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The Charlotte News

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Photo by Jason Stumpff
Turner Elliott fights to move the ball down the field in CVU's 8-4 victory at BFA-St. Albans on Monday, April 18. More on CVU sports page 13.



Help de-trash on Green Up Day May 7

Axel Macik cleans up at a previous year's Green Up Day.

Courtesy photo

Kim Findlay and Ken Spencer
Charlotte Green Up Day Coordinators

Vermont was the first state to designate a day of the year to clean up litter along the roadsides.

Green Up Day started 52 years ago in 1970. The first year, participation and results far exceeded expectations.

According to a release from Charlotte's Green Up Day coordinators, 95 percent of the 2,400 miles of the interstate and state roads and 75 percent of the 8,300 miles of town roads were cleared of garbage, that first year.

Vermont's wonderful tradition of de-trashing will be celebrated this year 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, May 7. As usual the collection site will be the parking lot on the west side of Charlotte Central School.

As in the past, the annual e-waste recycling will once again be sponsored by Sustainable Charlotte at the event.

The coordinators believe these are the things you should know about Green Up Day in Charlotte:

- Sign up for a route (three ways): 1) on our website charlottetvgreenupday.com until 6 p.m., Friday, May 6; 2) email Kim at farafieldfarm@gmail.com until 6 p.m., Friday, May 6; or 3) at the event on Saturday, May 7. Signing up for a route makes sure everyone gets a road that hasn't been cleaned up yet.
- Get bags: This year green bags for trash will be given out and optional clear bags for redeemable and recyclable plastic containers that get rinsed and recycled. Bags can be picked up at the Old Brick Store, the library and Spear's Corner Store starting April 30 and at the event on Saturday. Please do not leave filled bags on the roadside — they must be returned to the event site.
- Volunteer: Volunteers are needed. Co-coordinators Ken Spencer and Kim

Findlay would love to have helpers at the Quonset Hut. Two-hour (or more) shifts available.

- Tires: The de-trashers will only accept tires found on roadsides. This is not the place to get rid of your personal tires. The Chittenden Solid Waste District transfer stations take tires.
- Hazardous waste: This is not a hazardous waste drop off event.
- Visit Our Website: It has all the information you need and lots more. Visit charlottetvgreenupday.com or contact farafieldfarm@gmail.com with any questions, to help out, or sign up for a route.

Findlay said, "It warms my heart to see folks out cleaning up our town together. Whether driving, biking or walking around town, isn't it great to not see that junk on the side of the road and to share a collective feeling of stewardship?"

Planning wrestles with land use regulations

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Of late, the Charlotte Planning Commission has been enmeshed in planning. Just what was intended by the switch to a development review board — a planning commission that works on planning.

And a development review board that reviews development applications.

Much of the planning commission's planning has been working on amendments to Charlotte's land use regulations. Lots of that conversation has been about how much the town wants to constrain people in selling nonconforming lots, said town planner Larry Lewack.

A nonconforming lot is property that was grandfathered in when land use regulations were enacted, for example property where homes were already built on less than five acres per home when this requirement went into effect.

At the planning commission on April 7, Lewack said there had been "pushback" on a too rigid interpretation of land use



regulations "to the effect that the more we constrain people from being able to sell preexisting, nonconforming lots, the more we foreclose on any other kinds of development that could happen."

The planning commission spent a good bit of time discussing whether someone who owns a larger piece of property that's been subdivided with undersized nonconforming lots should be merged if they sell the property together.

It is better to have a permitting process "that is as permissive as possible," Lewack said.

Commissioner Linda Radimer said a

person who owns a nonconforming lot should be able to sell it, and, if someone buys it and wants to develop that property, they should follow "the criteria."

Commissioner Kyra Wegman said she believed it is stated as a goal in the town plan to decrease the number of nonconforming lots and the rest of the commission agreed with this.

"I feel like these days a lot of properties are owned by trusts and limited partnerships," Lewack said.

A lot of times the same corporation or owner buys related parcels with the thought of eventually being able to do something on a merged block of land that they couldn't do on separate blocks. Lewack said it's difficult "to tease out who are the actual legal owners based on these complicated trust documents."

The planning commission is in the middle of considering a number of amendments to the land use regulations. The vast

Concern expressed over CVSD administrators leaving

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

The Champlain Valley School Board planned for a 30-minute executive session on April 5; instead the closed session lasted more than two and a half hours.

When the board came back into public session, the usual committee meetings scheduled for this, the first Tuesday of the month, were cancelled. No decision was made and nothing was revealed.

However, there's a strong possibility that some of the executive session was spent discussing the large number of upper-level educators leaving their positions, transferring or being promoted in the district.

In the public comment portion of the meeting before the executive session, allegations were made that something was wrong with so many in leadership positions leaving the district, particularly in Shelburne.

With more than 20 years of experience in multiple districts, Shelburne Community School music teacher and parent Jodi Sanders said she was concerned about "a mass exodus of highly skilled, well-liked, exceptional leadership from our district."

"I've been through the hiring of principals, the turnover of superintendents, the changes of boards and the consolidation of schools many times and I've never seen this amount of leadership change in a single year," Sanders said. "As both a staff member and a parent, this change and this amount of change is unnerving and concerning."

In her experience in education, Sanders said the amount of change is unprecedented and a red flag that something is wrong.

Former board member Dave Connery was among several who sent messages about the leadership exodus.

Connery sent the paragraph below on social media, part of a post urging others to copy, amend and send it to the superintendent:

"This week, Shelburne lost an amazing educator who truly cared about the students and faculty in the building. I am a concerned parent, shocked at the number of people leaving the district in the past few months. Yes, I understand that turnover is an issue, and we will always hear stories of retirements, and COVID fatigue. We will hear stories of how people relayed the news and dispute the veracity of their claims. But, the loss of Shelburne of Scott Sivo is a real disappointment."

This disappointment is exacerbated by the exodus of leadership, Connery said.

The lure of better jobs?

Part of the flotsam left by the pandemic is a massive employee shortage. The administration's response has essentially been to respond that a massive overturn in upper administrative leadership has been happening all over the state.

Sanchez said in emails to parents that the Champlain Valley School District's large overturn in leadership is in large part due to poaching.

"More than a quarter of the Vermont superintendents and more than 60 principals

Letter from the Editor

If you’ve got the volunteering bug, write for The Charlotte News



Scooter MacMillan
EDITOR

The Charlotte News held a gathering for writers who are regular contributors to the newspaper at the Senior Center last week. The level of commitment to community journalism and The Charlotte News present in that room was off the charts.

These writers’ dedication to keeping their community informed and to helping draft the first account of Charlotte’s history is stupendous and inspiring, and they would like for you to join them in keeping the community in this community newspaper.

These folks grapple with thoughts and wrestle with words to help fan the fires of community and herald the home team just because of their love for their community.

Besides being an opportunity to meet the new editor and make sure that we’re all on the same page, both literally and figuratively, the gathering was a chance to turn the page and look at what might be next for making the newspaper even more vital, lively and engaged with Charlotte.

LAND USE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

and overwhelming majority of these amendments are either minor edits to clear up language like changing references to a zoning board to the new development review board or only slightly more significant “technical updates” edits the commission refers to as the “oops list.”

Most of the “oops list” is amendments to brief language covering changes in regulations or procedures over time or language in the land use regulations that needs to be clarified.

The 11 more significant amendments that would mean policy changes address a variety of such issues as when unattended, wrecked buildings become abandoned; requiring new construction to comply with state energy codes; considering waivers to minimum lot line and shoreline and wetland setback requirements; restricting accessory dwelling units; changing minimum lot sizes for homes built on property in either of the town’s villages from five to one acre; and allowing water and wastewater lines to run under roads to a property in an adjacent village commercial district.

Lewack argued for clarity in the land use regulations. For example, if a nonconforming structure burns down, the regulations should be clear about whether the owner can rebuild the structure with the same nonconformity. A nonconforming structure might be a building built too close to the required setbacks from lot lines when those requirements were enacted or taller than current restrictions.

One of the interminable topics covered in the planning commission’s epic reexamination of the land use regulations is accessory dwelling units and whether an accessory building can be built before a primary building.

The planning and zoning office is “often in a pickle” when people have a proposal to build an accessory dwelling unit first to live in while they build their larger primary home, Lewack said.

He asked if the commission’s position about a hypothetical situation where a couple build a smaller accessory building for their child and their spouse. Then, as the younger couple has children and that family grows, the older couple slows down and decides to swap houses so the growing family has more room. Overtime, how should the houses be considered as which is the primary and

Any ideas you have about how to make The Charlotte News better are welcome.

One major discussion was how to handle the holes in the newspaper after the death of Edd Merritt. Merritt regularly contributed three stories to The Charlotte News and everyone gathered thought it was vital that some way was designed or, better yet, someone be recruited to take some of those responsibilities over.

The newspaper is not expecting to find another triple-threat writer like Merritt. At least two people are most likely needed — someone to write and compile an “Around Town” type of column where the tidbits that reflect the life of the community such as the births, the deaths, the pets, the promotions, the dean’s list, the recipes, the holes-in-one, the 6-year-old who’s lost their first tooth are gathered and someone to wrangle a CVU sports roundup which either could be just gathering game information or even writing four to six sentences on each of the sports contests from the previous two weeks.

Finding someone to mine their thoughts and backyard for the type of gems that Merritt produced in his “Out Takes” column is probably shoes too big to fill, but if someone wants to take a run at such a column, we’d be endlessly supportive and

boundlessly appreciative.

The assembled scribes described their motivations and rewards from writing for The Charlotte News.

Too often we look to national figures for inspiration. Phyl Newbeck said her “Hi Neighbor” column is an opportunity to show “readers that there are people just as incredible, accomplished and inspirational much closer to home.”

Bradley Carleton said he was motivated to write “Sacred Hunter” column by a desire to share his understanding of hunting, fishing and foraging as a way of conveying “the spiritual meaning in our lives and our connection to nature and the outdoors.”

Carleton said he strives to be as unbiased as he can as a way to being a community healer.

Don’t you want to gather information about what’s happening to people in Charlotte or information about CVU sports contests? Is there something else you’re interested in writing about?

Or do you have some beautiful photos of Charlotte?

If the answer is yes, or even just kind of yes, please give me a call at 802-881-4738 or send me an email at news@thecharlottenews.org.

snowmobiling on all open space conserved land if the owners and the snail darters approve.

With 9 p.m. nipping at heels of the planning commission, before the meeting adjourned, Pughe took an opportunity to object to waivers the new development review board has issued that some have objected to.

“In my opinion the land use regulations are clear on what the intent is, and they’re consistent with how we’ve done things in the past,” Pughe said, explaining how he sees some of the development review board’s waivers as inconsistent with how the land use regulations have been practiced in the past or the regulations’ intent.

In so doing, Pughe staked out an opinion consistent with the views of a letter from the conservation commission to town boards and commissions, criticizing the development review board for waivers it has granted.

Pughe and the conservation commission believe the development review board has incorrectly ignored the 300 feet of road frontage requirement for a property owner in recent decisions and granting waivers permitting a road that connects with a town road via a right of way across a neighbor’s property.

Pughe argued the problem with interpreting the frontage requirements the way the development review board has could mean eventually people could try to use right of way to change lot size requirements.

He said the purpose of the frontage requirements is to “kind of keep people from developing lots way back and way off the road.”

Lewack said he had looked for text to support this interpretation by Pughe but hasn’t found it.

Pughe said the planning commission is planning to amend the land use regulations so they “circumvent” actions like the development review board’s waivers.

“We don’t agree with how the development review board has done that,” Pughe said.

Eventually, the conversation came to an end because of the time and not so much because of closure. But the planning commission will have at least four more public meetings about land use regulation amendments before they are officially adopted.

“In my opinion the land use regulations are clear on what the intent is, and they’re consistent with how we’ve done things in the past.”

— Pughe

which the accessory dwelling?

However: How can you build an accessory unit if you don’t have an existing house? asked Bill Stuono. For the time being at least, his question went unanswered, tossed into the echo chamber of unclaimed rhetoric.

The members of the planning commission appeared to agree that size limitations on accessory dwellings should be amended so it’s based upon square footage rather than the number of bedrooms. Septic limitations may already impose bedroom limitations, but if the property has sufficient septic capacity, people should be able to decide what rooms they want within a footage restriction.

Before wrapping up this meeting’s discussion, Pughe threw another log on the rhetorical fire of land use regulation amendment considerations: “I think something we should talk about at some point is what an open space agreement is because it’s kind of like all over the place,” he said. “Currently, it’s effectively a conservation easement and I’m not sure that’s what the intent is for everywhere.”

He believes people want to use some open space land for other things than just be reserved as habitat.

“If it’s critical habitat for snail darter fish, we should treat it one way. If it’s just simply a farm field as you drive into the town you want to keep it as a farm field, that doesn’t seem like the rules,” Pughe said.

Advocating for interpreting the open space agreements differently in different places, Pughe admitted that he was a snowmobiler and he doesn’t believe that open space agreements should prohibit



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

Editorial independence

The editor makes final decisions on stories that are published in The Charlotte News. While we are funded by advertising revenue and donor contributions, our news judgments are made in accordance with our mission and are independent of all sources of financial support.

