski, Cathy Marshall, Andrew Milliken, Claudia Mucklow, Braxton Robbason, Greg Smith.

#### **Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCPRC)**

Dana Hanley (Representative), Deirdre Holmes (Alternate), Jim Donovan (Representative until June 30, 2021), Marty Illick (Alternate until April 19, 2021).

#### **CCRPC Technical Advisory Committee**

Deirdre Holmes (Representative).

#### **CCRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee**

Mariana Du Brul.

#### **Chittenden Solid Waste District**

Ken Spencer (Representative), Abby Foulk (Alternate).

#### **Conservation Commission**

Linda Radimer (Co-Chair until resignation, November 9, 2021), Kevin Burget (Chair), Derk Bergquist (resigned March 2021), Susan Blood, Roelof Boumans, Maggie Citarella, Mel Huff, Ronda Moore, Willie Tobin, Brett Towle, Mary Van Vleck.

#### **Constable**

Josh Flore.

#### **Development Review Board**

Lane Morrison (Chair), Christina Asquith, Gerald Bouchard, John David (JD) Herlihy, Charles Russell.

#### **Emergency Management**

Chris Davis (Director), Karina Warshaw (Coordinator).

### **Energy Committee**

Rebecca Foster (Chair), Matthew Burke, Jacqueline DeMent, Suzy Hodgson, Deirdre Holmes, Doug Paton (until April 30, 2021), Wolfger Schneider.

### **Green-Up Day**

Kim Findlay (Co-Coordinator), Ken Spencer (Co-Coordinator).

### **Planning Commission**

Charlie Pughe (Chair), Gerald Bouchard (Vice Chair), Peter Joslin (Chair until resignation, October 15, 2021), Robert Bloch, Kelly Devine, Marty Illick (until April 19, 2021), Ben Pualwan (resigned February 24, 2021), Linda Radimer, William Stuono, Kyra Wegman.

### **Recreation Commission**

Bill Fraser-Harris (Chair), Rich Ahrens, Christy Gallese, Jeff Giknis, Judy Hill, Bill Pence, Juliann Phelps, Craig Reynolds, Greg Smith.

### **Senior Center Board**

Lane Morrison (President), Carl Herzog (Treasurer), Roberta Whitmore (Secretary), Sukey Condict, Dorrice Hammer, Susan Hyde, Wally Gates, Beth Merritt, Gary Pittman, Ron Ulmer.

### **Thompson's Point Design Review Committee**

Robert Bloch, Robin Coleburn, Robin Pierce (until April 30, 2021), Betsy Rich.

### **Thompson's Point Wastewater Advisory Committee**

Tom Maffitt, Dick Tonino, Miles Waite.

### **Trails Committee**

William Regan (Chair), Laurie Thompson (Co-Chair until resignation, December 13, 2021), Elisa Fante, Stephany Hasse (until April 30, 2021), Richard Hendrickson, John Limanek, Ethan McLaughlin (resigned November 8, 2021), Margaret Russell, Larry Sommers, Ajat Tariyal (resigned May 24, 2021), David Ziegelman.

### **Tree Warden**

Mark Dillenbeck, Sue Smith (Deputy), Alexa Lewis (Second Deputy).

### **Trustee of Public Lands**

Moe Harvey.

### **Zoning Board of Adjustment**

(Replaced by the Development Review Board, December 2021)

Lane Morrison (Chair), Frank Tenney (Chair until resignation, April 20, 2021), Stuart Bennett (served until April 30, 2021), Jonathan Fisher (resigned April 20, 2021), John David (JD) Herlihy, Eli Lesser-Goldsmith, Ronda Moore (resigned July 28, 2021), Charles Russell, Andrew Swayze (resigned May 28, 2021), Karina Warshaw, Matt Zucker (resigned April 14, 2021), Scott Goodwin (alternate).

PRESORTED STANDARD

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