Letters, Opinions and Obituaries

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

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

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CVSD

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will be new to their roles next year,” Sanchez said. “These and other central office departures create opportunities for movement around the state. As a result, many of my superintendent colleagues in the state are looking for applicants for their leadership positions.”

Connery said he wanted to hear from the superintendent how he planned “to staunch the flow” of experienced, talented leadership “before they are all gone.”

His list of those leaving includes Meagan Roy, director of student support services; Jeff Evans, director of learning and innovation; Jeanne Jensen, chief operating officer; Mike Kanfer, director of IT; John Pontius, Hinesburg Community School principal; Peggy Sue Van Nostrand, Shelburne Community School special education administrator; and Scott Sivo, Shelburne Community School lead principal.

Roy is leaving to become superintendent of the Washington Central Supervisory Union. Evans, Kanfer and Pontius are retiring. Van Nostrand accepted the position of director of student supports for the Montpelier Roxbury Public Schools.

Sivo is taking over as principal at Frederick H. Tuttle Middle School in South Burlington.

In an email to Shelburne Community School families, Sivo said, “The ability to be bold and strong, in difficult moments, is predicated on trusting that you are well supported and fully backed by well-established systems of leadership and governance. While change is always difficult, the unprecedented amount of leadership change we have and will face as a school district, along with the general uncertainty it brings, greatly impacted my decision to seek and accept this new opportunity.”

“I don’t believe it is a coincidence that these leaders are resigning one year after a new superintendent was hired,” Jeff Nowlan said in an email. “The sheer amount of turnover is quite unnerving. From what I have heard, superintendent Sanchez has been criticized for being absent, non-responsive, and that his vision/educational values do not align with those of our current leaders and community.”

The Shelburne Community School has been through this before, Connery said. Five years ago the school needed a new principal, a vice principal and another administrator. The new principal the school got then was Sivo and that worked out well.

Not leaving but shifting

One administrator who is not leaving but shifting to another job within the CVSD

“I’ve been through the hiring of principals, the turnover of superintendents, the changes of boards and the consolidation of schools many times and I’ve never seen this amount of leadership change in a single year.”

— Jodi Sanders

is Jensen, who is stepping down as chief operating officer to shepherd the district through the perils of weighting.

The state is in the midst of a weighting study that appears to have “pretty serious ramifications,” Jensen said. She can’t handle her job and keep up with those ramifications.

The school district is looking to hire a chief operating officer who will have a year to settle into the job with Jensen’s help. This will give Jensen the opportunity to cut back on her duties as she prepares to retire in a year.

The school weighting study is research into whether the way students who may cost more if, for example, they are experiencing poverty or learning English as a second

language, are weighted. Right now, students from backgrounds that inhibit learning are weighted at 1.25 of a theoretically regular student for determining tax rates.

The study looks certain to conclude that 1.25 is not enough weight to make up for the difference.

When the weighting per pupil is changed, it could have a big effect on the tax rate. The school system has been told “if you weren’t willing to raise your tax rate, it could cost the district \$10 million,” Jensen said. “We have some hard work to do to figure out what we’re going to do about that. It’s not something I can do on top of a really intense job when I’m thinking about retiring.”

Grange thanks community for online auction success

To the Editor:

The Charlotte Grange says a loud and ringing “Thank You” to the whole Charlotte community. Over one hundred townsfolk donated to our online auction, generating hundreds of generous bids and counterbids during the course of the week. As well as being a fun and exciting few days, we raised important funds that will let us keep the lights on at the Grange Hall in East Charlotte and continue to plan for our future work.

This year’s Grange programs are energized and going strong—we’ve already held a successful clothing drive for low-income families and started a conversation with Charlotte farmers, and plans are well in hand for our summer concert series “Grange on the Green.”

This work is all driven by our enthusiastic and dedicated volunteer members, and it is both heartening and inspiring for us to see so much support and messages of encouragement from the wider community.

Thank you again on behalf of all of the members of the Grange, and we hope to see many of you as our programs take shape through the year.

Mike Walker
Charlotte

Who actually determines the future of our town?

My husband and I have lived in Charlotte for over 26 years. Six of our seven children attended Charlotte Central School. We truly love this town. Honestly, every day we feel grateful that we live here.

Between full-time jobs in health care and a big family, we have not been ideal citizens. Of course, we vote and try to support our community, but we have fallen short of volunteering for the commissions and boards which hold such power in deciding the future

of our town.

These boards/commissions, specifically, the new development review board and the planning commission, are composed of volunteers who give their time to the evaluation and approval of new building and development in Charlotte. Charlotters do not elect these folks. Members of the planning commission and development review board are appointed by the selectboard.

The selectboard members, also volunteers but democratically elected, represent us. If we are displeased with their actions, we have the power to vote them out in the next election. This is not the case with the appointed planning commission and development review board members. We cannot vote them out should they be driven by personal motives and make decisions that are out of line with the desires of the majority of Charlotters.

So how does a Charlotte citizen have a voice in determining the future of our town? The answer: The Charlotte Town Plan which was voted into existence by Charlotte citizens. The entire town plan is available at the town web site (charlottevt.org), however, here are a few selected quotes from that document which was revised in 2019:

The Charlotte Town Plan expresses our vision for the future of Charlotte. In its vision for the future, the Charlotte Town Plan builds on the town’s most valuable characteristics — its rural landscape, healthy environment, small-town character, history, and a long tradition of active participation by citizen volunteers in local government and community activities.

To balance property owner rights to reasonably use their land in keeping with overall public health, safety, welfare and the goals of this town plan.

To reinforce historic settlement patterns by focusing growth in our hamlets, and east and west villages, while conserving our areas of high public value.

To maintain and enhance the integrity and continued viability of natural and cultural features with high public value, including land and active agricultural use, prime and

statewide agricultural soils; steep slopes; flood hazard areas, surface and groundwater resources; shoreland buffers; special natural areas, wildlife habitats, water supply source protection areas, and other ecologically important natural areas; scenic views and vistas; historic districts, sites and structures; and conserved land;

Densities for proposed development will be reviewed with consideration of existing settlement patterns, distance to and availability of town services, physical capability of the land for development, the presence of significant areas of high public value, the size of the parcel, and the need for affordable housing.

The planning commission and development review board appointees have a difficult balancing act. Decisions regarding development and whether to allow waivers that enable the bypass of land use regulations and the goals of the Charlotte Town Plan are complex and complicated. Obviously, landowners have rights. However, landowners who own and purchase property in our town know that there is a Charlotte Town Plan and Land Use Regulations. Development that does not abide by goals set forth in the town plan should be denied. Waivers to the Land Use Regulations should require very careful consideration before being approved.


The truth of the matter is that the future of our town is in the hands of approximately a dozen volunteers on the planning commission and development review board

who are not elected by us. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that our elected selectboard members take responsibility for the folks they appoint and provide oversight of the decisions made by these boards. The selectboard must not only provide guidance, but also intervention, should the planning commission and development review board make decisions that deviate from the Charlotte Town Plan.

Short of being appointed to boards/commissions, one avenue Charlotte citizens do have to influence the future of our town is to be vocal in expressing our support for the Charlotte Town Plan in meetings, in newspapers, in Front Porch Forum posts. Our elected officials and their appointees need to hear our strong support for our Charlotte Town Plan.

All Charlotters, including most importantly, the municipal bodies must be active in their adherence and support for the democratically approved Charlotte Town Plan. The Charlotte Town Plan is the vision for the future voted upon by Charlotte citizens and the reason many of us choose to live in this beautiful town.

Sharon Mount
Charlotte



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The Charlotte News

Around Town

Many ways to volunteer with United Way Connection

United Way’s Volunteer Connection site is set up to help connect agencies and volunteers. Agencies are working hard to navigate volunteering during this time, but opportunities are increasing.

To learn more about some volunteer opportunities with the United Way here are links for Volunteer Connection:

- Bring a meal — Hope Lodge offers a home away from home for cancer patients and their families while the patients are undergoing treatment. Volunteers are invited to drop off a home-cooked meal that would serve about 15 people. Dinner is at 6 p.m., but drop-offs can happen at your convenience. To sign up for the meal train, call 802-658-0649 or visit TakeThemAMeal.com/JVXC0633.
- Spring cleaning — Winooski Valley Park District and the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum need help getting ready for the coming seasons. Volunteers are needed for a general spring cleaning of the grounds and buildings, including raking, moving gravel for paths, touching up paint, dusting, window cleaning and sweeping. Flexible schedules 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact Tim Larned at timlarned@wvvpd.org.
- Serve a meal — ANEW Place is looking for volunteers to serve evening meals at the Champlain Inn Low Barrier Temporary Housing Facility. The food is provided by New Moon Catering. Volunteers help to set up, serve and clean up after the meal. Pick a day, Monday-Sunday, from 6-8:30

p.m. Contact Andre Clark at clark@newplacevt.org.

- Reaching out — Common Good Vermont will be surveying Vermont nonprofits for detailed information about the range, average, levels of wages and benefits to help with recruitment and retention efforts in the sector. They are looking for volunteers to help with outreach to make nonprofits aware of this opportunity via phone or email and encouraging them to complete the survey. A good opportunity for volunteers who care about this element of the nonprofit sector. Contact morgan@unitedwaynwvt.org.
- Urgent need — Franklin County Meals on Wheels has an urgent need for volunteers to deliver Meals on Wheels in St. Albans and Swanton between 9:30-11:30 a.m. once a week, once a month, or whatever fits your schedule. Here’s the chance to be the friendly face that brightens a senior’s day. Contact Jillian Brady at jbrady@agewellvt.org.

Water data made accessible

Lewis Creek Association has been working to make water quality data results more accessible and understandable to watershed towns and citizens.

The association has finalized its analysis and the results of the 2021 sampling in map format are at bit.ly/LCA-WQ-2021.

Find out why sampling is within certain parameters or why chloride is important and what it does to our streams.

Sympathy

Robert Titus

A memorial service for longtime Charlotte resident Robert Titus, who passed away Dec. 24, 2021, will be held April 23 at 1 p.m. at the North Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church at 227 Old Hollow Rd.



Mary ‘Patsy’ Schweyer Nostrand

Mary “Patsy” Schweyer Nostrand of Shelburne, Vt., passed away peacefully in her home at Wake Robin on April 2, 2022. Patsy was born in Owego, N.Y., on Oct. 14, 1927, to Mildred Sanford Schweyer and Benjamin Franklin Schweyer.

Patsy grew up on Kingsland Terrace in Burlington, where she met Dick Nostrand, who lived across the street. Patsy was a member of Burlington High School’s class of 1946. She graduated from the University of Vermont in 1950 with a Bachelor of Arts in history. Patsy and Dick Nostrand married in 1952 and were happily married for 63 years.

Patsy started her career working for the Girl Scouts of America in Massachusetts and Rochester, N.Y., as a trainer to troop leaders. Patsy and Dick had three children, Susan, Peter and Ben, while living primarily in New Jersey. While her children were growing

up, she was an active volunteer with many organizations, including the Presbyterian Church in Westfield, N.J. She and Dick retired to Williamsburg, Va., in 1994 and moved back to Vermont in 2012.

Patsy and her family spent every summer at the family cottage on Lake Champlain in Grand Isle, Vt., which she enjoyed for 55 years. She spent her time at the lake gardening, swimming and taking long walks. Family meant everything to Patsy, and she was jokingly referred to as “the matriarch” of her extended family of 18, who congregated frequently to Patsy’s adoring eye at Grand Isle. The cottage was a place that her family and friends enjoyed immensely, and she oversaw it with kindness and generosity.

Patsy was very active throughout her life and loved swimming and playing tennis. She also enjoyed gardening, reading, decorating and collecting antiques. Patsy was a member of the Charlotte Congregational Church. Patsy was a wonderful mother, beloved mother-in-law, grandmother and great-grandmother. She was always interested in their lives and was great fun to be around. Patsy will be greatly missed.

Patsy was predeceased by her husband, Dick, and her brother Ben Schweyer. She is survived by her children, Susan Nostrand Boston and husband, David, of Woodstock, Vt.; Peter Nostrand and wife, Kristen, of Santa Barbara, Calif.; and Ben Nostrand and wife, Susan, of Charlotte, Vt.; as well as six grandchildren, Sarah, Peter, Helen, Leah, Elizabeth and Sam; and four great-grandchildren, Anna, Isla, Sally and Jane

Memorial gifts in the name of Patsy can be sent to the Lake Champlain Land Trust, 1 Main St., Burlington, VT 05401 (lclt.org).

Commentary

What’s good for public schools is good for private

Bruce Baker and Rebecca Holcombe

Based on a University of Vermont study, the Vermont Legislature is updating the education funding formula so districts that serve more disadvantaged students have the ability to raise the revenues they need to care for their children.

The study used school spending and test scores statewide to estimate how much additional school spending is associated with the ability to educate different types of students to the state average test score. Those estimates informed how much more to “weight” the formula for different kinds of students.

These newer, bigger proposed weights are an estimate of how much more districts need to spend to overcome harms to students caused by factors like low wages, unstable housing, exposure to environmental toxins, lack of access to health care, disrupted education and trauma. The assumption is that spending in schools can compensate for these harms.

The state could support paid leave, affordable housing, higher minimum wages, more affordable and accessible health care, and a fully funded mental health system, so that all parents can care for their children. In the absence of that, Vermont turns to public schools as the last safety net.

However, Vermont does not weight the vouchers to private “independent” schools for which our Education Fund pays. It makes little sense to fund public districts based on estimated needs and costs, but then pay private school vouchers without regard for needs and costs of the students they enroll, especially since the legislature allows these private schools to decide which students are a “good fit,” thus opening the door to a wide range of discriminatory practices.

Currently, the state relies on statewide average public school spending levels to set

tuition rates for students who take vouchers to private schools. A 2015 analysis found that Vermont students who take vouchers to private schools are more advantaged than the average Vermont student. Failing to adjust tuition voucher rates for needs makes inequality even worse.

Moreover, if the legislature continues to exempt districts that don’t operate public schools from the excess spending penalty that applies to districts that operate public schools, it incentivizes smaller and wealthier districts to close their public schools to limit what they have to pay into the Education Fund.

These two related policies — weighting vouchers and applying the same high spending penalty to districts that don’t operate public schools — must be changed at the same time, unless the legislature’s goal is continued erosion of both equity and the state’s public education system.

Changing weights in the funding formula would make it possible for less wealthy, sparsely populated and remote districts to raise more revenue to support their children. The resulting increase in spending won’t be offset by reductions in other districts, because there are limits to the cuts many districts can and will support, especially when their schools compete with “independent” schools that are dependent on voucher-funded students, sell themselves based on low student to teacher ratios, and are not required to comply with the same statutes and rules that apply to public schools

Currently, private schools that serve more privileged students are “overfunded” through their vouchers, including in private schools with exclusionary enrollment practices. The rest of the state helps pay, in ways that incentivize more privileged districts to close

Commentary

SCHOOLS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

their own public schools.

The UVM report produced a simulation to inform weighted funding, which can also be used to inform weighted vouchers. Using the weights in the UVM simulation, high school students who:

- are not economically disadvantaged and not living in remote rural areas would receive vouchers for about \$10,000,
- are economically disadvantaged would get vouchers closer to \$35,604,
- are eligible for English Language Learning services are eligible for another \$13,502,
- are economically disadvantaged and eligible for English Language Learning vouchers worth \$40,506.

For example, a high school student in Lyndon who is not disadvantaged would receive a base voucher of \$10,000 to take to Lyndon Institute (or Phillips Exeter Academy which otherwise provides education free to families with incomes under \$75,000) as the legislature allows. An economically disadvantaged student who was also an English language learner would bring a

voucher worth about \$40,000, supposedly to provide additional support services although, of course, there is no way to verify if and how those “support” dollars would be used in private settings. One Massachusetts private school said Vermont’s “vouchers save the school dollars to give to other students with financial aid needs.” These could include students from other states.

If voters in a Vermont voucher school district want to provide larger vouchers for wealthier children, they could do so through a vote. However, they’d also be subject to the excess spending penalty, just like districts that operate public schools.

We don’t think Vermont should pay vouchers to private schools that do not have open enrollment and which are not designated as a public education replacement for a sending district by a vote of their electorate. But since this is the system our elected leadership prefers, they can at least protect our wallets and children by weighting the tuition vouchers for which taxpayers are forced to pay.

Bruce Baker is a professor at the Rutgers Graduate School of Education and Senior Fellow at the Learning Policy Institute. Rebecca Holcombe lives in Norwich and is a former Vermont Secretary of Education.

Why wait when overdose prevention sites will save lives?

Jay Diaz and Ed Baker

Vermont is experiencing a full-blown overdose crisis. A record 210 Vermonters died of preventable opioid-related overdoses in 2021, marking 33.7 overdose deaths per 100,000 people. That’s a 500 percent increase since 2010.

For context, Portugal, which has committed to handling addiction with a public health approach since the early 2000s, saw less than 1 overdose death per 100,000 people from 2008–18.

The extent of this crisis is shocking, not least because Vermont has a relatively robust addiction treatment infrastructure. But accessible treatment is insufficient if we don’t keep our friends and neighbors alive long enough to access treatment when they are ready. Clearly, what we’re doing isn’t working.

Sadly, state leaders are still ignoring commonsense strategies that would save lives. One such necessary and proven step would be the opening of overdose prevention sites, medicalized facilities that allow people to use opioids in a safe, non-judgmental space where they can receive vital medical services if necessary.

Opioid users at an overdose prevention site have access to sterilized syringes, fentanyl test strips, overdose reversal medications and other life-saving tools. They also have an opportunity to connect to long-term treatment services that can be essential to recovery.

These facilities not only save lives — they also make our communities healthier and safer. They help reduce the transmission of HIV, hepatitis C and other blood-borne pathogens, while reducing the incidence of endocarditis, a deadly heart infection resulting from unclean syringes.

In addition, overdose prevention sites can lower costs in our public health and safety systems. Because they provide on-site medical care for people experiencing overdose, local emergency rooms, law enforcement, EMTs, fire departments and ambulances can focus attention elsewhere. Providing safe places to use also results in less public drug use and fewer discarded syringes in public spaces.

A review of the scientific literature shows that overdose prevention sites save lives, contribute to lower rates of crime and drug use, and help to alleviate the other myriad harms that drug criminalization has done to our neighbors and loved ones.

There are currently more than 120

overdose prevention sites around the globe. They exist throughout Canada, Australia and Europe. Every country that has implemented these sites has seen substantial reductions in overdose deaths. New York City just opened the first official sites in the United States, and Rhode Island recently became the first state to statutorily authorize overdose prevention sites. To this day, there has never been an onsite overdose fatality in an overdose prevention site.

The Senate Health and Welfare Committee is considering a bill, H. 728, that would create a working group on overdose prevention sites, but the working group’s report wouldn’t be due until late 2023. In the meantime, Vermonters will continue to die preventable deaths. We need to act with far more urgency.

Of course, overdose prevention sites are only one piece of the harm reduction puzzle. The overdose crisis requires a multi-pronged approach, and that includes making naloxone and fentanyl test strips more widely and easily accessible; expanding access to sterile safe injection devices and disposal boxes; improving good Samaritan protections for seeking emergency health care for overdoses; and providing mobile treatment, mobile overdose prevention, and greater access to transportation for people seeking treatment. Every one of these proposals should be on the table right now.

Without these kinds of public health strategies and science-based innovations that are succeeding in countries around the globe, we can expect more of the same grim outcomes. For many Vermonters struggling with substance use disorder and the families who love them, time is running out. Vermont has a choice to make. Will we continue to allow Vermonters to die of preventable drug overdoses — wasting tens of millions of dollars from opioid settlement funds on failed and incomplete strategies? Or will we implement bolder and more effective policies to save lives?

Before the Legislature adjourns in May, Vermonters should call on Governor Scott and legislators to see this crisis for what it is and take decisive action to respond. That includes the immediate authorization of overdose prevention sites in Vermont.

Ed Baker, a retired licensed alcohol/drug counselor of 30 years, lives in Burlington and has been in recovery from addiction for more than 37 years. Jay Diaz is general counsel for the ACLU of Vermont and lives in Williston.

Report from the Legislature

Legislature takes responsibility for integrity and pension systems



Rep. Mike Yantachka

Code of Ethics for state government

Back in 2015 the Center for Public Integrity gave Vermont a failing grade from the State Integrity Investigation, ranking Vermont 50th out of 50 states in the category of ethics enforcement because it previously had no ethics body of any sort. In response Vermont passed Act 79 of 2017, enacting its first comprehensive state ethics laws and creating the State Ethics Commission. This week the Legislature took another important step by passing S.171 which creates Vermont’s first statutory State Code of Ethics. Vermont was one of only five states without a code of ethics. In 2020, all six statewide elected officials — the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, auditor, treasurer and attorney general — called for passage of legislation to create a code of ethics for Vermont’s public servants in all three branches of government.

The Code of Ethics applies to elected and appointed State officers, the General Assembly, members of the judiciary and state employees. The Code of Ethics provisions include:

- disclosure and recusal for conflicts of interest;
- not using a state position, resources or information for personal or financial gain;
- limits on gifts to public servants; and
- limits on other outside and post-state employment.

S. 171 also provides protection for whistleblowers who report a Code of Ethics violation and mandatory training on the Code of Ethics. By setting out clear rules that public officials must abide by, Vermonters can have confidence in the integrity of our state government.

Pension systems find support

In 2021 the sustainability of the public pension systems covering state employees and teachers was called into question. State Treasurer Beth Pearce announced that the state pension funds for teachers and state employees were underfunded by about \$3 billion and recommended that action be taken, including painful changes to pension benefits. These included increasing

the retirement age, increasing employee contributions, and lowering the payouts. Teachers and state employees reacted immediately to protect the benefits they had earned by contacting legislators to plead their case. After a considerable amount of controversy within the Legislature and between the Legislature and the unions, a task force consisting of the treasurer, legislators and representatives of the unions and of the administration was created to address the problem. This task force worked throughout the summer of 2021 and hammered out a solution that all parties agreed to. S.286, as passed by the Senate, implements the final recommendations of the task force which are expected to reduce Vermont’s long-term unfunded retirement liabilities for state employees and teachers by approximately \$2 billion by prefunding other post-employment benefits (retiree health care), modifying the pension benefit structure, and making additional state and employee contributions into the retirement systems. The bill contains a \$200 million one-time general fund appropriation to the state employees and teachers’ pension systems to pay down unfunded liabilities. An additional \$13.3 million, one-time



education fund appropriation for fiscal year 2022 is made to the Retired Teachers’ Health and Medical Benefit Fund to begin prefunding health care benefits for retired teachers. S.286 was voted out of the House Government Operations Committee and sent to the Ways and Means Committee for review. It is expected to pass and be sent to Governor Scott by the end of this week.

As always, I welcome your emails (myantachka.dfa@gmail.com) or phone calls (802-233-5238). This article and others can be found at my website (mikeyantachka.com).

Opinion -Where do we go from here?

Village districts won’t develop without water and wastewater systems

Peter Joslin

“Change is the law of life, and those who look only to the past and present are certain to miss the future” — John F. Kennedy

There was a time when Richmond did not have a water and wastewater district. Kendall Chamberlin remembers. He has been Richmond’s water quality superintendent since 1985. As he describes it, Richmond did not have enough water in the village district and there was no cohesive system. A few reservoirs ran dry. So, what did Richmond do? The town voted to develop a water district and hired an engineering firm tasked with performing the necessary hydrology studies to find water. They investigated three sites and found the mother lode on a farm near the old round church. Chamberlin says the well has unlimited supply. According to Chamberlin, an agreement was reached between the town and the farmer to access the water. A bond vote was approved and the town secured state and federal grants that covered 90 percent of the project. Thus began Richmond’s water system. The year was 1969. At some point thereafter, the town assumed ownership of the land. In 1970, Richmond constructed its

wastewater treatment facility. Chamberlin said since 1985 there have been “four big pushes” to expand the water and wastewater systems beyond the current Village District, and all four attempts were voted down, with one exception. The last time, the voters approved to extend the water (and wastewater) only as far as the Mobil gas station on Route 2 near Interstate 89. One of the fears of implementing public water and wastewater systems in small towns is that development will run rampant. This has not been the case in Richmond. Without some level of municipal water and wastewater systems in small towns, growth in Village Districts will be, at best, extremely limited. There is no water system in either Charlotte’s East or West Village. There is a small wastewater system in the West Village that has additional capacity. On April 7th, Seven Days ran a story titled: “Obstruction Zone: How Vermont’s Land-Use Regulations Impede New Development-and Complicate the State’s Housing Crisis.” The article details a number of development projects in the state, their success or failure, legal disputes, restrictions in land use regulations and the pros and cons of Act 250 on larger projects (subdivision of 10 lots or more in a 5-year period). In this article, Nancy Owens, co-president of Evernorth, a non-profit developer, stated the reason for the state’s chronic housing

shortage is “Vermont’s complicated regulatory model for new development, which is made more unpredictable by the ungovernable human resistance to change.” Additionally, she says “In the end, the fate of a proposed housing project often depends less on a town’s zoning codes than on the community’s willingness to accept what might be allowed. ‘What it often boils down to is this very broad idea of compatibility with the neighborhood.’” This will sound familiar to many Charlotters. The state is encouraging local municipalities to update their land use regulations to promote the statewide planning goal of fostering development in village centers to prevent sprawl in the rural areas. This year, the state has awarded \$500,000 in grants to assist 41 municipalities update zoning regulations. More grants are planned for 2023. Richmond was a recipient of such a grant. As a result, Ravi Venkataraman, Richmond Town Planner, and the Richmond Planning Commission have been focused on growth in the Village Districts. Their guide has been “Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods.” This guide, referenced extensively in my last column, states in its introduction: “Vermont’s statewide planning goal to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside provides a wonderful context for individual town and village comprehensive and growth plans. Yet in many cases, the bylaws in many communities do not reflect either the statewide planning goal or the local village or town plan.” The goal of Richmond’s grant work is to implement changes to their zoning regulations to increase density in the Village District to meet the state standards for neighborhoods. This “gentle infill,” as described by Venkataraman, would include

duplexes and multi-family units. These updates would also include compatibility standards to maintain the character of the area. Once these updated regulations are completed, they will be put before the town for comment. After public comment, the Planning Commission may make modifications before submitting to the Selectboard for approval. Richmond was astute in realizing that water and wastewater were central to the future of the Village and now they are focused on amending zoning regulations to promote development. Back in the West Village of Charlotte, change is afoot. In March 2022, Charlotte Village Partners purchased the LeBoeuf property on Ferry Road (54 acres). The house close to the street (that was to be the location of the Health Center), as well as the out-buildings, are now being renovated and brought back to life. The field behind the house, which runs south and east, is being cleared of scrub and the drainage reworked. Mike Dunbar, of Charlotte Village Partners, and owner of Charlotte Crossings said: “We began immediately cleaning out the existing structures and maintaining the property to put the land back into working order. In the next several months, we will renovate all three structures, returning the house and garages to usable and desirable conditions...our plans for this property are aligned with the town’s overall vision. We believe the revival of the property will significantly benefit Ferry Road’s general appearance within the town’s village center.” This is a fine first step toward revitalizing the West Village, but without significant changes to the Land Use Regulations and municipal water and wastewater systems, little to no new development will occur in Charlotte’s Village Districts.

Peter Joslin is the former chair of the Charlotte Planning Commission.

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Community

Country stores anchor life in both Charlotte villages

Halle T. Segal
Community News Service

“See that boy there, I met him right here when he was a baby,” said Carrie Spear while quietly pointing out the young man gathering drinks in the back cooler of Spear’s Corner Store.

“The difference between a big store and a small store is that you are a name to us, not a number,” said Spear, the co-owner of Spear’s alongside her husband, Michael.

Spear’s Corner Store, located on 20 Jackson Hill Road in Baptist Corners of East-Charlotte, has served as a town landmark since 1795.

Starting in 1970, it began functioning as both a convenience store and gas station. On Jan 2, 2001, the Spears took over the business.

This was when Michael called Carrie telling her just to ask the previous owner if the store was for sale.

“I heard him say ‘Carrie, call Leo, we’re going to buy the store!’” said Spear. “That’s what I heard.”

“I left my job — I wanted to be in Charlotte. Michael grew up in Charlotte and moved back here. And then I felt a calling to the corner,” said Spear, “I see a beauty here that not everybody does. There’s been thousands of special moments — all the people, whether they’re customers or friends.”

This country store is packed with all the goods needed to support the community — the walls, aisles and coolers overflowing with groceries, drinks and Vermont-based trinkets.

“We sell everything here, fruits and vegetables — frozen, fresh — it’s really a mini supermarket,” said Spear. “

There has been little renovation done from the original property, as the Spears have kept everything as true to the original design of the building besides maintenance updates and adapting grocery orders to provide for a changing climate.

Providing a family-oriented safe space to Charlotte has been fundamental to the business over the years, and interacting with customers is the best part of the job for Spear.

“I’m now seeing kids that were little having children, I’ve seen groups of children born that are going to grow up in Charlotte,” said Spear.

Spear’s adapted to the needs of the community during the pandemic by stocking up on local produce, milk, frozen meals, and other household supplies. When customer demand increased with people staying local to avoid shopping at bigger grocery stores, Spear’s Country Store stocked up to meet the demand and gave the community a safe place to interact and stock up.

Seven minutes down the road from Spear’s at 290 Ferry Road is the Old Brick Store, which has been around since 1853.

“We did some updates to make it more

“It’s really nice to have a community. We get the same people in every single day. They want us to be here and appreciate what we’re doing.”

— Whitney Finley

modern, but kept the heart in that feeling of the original country store. I don’t see it really going anywhere,” said Whitney Finley, owner of the Old Brick Store for over seven years.

Finley, a Charlotte native, worked at the Old Brick Store in high school and returned to buy the place with her husband in order to keep the store running. As a mother of four living down the road from the store, Finley has done as much as possible to keep the store open for the Charlotte community.

“The community certainly stepped up during the pandemic,” Finley said. “Lines of people around the corner in zero degrees just to get coffee, it was very nice to get the support.”

Open for breakfast sandwiches, pastries, espresso, snacks, ready-to-eat lunch orders, and rows of wines and beers, Old Brick Store has adapted in order to continue serving Charlotte. Currently the store is closed on Mondays, and open 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday — Sunday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

“It’s really nice to have a community. We get the same people in every single day. They want us to be here and appreciate what we’re doing,” said Finley.

“It’s hard because people often go to bigger stores because of price point. While we try to maintain as low prices as we can to be competitive, everything we buy is more expensive than bigger stores because we’re not buying in bulk. And while I understand the desire to spend as little money as possible, if you don’t shop here, it’s not going to be a convenience because it won’t be here,” said Finley. “And people seem to know that.”

“You can always tell when people are from out of state — they’ll come in and say, ‘This is amazing!’ I think a lot of other states don’t have places like this. It’s fairly unique to Vermont, this very homey, friendly feeling,” Finley said.

Community News Service works in a partnership with The Charlotte News and other local media outlets to provide opportunities to University of Vermont students.



Photos by Halle T. Segal

Carrie Spear shows an old photo of Spear’s Corner Store



One of the many bicyclists who stop at the Old Brick Store tries to make up their mind.

Community

Join in the resurrection of broken stuff at Repair Café

From contributed information

If it ain't broke don't fix it, but if it is broke—bring it out to the Repair Café.

People, get ready for the return of the Repair Café at the Charlotte Congregational Church 10 a.m.–2 p.m., Saturday, April 30.

The Repair Café is a four-hour, fix-it party of local folks volunteering their skills to fix or help you learn how to repair your broken stuff.

Just bring your broken things to the Repair Café and watch and learn as handy folks do and demonstrate their magic.

In addition to fixing stuff so it isn't thrown into the infinite-seeming abyss of disposable but not biodegradable refuse, co-sponsors the Charlotte Library and the Grange hope to:

- promote and teach the lost art of repair to all ages
- keep perfectly good stuff out of the landfill
- build our town's sense of community by working together to meet each other's needs.

In the past repairers have fixed such things as:

- Lamps—replace switches and cords, tighten wobbly bases
- Jewelry (no soldering), replace watch batteries, fix watch bands,

- Eyeglass screws
 - Furniture, cuckoo clocks, dolls, favorite toys (wooden, metal or plastic)
 - Troubleshoot and/or repair small appliances, electronics, radios, fans, heaters, (de)humidifiers
 - Sharpen garden tools, replace wooden handles, repair electric trimmers
 - Sharpen knives, scissors, axes
 - Mend clothing by hand or sewing machine; repair holey knits; adjust sewing machines
 - Replace zippers.
- Even the following services have been offered:
- A 3D printer and operator on hand for quickly making copies of replacement parts out of plastic
 - Fixers who can make reusable shopping bags out of your old jeans, favorite skirt, whatever. Or denim skirts and shorts out of your old jeans or other pants
 - A fixer of old tube stereos
 - A bike repair dude offering tuning and minor repair of bicycles, truing of bike wheels
 - A squad of electronic repair folks to tackle more sophisticated electrical and computer issues.
- The Repair Café is always looking for volunteer repairers. Do you have a repair or



Courtesy photos
Catherine Bock, left, sews and shows how to sew at a previous Repair Café.

creative skill you want to offer? Email Jamey Gerlaugh, the Repair Café coordinator at repaircafe@sustainablecharlottevt.org.

There is no charge for the Repair Café repairers' labor. If your repair requires new parts, you are responsible for buying those parts beforehand and bringing them. If possible, please register your items to be

fixed at forms.gle/au7CwqKZbvygnVSb7.

Attendees are asked, if able, to bring food or money to donate to the Charlotte Food Shelf. Coffee and home-baked goods will be available all day. Lunch of chili, salad and drinks will be available for a \$5 donation to Sustainable Charlotte.

Food Shelf News

Magpies and the Food Shelf — helping unharness community

Maj Eisinger
Contributor

What does the Food Shelf have in common with Australian magpies?

Many of us are appreciating the vast quantities of bird song and avian nesting behavior near our homes. A recent article in

The New York Times “Experiment Foiled: Magpies Helping Magpies” talks about altruistic behavior among Australian magpies and Seychelles warblers.

The magpies cooperated to manipulate tracking harnesses off their bodies; the Seychelles warblers helped other members of their social group escape from sticky seed

clusters. Closer to home, there are many similar acts of altruism and generosity. There are efforts of our neighbors to honor, memorialize or thank another by “paying it forward” donating to the Food Shelf and thus amplifying an original act of kindness.

The Food Shelf thanks the Patrick Foundation for the donation in memory of Robert Fleming and Jane Howe Patrick; the Charlotte Senior Center patrons for the generous donations of paper products and cleaning supplies; Meredith and Peter Moses for supplying nonperishable items; participants in the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Easter Food drive, which supplied families with many nonperishable food items and treats for the children; Walter Gates, Kathleen Nolan and Rice Lumber for monetary donations; and Dave Quickel of Stony Loam Farm who gave the Food Shelf over 100 pounds of potatoes, carrots and beets.

The Food Shelf continues to appreciate regular donations of 6–8 dozen eggs from Linda Hamilton's prolific hens and delicious bread from O Bread Bakery at Shelburne Farms.

The April weather is inspiring local gardeners to plan their spring planting. The Food Shelf is grateful to all community gardeners who have provided healthy leafy

greens and vegetables in the past. Now, as food prices rise due to fuel crises and an expected wheat shortage, locally grown produce is especially needed. Fresh produce is appreciated and welcomed on distribution dates (the second and fourth Wednesday of each month) throughout the growing season.

If you grow, plant an extra row! Thank you in advance for considering this.

Monetary donations of any size are appreciated. Donations can be addressed to: Charlotte Food Shelf, Inc., P.O. Box 83, Charlotte, VT 05445. The Food Shelf is a 501(c)3 entity, and contributions remain tax deductible.

The Food Shelf is open for food distribution from 4–6 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month.

For emergency food, please call John at 802-425-3130. If you cannot come to food shelf distribution due to COVID symptoms, or need further information about the Food Shelf, please call 802-425-3252. Given concerns about increasing risk from rising levels of the more transmissible COVID-19 variants, we have high quality N95 masks supplied by the community resilience committee available. We continue to encourage masking and will continue to distribute food by curbside pickup to keep families and volunteers safe.

STONE'S THROW

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Hi Neighbor!

Ginny Joyner: Finding a multitude of outlets for creativity



Phyl Newbeck
CONTRIBUTOR

Like many kids, Ginny Joyner was introduced to watercolors at a very young age, but unlike most, she loved making art enough to make a career of it.

“I graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1986,” she said, “and started a freelance illustration business.”

Although Joyner did some odd jobs on the side, particularly when her daughter was young, she has always worked as an artist.

Joyner paints mostly in watercolors, but over the years, she has experimented with a variety of art forms. “I have a very tight style which I use for my greeting cards,” she said, “and that’s what I really love to do.”

Joyner’s cards, which can be purchased from her website and at a number of area locations, are often humorous play on words. “I do the artwork first,” she said, “and then I look for a phrase to go with it.”

Years ago, Joyner did an illustration of goats across the world, and she turned one of them into an “old goat” birthday card. A card saying “nailed it” is paired with some nails and one saying “you rule” includes a ruler. After undergoing chemotherapy and radiation, Joyner created what she refers to as her breast cancer cards with frilly bras and sayings like “thank you for your uplifting support.”

During the recession, Joyner’s freelance work dried up and she began to spend more time teaching at her

studio and in the ACCESS program at Champlain Valley Union High.

“I often teach beginners,” she said, “and that’s my favorite thing to do because my goal is to have people keep painting.”

Teaching beginners meant that Joyner had to loosen up her style, creating a very different kind of artwork. She teaches up to six classes a week, doing a demo in every class on a different topic.

Joyner continues to do freelance artwork, but she has also begun delving more and more into decorative arts.

“I do big projects which are faux finishes or trompe d’oeil,” she said.

Joyner worked on two dining rooms on the Spirit of Ethan Allen. “The first floor was designed to look like marble,” she said, “and the top floor is faux wood—maple and mahogany. That was a fabulous summer on the lake, painting while they did tours.”

After finishing her CVU classes this spring, Joyner is looking forward to inviting her students to her studio to paint outdoors, something she has been doing during COVID together with teaching Zoom classes.

Joyner’s studio is on the corner of Ferry and Greenbush. She hasn’t been exhibiting outside her home for some time but she’s hoping to start posting hours so she can sell her work from her first-floor gallery.

“I’d like to go back to the time when you’d drive around Vermont and see artists you didn’t know about,” she said.



Ginny Joyner

Courtesy photo



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Education

Couperthwait CVSD’s new director of student support

Anna Couperthwait has been appointed director of student support services for the Champlain Valley School District (CVSD).

Couperthwait begins July 1, replacing Meagan Roy, who is the new superintendent of the Washington Central Supervisory Union.

Couperthwait has “both local CVSD historical knowledge as well as a full K-12 system perspective to our central office,” Superintendent Rene Sanchez said. “With these two qualities and more, I am confident that CVSD will continue to be a leading district in inclusive practices in Vermont and the nation.”

Couperthwait is a graduate of Champlain Valley Union High School, earned her bachelor’s in English from the University of Vermont and master’s from Lesley College, obtained her administrator’s license and attended the Snelling Center for Government’s Vermont School Leadership Program.

She has been the director of special services at CVU since 2012, leading a department of 23 special educators and as many as 60 paraeducators. Prior to that, she was a special educator, classroom teacher, Reading Recovery teacher and language arts teacher.

The director of student support services will collaborate with the directors of learning and innovation and diversity,



Anna Couperthwait

equity and inclusion to oversee student support services in the CVSD. Primarily, the director oversees special education and serves as the liaison for local, state and federal programs providing services to students, such as: school counseling, nurses, homeless children and families, the school psychological services program, and occupational and physical therapy services.

“I’ve learned so much over the years as a CVSD student, teacher and administrator, and I’m excited to continue my professional journey at the district level,” Couperthwait said.

Rotation exploration



Courtesy photo

Students at Vermont Day School spent a week conducting research and interviewing experts from BETA Technologies, an electric aerospace company, beginning with a field trip to the company in South Burlington. In the photo they are learning how motors rotate.

Crum named CVSD’s director of learning and innovation

Sarah Crum has been appointed director of learning and innovation for the Champlain Valley School District (CVSD).

Crum begins in the new job on July 1, replacing Jeff Evans, who is retiring at the end of this school year.

Superintendent Rene Sanchez shared, “Sarah’s experience as an English teacher, special educator, and special education director will prove to be a valuable resource for the Champlain Valley School District. Literacy, instructional techniques, and inclusivity are always among the most important current focus areas of school districts. Sarah’s background will help Champlain Valley’s already innovative work progress even further.”

Crum graduated magna cum laude from Vanderbilt University with degrees in English and special education.

She holds a master of education in curriculum and pedagogy from the University of Colorado. She earned her special education administrator licensure with a certificate of advanced graduate studies from St. Michael’s College. Sarah is engaged in leadership work with the Snelling Center for Government’s Vermont School Leadership Project and is the director of special education for the Williston Schools. Prior to that, she was a special educator at Champlain Valley Union High School and an English teacher in Telluride, Colo.

The director of learning and innovation will collaborate with the directors of student support services and diversity,



Sarah Crum

equity and inclusion in CVSD. In addition to curriculum, instruction and assessment, the director of learning and innovation oversees the English language learner program, instructional coaches and coordinators, the faculty and staff mentor programs, manages a number of grants, leads continuous improvement planning, COVID recovery planning, and helps ensure compliance with Vermont Education Quality Standards and Acts 77 and 173.

Crum shared this with us, “I am thrilled to have this opportunity to join the central office leadership team as the director of learning and innovation. I look forward to continuing the strong foundation that has been built at CVSD and working toward an innovative and responsive experience for our CVSD students and community.”

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Education

A good essay might sway a college’s decision



Margo Bartsch
CONTRIBUTOR

“I’m going to college!” is the typical high school senior’s Instagram posting in April.

The class of 2026 boasted a 14 percent increase in overall applications and highly selective schools saw a 25 percent increase in two years, according to the Common Application. Forbes reported some of the lowest acceptance rates for the Ivy League. The University of Vermont (UVM) had its largest application pool of more than 30,000, a 15 percent jump from last year’s record.

Given this trend, how can an application rise to the top? There are two strategies that could differentiate the student: early decision can capture a spot faster and college essays need to profess a connection to the school. These points help a college gauge a student’s likelihood to enroll.

First, early decision is the one college a student can choose to apply to around Nov. 1 and be notified by around Dec. 15, where they are bound to attend if accepted. Some colleges also have an early decision-2 binding option as one college to apply to around Jan. 1 with notification around Feb. 15. These binding decisions fill half or more of the available slots of most colleges.

Typically, liberal arts colleges and private universities use early decision as an assurance that the student will attend the school. This improves the college’s yield and increases its ranking. Although early decision has advantages, a student needs to identify the college as their first choice and must be prepared to submit a compelling application.

However, most students apply regular decision, around Jan. 1, with decisions around April 1, to weigh multiple offers. With more applicants for limited slots, this increases rejections and boosts the

college’s selectivity ranking.

The trend toward early decision is seeping into public universities. UVM announced offering early decision-1 for the class of 2027. This is in addition to its current early action non-binding option. The UVM applications for early decision and early action are due by Nov. 1.

UVM is adding early decision, following in the tracks of University of Virginia, which also offers both early decision and early action. For this class of 2026, Virginia announced an 18 percent increase in early decision applications from last year and a 32 percent early decision acceptance rate from nearly 3,500 applications.

Second, the essays are one of the few ways a student can talk directly to the admissions committee in sharing their ideas and highlighting how they will engage in the campus community. Many colleges require supplemental applications, in addition to the common application’s essays, recommendations and other material that is required by most colleges.

For example, this year Dartmouth College asked students to respond within 100 words: “While arguing a Dartmouth-related case before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1818, Daniel Webster, Class of 1801, delivered this memorable line: ‘It is, sir, ... a small college, and yet there are those who love it.’ As you seek admission to the Class of 2026, what aspects of the college’s program, community, or campus environment attract your interest?”

This is not a trick question asking for a high-brow analysis of a Supreme Court decision; rather, the essay should captivate the admissions’ attention on why Dartmouth is special to the applicant. The essay is a chance to bridge the student’s current interests with their future goals.

Colleges are building a diverse campus, where students learn from each other



beyond the classroom. This year Brown University asked applicants to answer this prompt within 250 words: “Tell us about a time you were challenged by a perspective that differed from your own. How did you respond?”

This essay encourages the student to tell a story illustrating their character traits and communication style. Colleges look for a range of personalities in building a respectful and involved community. Essays can make a student memorable.

College planning and essays are not one size fits all. It is important that families take time in considering and prioritizing options. In the process, the student should find their new home away from home.

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

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Education

CCS band playing national anthem for Lake Monsters

Naomi Strada
Condensed by Tom Scatchard

This time of year at Charlotte Central School often features cycles of celebration as students are melding together all that they have learned and are creating fantastic artifacts. Several of the learning celebrations this week focused on writing.

Kindergartners through third graders are immersed in an integrated unit of study with librarian Heidi Huestis and STEAM educator Beth Damon. Focusing on the book “Barnabus,” students are creating their own personal character, listing their three most important attributes, creating their habitat, designing their character with clay, lighting up their character, building their character out of foam clay, painting it and wiring it.

Students will use a number of digital and STEAM tools.

Fifth grade students held a press conference to share their claims and evidence writing.

Third graders shared their final Fractured Fairy Tales with one another and practiced giving critical feedback to their fellow authors.

Second graders, who have been learning about acids, bases and chemical reactions, published and shared their opinion writing.

Seventh and eighth graders are finishing up murals of individuals who have had a positive impact on our world, a PTO grant-funded project called “Omega’s Walk of Fame.”

Incoming kindergarteners

Kindergarten visiting day is coming for incoming 2022-23 kindergarten students.

In-person visiting days for future kindergarten students and their caregivers are Wednesdays, May 4-18, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Students will head to the kindergarten classrooms for a variety of activities with the teachers while parents will hear more about kindergarten, the school and tour of the building with co-principal Stephanie Sumner.

The kindergarten teachers for next year will be Sarah Cota and Devon Davis. If there are any questions related to Kindergarten Visiting Days, please reach out to ssumner@cvsdvt.org.

Champlain Central School Band CCS Band playing national anthem for Lake Monsters

All band members in the fifth-eighth grades will have the opportunity to participate in the performance on Sunday, June 5.

The CCS band will play “The Star-Spangled Banner” just prior to the first pitch at 4:55 p.m. at Centennial Field and will be wearing solid color tops of red, white or black to represent the school.

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Sports Roundup



Photo by Jason Stumpff
Colin Zouck is keeping his eyes on the ball, demonstrating the focus that has helped make him a scoring leader in CVU’s young lacrosse season.

Redhawks boys lacrosse starts season swimmingly

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

The spring sports season has started off rainy so ... only a sprinkling of games have been played.

The boys lacrosse team is among those Champlain Valley Union High School Redhawks teams that have managed to slip in some competitions between precipitations.

CVU 12, Burlington 4

Last year’s state champs started the season with a 12-4 win at Burlington on April 6.

“A solid team effort” is how coach Tom Garvey characterized the outing.

“I was happy with the goalie play of Jake Bowen and junior Harper Anderson,” Garvey said.

The coach likes the way that Anderson is serving as Bowen’s backup and learning the position, presumably to take over when Bowen graduates, and taking over in the second half and continuing to provide a stout defense.

Bowen had three saves and Anderson stopped five against Burlington.

Of course, the coach was pleased with the offense of returning senior Colin Zouck and newcomer sophomore Matias Williams, both scored 4 of CVU’s 12 points.

Nolan Shea, Owen Pierce, Turner Elliott and Isaiah Atherton all scored for the Redhawks.

CVU 13, Rutland 0

Garvey felt the second match of the season was an improvement over the opener, and the score supported the

coach’s assessment with the team scoring one more goal and the defense shutting out Rutland.

Offensively, it was the Williams and Zouck show again with each notching three scores.

Peter Gilliam and Elliott each tossed in two. Jack Lamphere, Max Destito and Shea each scored.

“They were sharp on both ends of the field. They paid attention to detail,” said Garvey, but he still sees lots of room for improving as a team.

“We’ll get better. Each new game is another opportunity to get better,” he said.

CVU 8, BFA-St. Albans 4

A day of rain washed away any chances for a match on Friday, April 15, but the teams managed to make it up on Monday at St. Albans before a late winter storm struck that night.

The Bobwhites managed to puncture but not sink the Redhawks’ defense and slowed its offense some.

“We earned a hard-fought win against a good BFA-St. Albans team,” Garvey said. “They battled us for the full 48 minutes and we feel fortunate to come away with a win.”

He singled out the goalie play of Bowen. The senior had six saves.

Once again, Williams showed up on the offensive end of the field with three goals.

It was a balanced attack with five of the Redhawks scoring — Shea, Gilliam, Zouck, Pierce and Jacob Whitcomb.

Garvey also singled out the play of face-off specialists Jacob Bose and Devon Fay who helped the team earn possessions that led to goals.

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Foxy babies



Claudia Pfaff took this picture of four kits or baby fox emerging from under their porch for the first time.

Health Matters

Ease into spring activity safely

Laurel Lakey
Contributor

Warmer weather is beginning to gradually creep into the Champlain Valley, and with it comes the natural desire for us to get outside and become more physically active. While this is a wonderful change of pace after a long and cold winter, it is important to be aware of keeping our bodies safe and avoiding doing too much too soon.

The transition from winter to spring is a common time for orthopedists and physical therapists to see an influx of overuse injuries such as sprains, tendonitis and muscle strains, usually as a result of people doing more than their bodies are ready for. Here are a few tips to help get you moving safely so that you can enjoy being active in the months ahead:

- Pace yourself: If you are trying an activity you have not done since last summer or fall, start small and slowly build. A common denominator to measure is the time spent doing an activity. For example, 10 to 20 minutes is a good starting point, and then adding five- to 10-minute increments each week, as tolerated. Remember that you may not experience pain while doing an activity, but later that day or the next morning it can catch up with you. That’s why it is important to avoid spending multiple hours on a new activity, even if it is feeling good in the moment.
- Dynamic and static stretching: There are two types of stretching that can be helpful for avoiding injury and remaining pain free. Dynamic stretching is performed as a pre-activity warmup. It involves stretching with movement, such as kicking your heel towards your buttocks repeatedly, swinging your leg forward and backward, hugging your knee up to your chest alternately, rotating your trunk side to side and swinging your arms forward and backward. Static stretching is performed as a post-activity cooldown. It involves coming into a stretch position and holding it for 30 to 60 seconds. Important muscles to target include your quadriceps (front of your thighs), hamstrings (back of your thighs), calf muscles, psoas (front of the hip) and lower back. There are a number of different ways to stretch these muscles, and it will vary from one person to the next which stretch

is most appropriate. If you feel unsure as to how to perform dynamic and static stretches, meeting with a physical therapist or personal trainer for just a couple of sessions can get you set on the right path.

- Listen to your body: No one knows your body better than you do, so trust your instincts and respond when your body is giving you signals that you are doing too much. Common complaints related to overuse injuries include sharp or throbbing pain, redness and swelling in the involved area. If this occurs, practice RICE: rest, ice, compression and elevation. Refrain from activity for at least two days, and try to elevate, ice and compress the area for 10 to 20 minutes, two to three times a day. If symptoms do not improve, contact your doctor, who may recommend a consult with a physical therapist or orthopedist. Overuse injuries, when not properly addressed, can often lead to chronic problems over time, so it is important to take action.

All of these tips apply not only to recreational sports, but yard work and gardening, too. Lower back and shoulder pain are common ailments of people who spend hours in their yard after being largely sedentary during the winter. For this type of activity, try to pace yourself by starting with shorter work sessions with breaks built in. Being a marathon gardener on day one is a common cause of overuse injuries for low back, shoulder or knee joints.

It is also worth mentioning that maintaining a regular exercise program during the winter months can go a long way toward preventing spring injuries.

Your body is your home, so give it the care and attention it deserves. Although it can be difficult to hold back on going for it when the sun is shining and the birds are calling, taking a thoughtful and measured approach will help ensure that you can enjoy moving your body all through the warmer months ahead.

Laurel Lakey is a physical therapist assistant at Dee Physical Therapy in Shelburne. She also has a bachelor’s in dance and is a certified yoga teacher. She lives in Charlotte with her husband, toddler daughter, dog and farm family of sheep and chickens. You can reach her by emailing laurellakey@deept.com.

Charlotte History

In 1800s, families housed teachers during school year

Dan Cole
Charlotte Historical Society

In his memoirs published in 1888, Civil War General Philip Sheridan recalls his early schooling:

“When I was old enough I was sent to the village school, which was taught by an old-time Irish ‘master’ (Mr. McNanly) ... who, holding that to spare the rod was to spoil the child, if unable to detect the real culprit when any offense had been committed, would consistently apply the switch to the whole school without discrimination. It must be conceded that by this means he never failed to catch the guilty mischief-maker.

“The school-year was divided into terms of three months, the teacher being paid in each term a certain sum — three dollars, I think, for each pupil — and having an additional perquisite in the privilege of boarding around at his option in the different families to which his scholars belonged. This feature was more than acceptable to the parents ... but the pupils were in almost unanimous opposition because Mr. McNanly’s unheralded advent at anyone’s house resulted frequently in the discovery that some favorite child had been playing ‘hookey,’ which means absenting one’s self from school without permission, to go on a fishing or a swimming frolic.

“Such at least was my experience more than once, for Mr. McNanly particularly favored my mother’s house ... and many a time a comparison of notes proved that I had been in the woods with two playfellows, named Binckly and Greiner, when the master thought I was home, ill, and my mother, that I was at school, deeply immersed in study.

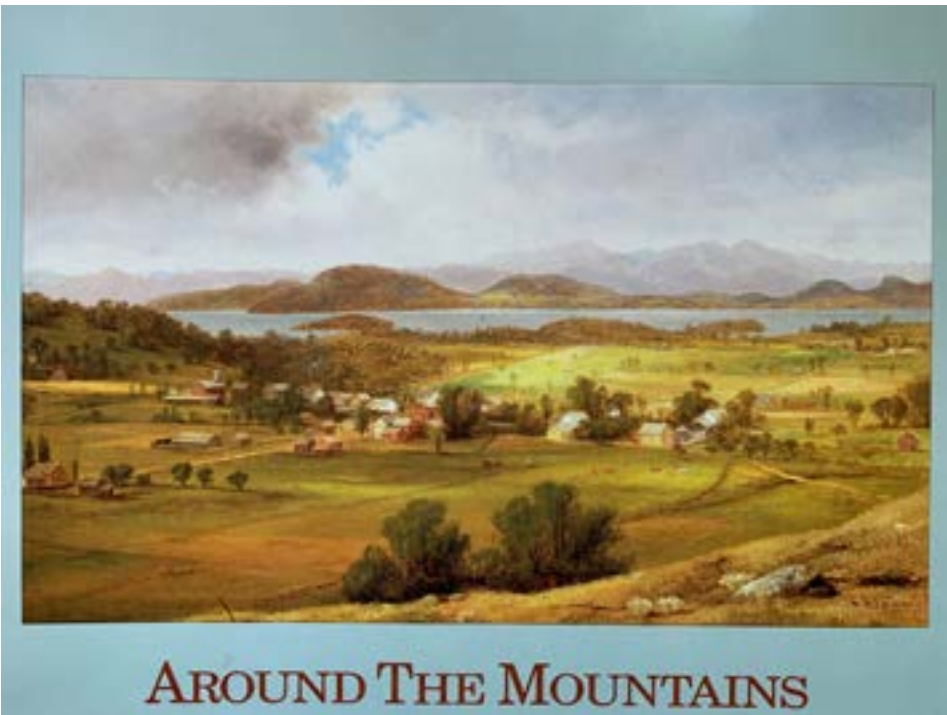
“However, with these and other delinquencies not uncommon among boys, I learned at McNanly’s school ... about as far as I could be carried up to the age of 14. This was all the education then bestowed on me — with the exception of progressing in some of these branches by voluntary study, and by practical applications in others.”

In this issue, we look at school No. 5. It was located on what is now Greenbush Road about half a mile north of the West Village on the west side. According to information gathered by the Charlotte Library, school No. 5 was known as the Barton School. It was named for builder and owner of the tavern in the village, Joseph Barton.

According to Frank Thornton, late president of the Charlotte Historical Society, the school burned in 1895 and the students were moved to the seminary building, which will be covered in a future issue.

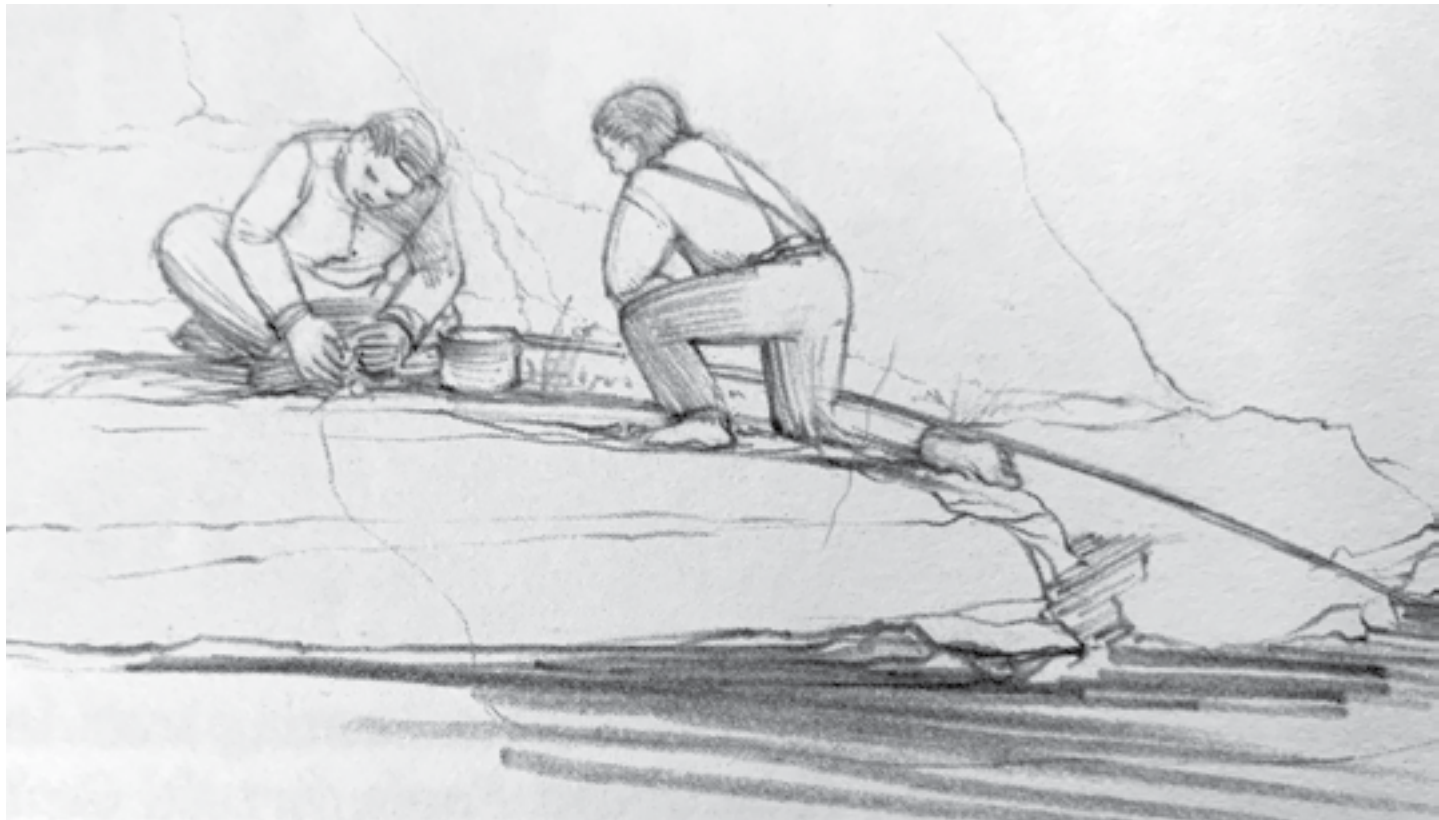
For more about the history of Charlotte’s schoolhouses, you can check out our library’s website

(charlottepubliclibrary.org). In the middle of the bar at the top of the home page, hover over “at the library.” On the drop-down menu, hover over “special collections.” On the drop-down menu here click on “local history & genealogy.” Scroll down to “presentations” and click “read it” next to “Jenny Cole’s Charlotte schoolhouse story walk.”



Above: Copy of the cover of Around the Mountains by W.W. Higbee, published by the Charlotte Historical Society, illustrating an 1860 painting by Daniel Folger Bigelow entitled “View of West Charlotte and Lake Champlain” used with permission of the Charlotte Historical Society. To the extreme right, at about the middle, school No. 5 is visible. The original oil on canvas is at the Shelburne Museum and can be seen as part of its ‘Painting A Nation’ exhibit in the Webb Gallery once the museum opens in May.

Left: Map of School District #5; detail is from the 1869 Beers Atlas.



Boys fishing, illustration from Around the Mountains by W.W. Higbee; original artwork by Jenny Cole; used with permission of the Charlotte Historical Society.

Outdoors

Ants gardeners of many early spring wildflowers



Elizabeth Bassett
CONTRIBUTOR

As we delight in energy from the warming sun, so too do ephemeral wildflowers, taking advantage of sunlight before trees in the canopy leaf out. These perennial woodland plants emerge early in spring, bloom quickly and set seed. Once the forest floor is deep in shade, the leaves wither away, leaving just the roots, rhizomes and bulbs underground.

Fun fact: Many of these plants rely on myrmecochory — seed dispersal by ants. The seeds of spring ephemerals bear fatty external appendages called elaisomes. Ants harvest and carry them to their nests, eating this rich outer layer and leaving the naked seeds buried in in the soil to germinate.

On each warm day I spot yet another species of spring wildflowers. As of deadline, I’ve spotted hepatica — Thompson’s Point and Mt. Philo, Dutchman’s breeches — Philo, and ready-to-pop buds of blood root, spring beauties and early meadow rue, also on Mt. Philo.

Trout lily leaves poke through leaf litter. Can flowers be far behind?

Many trails are wet and easily damaged at this time of year. Consider local road walks with good wildflower displays. Both Thompson’s Point and Leavingsworth Road, off Carpenter and O’Neil Roads just across the town line into Hinesburg, are worth the journey.

Plant identification apps

If you have ever used your cell phone to identify a plant, you may find this academic study from Michigan State University of interest. Students in a weed science class were required to photograph ten plants

and submit the photos to each of 14 apps to test their accuracy. The 2021 winner was PictureThis with 67 percent accuracy. PictureThis is not a free app, however. After a trial period it costs \$1.99 per month or \$19.99 per year.

The next grouping, at about 50 percent accuracy, includes PlantNet, which is free but many reviewers find clunky; Plant Story, which ranges in cost depending on user choices; and LeafSnap, free on iOS like Apple iPhones and iPads but not iMacs.

A 2020 runner-up, iNaturalist slumped to only 30 percent accuracy in the 2021 test. iNaturalist is always free and has no ads, but the survey organizers noted, “With iNaturalist, it appears to be more critical to read the instructions and get to know the app before you use it.” That’s good advice in life, I’d say.

I always try free first. If it’s cumbersome, frustrating, or fails to identify my quarry, then it may be time to pay. As I pursue spring wildflowers, I’ll test two free apps, LeafSnap and iNaturalist, with flowers I already know and then pursue some new ones.

Spring peepers

If spring peepers aren’t singing within earshot, you don’t have to travel far to hear them. These tiny frogs can peep up to 4,000 times per hour and each frog sings for several hours each night. Our neighborhood peepers joined the chorus one week later than usual this year, even as dates trend earlier with our warming climate.

Male peepers produce the cacophony. From the Vermont Center for Ecostudies we learn, “Each peep is made when a frog forces air from its lungs, over the vocal cords in its larynx, and into an air sac in its throat. The air enters the sac from openings on each side of the mouth cavity, causing the sac to balloon outward. The inflated sac acts as a sounding board, amplifying the sound and

carrying it from the frog to our ears.”

It is not surprising that male peeper trunk muscles, which pump air from the lungs, average 15 percent of their body mass compared to only three percent for the quiet females. The aerobic capacity of their trunk muscle is six times that of leg muscles and, in males, is 17 times greater than that of

female trunk muscle. These little guys have big bellows.

May “Outdoors” will feature Charlotte’s “Man of the Mountain,” Pete Hiser, who has led the three-year, trail-building project on Mt. Philo.

Until then, enjoy spring in the outdoors.



Photo by Elizabeth Bassett

Hepatica americana is one of our few evergreen spring wildflowers and therefore often the earliest to bloom. Leaves are reddish and three-lobed. Nectar-rich flowers in white, pink, blue or purple attract bees before other sources are available. Round-lobed hepatica are generally found growing in rich soils in shaded woodlands.

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Gardening

Onions one of first vegetables to plant in spring

Bonnie Kirn Donahue
Extension Master Gardener

A simple staple in many cuisines and recipes, onions can be a satisfying plant to grow in the garden. While it is easy to buy them at the grocery store, fresh onions are unique in flavor and intensity.

I like to grow onions from sets, which are basically small, dried onion bulbs. Sets can be purchased in bags or by the pound from your local garden or hardware store. Try to select sets that are smaller than 3/4 inch to help prevent the plants from bolting too early.

Often you may find a few varieties of white or purple onions. Grab some of each and test out what grows or tastes better for you.

Onions are one of the first vegetables that can be planted in the spring. The best time to plant them is about two-four weeks before the last hard frost, or late April to early May. It is best practice to rotate the vegetable families in your beds each year, so try to plant all alliums in a different location than you did the year before.

Cabbage, beets, strawberries and lettuce are good companion plants for onions, as the strong onion scent will help deter pests, while planting with peas and beans should be avoided. Onions can be planted individually throughout the garden or planted in a group. If space is an issue, consider interplanting with dill or other herbs that won't compete for light and room.

Onions need to be grown in full sun in nutrient-rich soil with good drainage. The pH of the soil should be between 6.2 and 6.8. You can check the pH of your soil with an over-the-counter kit or send your

soil sample to the University of Vermont Agricultural and Environmental Testing Lab (pss.uvm.edu/ag_testing).

Plant onion sets 1-inch deep. Depending on the expected size of the onion variety, plant the sets approximately 2 to 4 inches apart.

Onions are sensitive to drought and need consistent, moist soil throughout the growing season. To check soil moisture, place your finger in the soil, about one inch deep. If the soil is damp, watering is not required. If the soil is dry or dusty, it is time to water.

As the onions grow, the bulbs will begin to emerge from the soil. This is normal and does not require any intervention. Onions are ready to harvest when the tops begin to fall over.

When harvesting, keep the green leaves intact while gently pulling up the bulbs. Dry the onions in a warm, shaded place with plenty of airflow for a couple of weeks until the leaves and roots are dry. After curing outdoors, onions can be stored indoors in a cool, dry place with good air circulation.

Enjoy your homegrown onions in stir fries, soups, curries, main dishes, side dishes, pickled, battered, fried and more.

Bonnie Kirn Donahue is a University of Vermont extension master gardener and landscape designer from central Vermont.

Photo by Bonnie Kirn Donahue

Planting onions next to lettuce and other crops, such as cabbage and beets, is a beneficial move as their strong scent will help deter pests.



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East Charlotte Village Traffic Calming Study In-Person Public Meeting

April 28, 2022, Thursday @ 5:30 PM

Parish Hall at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
2914 Spear Street, Charlotte, VT

We will first walk through the village center to identify
bicycle & pedestrian safety issues

Please park at the Church for walk @ 5:30 PM; then join us at the Parish Hall @ 6:30 PM
for presentation and discussion.

This study is to evaluate the need for traffic calming features for the East Charlotte Village Center, and the area proximate to the Hinesburg Road and Spear Street intersection. We want to hear your safety concerns, bike and pedestrian activities, and vehicular traffic concerns within the study area. At this meeting, you will also learn about traffic calming concepts & ideas for feasible pedestrian and bicycle friendly improvements in this area.



If you have any questions, please reach out to:

Dean Bloch, Town Administrator, dean@townofcharlotte.com

Larry Lewack, Town Planner, townplanner@townofcharlotte.com

Sai Sarepalli, CCRPC Project Manager, ssarepalli@ccrpcvt.org

Jenn Conley, Project Manager, jconley@vhb.com



Communities Planning Together

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE SPORTS CAR CLUB OF VERMONT PRESENTS

THE HISTORIC MT. PHILO HILLCLIMB

Apr 30-May 1, 2022 AT MT. PHILO IN CHARLOTTE, VT

The Mt. Philo mountain road and hiking trails will be closed to the public from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. A historic hillclimb is a speed event up the mountain road with drivers racing against the clock.

We thank the residents of Charlotte and the State Parks for being a wonderful host for this historic event. Thank you! www.SCCV.org



The Town of Charlotte
TOWN MEETINGS
AND AGENDAS
Visit charlottetvt.org
for more information

Planning Commission: Regular mtg.
Thursday, April 21 at 7- 8:30 p.m.

Selectboard
Monday, April 25 at 6:30 p.m.

Development Review Board Regularly
Scheduled Meeting
Wednesday, April 27 at 7 – 9 p.m.

East Charlotte Village Traffic Study
public meeting
Thursday, April 28 at 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Monthly Meeting of the Trails
Committee
Tuesday, May 3 at 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Charlotte Energy Committee Monthly
Meeting
Wednesday, May 4 at 7 p.m.

Planning Commission: Regular
meeting
Thursday, May 5, 2022 at 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Calendar of Events

Get ready for an abundance of spring events blooming

Calendar compiled by Mary Landon.

Listings may be sent to calendar@thecharlottenews.org at least two weeks in advance of the event. Weather cancellations and COVID guidelines are available on individual websites.

With spring coming there’s an abundance of events, near and far. It is hard to include all the diverse offerings. Please send in your suggestions of preferred events.

What are timberdoodles? (new time)
Thursday, April 21, 7-8:30 p.m.

Join the Friends of the Missisquoi and Green Mountain Audubon as they welcome Liam Berigan in a talk exploring his work tracking the American woodcock, including some birds tagged in Vermont. Berigan covers the ecology of this forest-dwelling shorebird and discusses the evolving understanding of woodcock migration. Please register for this free Zoom event at greenmountainaudubon.org.

Musical recitals
Thursday, April 21-Tuesday, May 10

The music department at the University of Vermont (UVM) offers a series of vocal and instrumental student performances to highlight their year-long studies. All recitals are free and open to the public; venue is the UVM Recital Hall near Redstone Campus. These performances are highly recommended and showcase the students’ hard work and love of their art. Sunday, April 24 from 3–4 p.m., the UVM Catamount Singers perform Sacred and Profane, their first concert since December 2019. It will be the final performance of the group under the direction of founding director David Neiweem, featuring music from four centuries. Neiweem is enthusiastic, dynamic and brings out the best in his students. For the complete calendar, see uvm.edu/cas/music/.

Spring quilt show
Friday-Sunday, April 22-24

Enjoy the colorful and artistic works of 100 accomplished members of the Champlain Valley Quilt Guild of Vermont. Vote for a favorite in this friendly competition. Show also features many sewing craft vendors. Held at Holy Family Parish Hall in Essex Junction, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. daily. Admission at door. For more info, see cvqgvt.org.

Pandas!
Friday, April 22, 7-8:30 p.m.

The Vermont Institute of Natural Science in Quechee screens an IMAX documentary about researcher Ben Kilham who forms a bond with Qian Qian, a captive-born panda about to experience nature for the first time. Meet the filmmaker after this in-person screening. Tickets at vinsweb.org or call 802-359-5000.

Earth Day family movie
Friday, April 22, 3:30-5 p.m.

All ages will enjoy the popular and informative film, “Flight of the Butterflies,” shown at the Carpenter-Carse Library in Hinesburg. Free and no registration required. Please wear masks. More info at 802-482-2878.

Burlington Choral Society
Saturday, April 23, 7:30-9 p.m.

Schubert’s Mass in E-flat Major is his final Mass, written in the last year of his short life. It is a dramatic masterpiece for chorus and full orchestra. Several other works are included in this concert at the Elley-Long Music Center at St. Michael’s College in Colchester. Tickets and info available at bcsvermont.org.

Backyard Composting 101
Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m.-noon

Red Wagon Plants in Hinesburg hosts a workshop covering the basics of the science, technique, upkeep and process of backyard composting. Registration required at redwagonplants.com.

Draft Horse Clinic
Saturday and Sunday, April 23-24

In this 2-day hands-on clinic, beginner drivers work with experienced teamsters from the Green Mt. Draft Horse Association and their horses. Work on safety, harnessing, pulling carts, an obstacle course and general skills. For hours of this adult clinic and to register, see shelburnefarms.org.

Young Tradition Vermont

Monday-Sunday, May 2-8



The motto of Young Tradition Vermont is “Receive it, carry it, pass it on.” This organization’s mission is to expose young people to traditional music and dance, to make instruments available to them, and to give them instruction and opportunities to perform — all at the lowest cost possible, or even free. It is an absolute treat to watch the young musicians, singers and dancers as they perform. This week marks the Young Tradition Festival, during which time there are numerous recitals,

concerts, visiting artists, flash mobs, contests, and opportunities for sharing good music with joyful performers. Most events held at Contois Auditorium or in other Burlington locations. Highly recommended family entertainment. For more info about schedule and tickets, see youngtraditionvermont.org.

watched via zoom. For more info, see the calendar on monktonvt.com.

Family education series
Wednesday, April 27, 6:30-8 p.m.

Join this discussion group, organized by Four Winds Nature Institute, to explore the importance of nature-based play and adventure for children of all ages. The talk is based on the book Adventure, Play, Peace by Nancy Bower, available to borrow at the Carpenter-Carse library in Hinesburg. Join with other families in nurturing a sense of wonder in children. A second meeting takes place Wednesday, May 18, and a follow-up family playgroup will TBD. For more info, or to sign up, see carpentercarse.org.

Spring wildflowers
Wednesday, April 27, 7-8 p.m.

The Vermont Land Trust invites nature-lovers to join Liz Thompson for a virtual wildflower walk. This free webinar features abundant flower information. Register at vlt.org.

Gardening workshop
Thursday, April 28, 5-6:30 p.m.

Learn how to maximize your garden efforts to benefit bees and birds in a talk by Gwen Causer of Audubon Vermont at Red Wagon Plants in Hinesburg. The workshop includes a birding walk on the nursery property. Learn about native plants and insects that bees and birds rely on. For info or to register see Events at redwagonplants.com.

Wine and cheese pairing
Thursday, April 28, 5:30-7 p.m.

Taste a variety of local cheeses paired with wines from Shelburne Vineyard. This class, for ages 21 and over, is presented by City Market at the Vineyard building. Hear about Vermont’s emerging wine industry and how to use a discerning palate. For info or tickets, see shelburnevineyard.com.

Three great guitars
Friday, April 29

The University of Vermont hosts three revered acoustic guitarists in concert: John Jorgenson, Frank Vignola and Martin Taylor. As a group, they specialize in jazz, bluegrass, gypsy jazz and swing, with some classical thrown in, too. Held at the UVM Recital Hall. Tickets and more info at uvm.edu/laneseries.

Homestead weekend
Friday-Sunday, April 29-May 1

Wildroots Community Farm in Bristol hosts a weekend gathering revolving around primitive skills, homesteading practices, herbal tonics, cooking with fire, and related workshops. Camping is encouraged; Saturday and Sunday events are between 9:30 a.m-5 p.m. More info and tickets at wildrootsfarmvermont.com.

Early birding
Saturday, April 30, 7:30-10 a.m.

Join birders from the Green Mountain Audubon Society on a free morning birding walk of up to two miles through the varied habitat and terrain at Shelburne Farms. For more info or to register shelburnefarms.org.

Day in the dirt
Saturday, April 30, 9 a.m.-noon

This is a state-wide event to help prepare 21 school and community gardens for the season. It’s a fund-raising event for the Vermont Garden Network. The event is rain or shine; no experience necessary, and tools are provided. Also taking place Saturday, May 7. Join or start a team today. For more info or to

register, visit vtgardens.org or call 802-999-5368.

Repair Cafe
Saturday, April 30, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

A joint effort by Sustainable Charlotte, the Charlotte Library, and the Charlotte Grange, the Cafe aims to repair broken items, keep them out of the junk bin, and promote community interaction. Bring items to the Charlotte Congregational Church and let a friendly volunteer fix your item for free. A food or monetary donation to the Charlotte Food Shelf is encouraged. Lunch available for a \$5 donation. For more info, see sustainablecharlottevt.org.

Tree planting
Saturday, April 30, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

In partnership with Friends of the Winooski River, friends and supporters of the North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier will be planting hundreds of trees and shrubs. Any help is appreciated; bring gloves and shovels if you have them. Rain date is May 1. To sign up, please email kerry@northbranchnaturecenter.org.

Jazz in Vergennes
Saturday, April 30, 7:30 p.m.

LC Jazz is a Vergennes-based, 17-piece big band with vocalists and a whole lot of heart. They play music of the greats in this free concert at the Vergennes Opera House. Donations are welcome and benefit local music students. Doors open 6:30 p.m. with cash bar; must show proof of vaccination and wear a mask. For tickets or more info, see vergennesoperahouse.org.

Mt. Philo hill climb
Saturday and Sunday, April 30-May 1

The Mt. Philo State Park road and hiking trails will be closed to the public from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. both days. The Sports Car Club of Vermont hosts a hill climb event on the mountain road, with drivers racing against the clock.

Natural History Workshop
Sunday, May 1, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

We live at the meeting point of the boreal forest, extending north and the temperate deciduous forest, extending south. This diverse area has its own distinct character, which is the topic of this workshop with Jonathan Shapiro of Fox Paw School in Hardwick. Shapiro is a North Woods tracker, naturalist and teacher of woods skills. The group meets at North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier. Expect to end the day with a bird’s-eye view of the region’s natural history. For more info or to register see Calendar at northbranchnaturecenter.org.

East meets West
Sunday, May 1, 3 p.m.

The Vermont Youth Orchestra presents an evening of works from the West, alongside their Eastern European counterparts. The program includes one piece from Ukraine; a portion of funds raised will benefit Ukrainian refugees from the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine. This special event is on the Flynn Theater main stage. Vaccinations and masks required. For tickets or more info, see flynnvt.org.

Spongy moth caterpillars
Wednesday, May 4, 12-1 p.m.

Vermont Coverts, a Vergennes organization that focuses on keeping Vermont’s forests and wildlife healthy and productive, hosts a zoom webinar on the history and biology of spongy moth caterpillars — formerly known as gypsy moths. Josh Halman of the Vermont Department of Forests, Park and Recreation discusses ways that property owners can cope with a caterpillar outbreak. Free; pre-register at vtcoverts.org.

Vergennes Arts Festival through Friday, May 6

Stores, banks, restaurants, the library and other businesses in Vergennes are displaying local Vermont artists’ works through May 6. The festival culminates in an art walk on Thursday, May 26, as well as a silent and live auction at the Vergennes Opera House. Proceeds benefit the Boys and Girls Club and Vergennes Partnership. More info: call 802-388-7951.

More events are listed online at charlottenewsvt.org.

Library News

Large display of pelts coming to Charlotte Library



Margaret Woodruff
DIRECTOR

Looking for the latest information on favorite authors, new books or both? Get the latest information from the Charlotte Library with this link bit.ly/NewBooks05445.

Have a suggestion for a book or other material? Send to info@charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Short Story Selections Thursday, April 28, 1-2 p.m.

Join library director Margaret Woodruff to discuss short stories old and new. The reading list will include a variety of authors, and one or two stories will be featured each session. Copies of the stories are available at the library circulation desk or via email. On Zoom. Register at bit.ly/ShortStorySpring2022.

Spring Vacation! Vermont Fish and Wildlife Furbearer Kit, April 18 to May 4

Thanks to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, the library will have a large display of pelts, skulls, track sets, scat sets and track field guides. On April 18–20, 10 a.m.–noon, the items will be out for hands-on investigation. Come learn about Vermont’s furbearing animals, such as mink, beaver, fisher and red fox. No registration required.

Charlotte Library Mini-Disco Soup Thursday, April 21, 2-3 p.m.

World Disco Soup Day is the largest collective effort to combat food waste and climate change. This Slow Food celebration has been adapted to the library space. Join to chop veggies from Sweet Roots to save for the freezer instead of sending to the landfill. This is an in-person event. Register at eventbrite.com/e/mini-disco-soup-registration-305084545087



Turtle Talk Tuesday, April 26, 6-7 p.m.

Ben Phillips, a graduate fellow in wildlife biology and conservation at the University of New Hampshire, introduces the freshwater turtle species found in New England. He shares background information about freshwater turtle biology and ecology as well as the landscape and environmental factors that place turtle populations at risk, the methods that have been used to monitor turtle populations, and potential steps for the future of freshwater turtle conservation. No registration required. Join the presentation at unh.zoom.us/j/95123231799.

Braver Angels introduction Thursday, April 28, 7 p.m.

Are there family members you’d like to talk with about your political differences, perhaps a conservative cousin or a progressive son or daughter, but don’t know how to begin? Do you have friends you stay away from to avoid difficult political discussions?

Learn more about Braver Angels, a citizens’ organization that helps conservative, progressive and liberal Americans talk respectfully with one another ... with some surprising results.

Register at eventbrite.com/e/braver-angels-introduction-session-tickets-287931820827 to attend in person or here to attend via Zoom [/bit.ly/3Kfzj4N](https://bit.ly/3Kfzj4N).

Don’t miss these related events:

- Tuesday, May 10, 7 p.m.: “Reuniting America” film and discussion. Register here for in-person event: bit.ly/3vkhBY8.
- Sunday, May 15, 2:30-5:30 p.m.: “Depolarizing Within” workshop. Register at: braverangels.org/event/depolarizing-within-16.

Ongoing Programs Free Little Art Gallery Opening

Introducing the smallest art gallery in Charlotte. Come by the circulation desk for a visit. Feel free to take a piece that you like, add a piece of your own artwork—or both.

All media is welcome as long as it fits inside. Use your own materials or pick up the April Take & Make for supplies to make your own masterpiece.

Preschool story time resumes Tuesdays through May 17 10-11 a.m.

Join us in-person Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. in the library for Preschool Story Time fun with stories, crafts and play time. The program will be held in the program room unless it is warm enough to be held on the library porch. All children 2 years of age and over and their guardians must wear a mask at all times per library policy when indoors. No registration required.

Knitting drop-in Wednesdays, 5:30-7 p.m.

Swing by for in person knitting night at the library. Dust off those old projects you’ve been wanting to finish, start a new project, or even pick up a new skill. Jessica Card, a local knitting teacher at Shelburne Craft School, will be hosting the knitting night and hopes to grow the community of knitters in town. She will be around to get people started, help with existing projects and working on a knitting project as well. No registration required.

Book Chat Fridays, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Join Margaret Friday mornings on Zoom 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. Please register here: bit.ly/3BtebDj.

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
802-425-3864 or
info@charlottepubliclibrary.org



Courtesy photo
Turtle Talk with Ben Phillips on Tuesday, April 26, 6-7 p.m.



Courtesy photo.
A rain garden was built, and rain barrels were added where the former driveway was located.

Library landscapes for beauty and to improve water quality

From the Lewis Creek Association

Although it might seem so, it doesn’t always go that they pave paradise and put up a parking lot.

At least not at the Charlotte Library where they’ve unpaved part of a parking lot — an old driveway, to be exact — and tried to put up ... well, if not a little bit of paradise, a bit of an improvement to water quality downstream of the library.

The library and the Lewis Creek Association have been working on an area to the east side of the building where a former driveway has been taken up. A rain garden and other stormwater runoff mitigation practices have been installed in that area.

Stormwater historically ran off from the driveway and building and flowed toward Thorp Brook, where water quality sampling has found high nutrient and sediment levels, which affect both the stream’s and Lake Champlain’s water quality.

At the library, multiple optimal conservation practices were installed to mitigate stormwater runoff at the site.

The Lewis Creek Association participated in the planning of the expansion of the library, and concepts it advocated for were incorporated into the landscape design of the old driveway into a rain garden or “a bio-retention area” intended “to reduce impervious surface and increase water storage capacity” in that area, the

association said in a release.

Rain barrels were added to the gutter to capture roof runoff and to water gardens and flower beds, thereby keeping additional water on site. Much of the water shed by the sidewalk and the roof has been redirected into the new garden area instead of being sent into drainage swales.

The area now treats twice as much area of runoff from the library roof than the area of impervious driveway that was taken out before that water flows south to Thorp Brook.

“The library was an ideal site as a highly visible public space that showcases solutions that can easily be implemented by most homeowners,” the release said.

The Lewis Creek Association hopes the library rain garden will help the public better understand the problems associated with stormwater’s effect on streams and the lake.

“Come see how beautiful a bio-retention area can be and how big a rain barrel needs to be to catch a half an inch of rain off the roof area,” the release said.

The association advocates for “the three S’s” of stormwater mitigation: “slowing water down, spreading it out and sinking it into the ground.”

The Lewis Creek Association has several videos about the problem of wastewater runoff and what to do to improve water quality at lewisecreek.org/water-quality-videos.

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Senior Center News

Exciting, welcoming, ‘belonging’ place says new participant



Lori York
DIRECTOR

“I have never felt more welcomed anywhere. Every time I go it is a new and exciting experience, making new friends and feeling like I belong somewhere,” a new participant said.

The true purpose of the Senior Center is providing opportunities for connections. These connections can happen over a cup of coffee or by participating in one of the wide range of activities from hiking to birdwatching, exercise classes or art programs and board games. The Charlotte Senior Center is a great opportunity to meet new friends.

Registration is now open for the May programs. See the May newsletter insert in this edition of The Charlotte News. It is also available on our website: CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org. Follow “CharlotteSeniorCenterVT” on Facebook and Instagram for a glimpse of the activities happening at the center.

Events & Programs:

Mansfield Mountain Band Sunday, May 1, 1 p.m. Free

From Richmond comes the Mansfield Mountain Band, a four-piece acoustic group armed with banjo, guitar, mandolin, bass and vocals, bringing you a rib-tickling blend of traditional bluegrass and Americana classics, along with original songs of their own. Featuring Thomas Bryce (banjo), Jordan Duffy (mandolin), Charlie Wilson (guitar) and Jeremy Hobart (bass).

Shape-Note Singing Sunday, May 1, 3-5 p.m. Free

This traditional, a cappella, four-part harmony has been called “full-body, shout-it-out singing” and is also known as Sacred Harp (1750-1850). Open to newcomers and experienced singers. No performances and no auditions; a “good voice” is not required. Songbooks are provided. Stop by to listen or sing, and leave whenever you wish. Questions? Email Kerry Cullinan at kclynxvt@gmail.com.

Writing novels: How to Wednesday, May 4, 7 p.m.

The New York Times bestseller and Shelburne resident Miranda Beverly-

Whittemore has published five novels, including “Bittersweet” and her most recent, “Fierce Little Thing.” Beverly-Whittemore will explore how she writes a novel, from conception to completion, giving us a glimpse of both her own craft and of the publishing process in general, from working with an agent and editor to promotion — and deciding what to work on next. Co-sponsored with the Charlotte Library.

Maxine Davis Glass Art Studio Tour Wednesday, May 4, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Register by Monday, May 2. Free

Join Mickey Davis in her North Ferrisburgh studio as she talks about her art process developing one-of-a-kind handmade, fused and dichroic glass (multihued glass whose color changes with the angle of the light), panel pictures, platters, bowls, dishes and jewelry.

Watercolor: Spring has sprung Tuesdays, May 3–31, 9 a.m.-noon Cost: \$185. Register by Tues., April 26

Paint some glorious spring landscapes and other fun subjects over five weeks during this watercolor workshop with Lynn Cummings. Try some contemporary techniques, along with traditional watercolor painting. You should have some experience with watercolor prior to this class.

Guitar for beginners Wednesdays, May 4–25, 7-8 p.m. Cost: \$60. Register by Monday, May 2

Make some music. Join the adult beginner guitar lessons with John Creech on Wednesday evenings at the Senior Center.

Restorative yoga honoring all women Friday, May 6, 4-5 p.m. Cost: \$10. Register by Wednesday, May 4

At the start of Mother’s Day weekend, this class with Heidi Kvasnak will honor women with an hour of self-care. It is designed to nourish you during this seasonal transition with gentle warming movements to stimulate digestion and move out congestion, coupled with longer-held restorative poses to release stagnation and tension.

Italian for total beginners Fridays, 10-11 a.m., May 13, 20, 27, June 3, 10, 17 (six weeks) Cost: \$48. Register by Friday, May 6

Do you dream of traveling to Italy and



Photo by Ron Ulmer

A recent birding trip with Hank Kaestner.

ordering your morning cappuccino in a sun-drenched piazza? Feeling tongue-tied? Then this class with Nicole Librandi is for you. Now is the time to begin studying Italian — and have fun along the way.

Meals

Menus are posted on the website: charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday Lunches

Served weekly. Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. and ends at 12:30 p.m., or when there is no more food. Suggested lunch donation \$5.

Monthly men’s breakfast Thursday, May 12, 7-9:30 a.m. Register by Tuesday, May 10

On the second Thursday — or Thursday, May 12, this month — men gather for breakfast and conversation. This month the guest speaker is Fritz Horton, who is a sailplane/glider pilot. He will share his gliding experiences — and he’s actually going to plan to bring his plane to the Senior Center parking lot. To register, contact Tim McCullough at cubnut5@aol.com. Suggested donation \$5.

Weekly Grab & Go meals from Age Well Registration required. Free

Pick up on Thursdays 10-11 a.m. at the Charlotte Senior Center. May menus are posted on the Charlotte Senior Center

website at charlotteseniorcentervt.org. Please note new pickup time for meals. Pre-register by Monday for the Thursday meal. To register, contact Lori York at 802-425-6371 or lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Exercise classes

The Senior Center offers daily exercise programs for a wide range of fitness and activities levels. A complete list of exercise programs is on the website charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Questions?

The Senior Center staff would love to meet with you. The center is located at 212 Ferry Road in Charlotte. Hours are Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Call 802-425-6345 or email Lori York at lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Residents from other communities are always welcome.

Good eating at the Charlotte Senior Center

Susan Ohanian
CONTRIBUTOR

Monday Munch, April 25, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or until the food is gone.

Remember: These meals are popular, and when the food is gone, it’s gone. While the food lasts, a \$5 donation is suggested.

Menu: Cottage Pie Soup, salad, brownies
Known for the mashed potatoes on top, the name “cottage pie” was first used at the end of the 18th century—when the ordinary folk, those who lived in cottages, not to the manor born, started using potatoes as an everyday food. Spaniards had introduced the potato to Europe from South America at the beginning of the 16th century, but outside of Spain and Ireland it was mostly used as animal feed until those cottage people figured out it was good to eat.

What we call cottage pie, the French call “hachis Parmentier,” named in honor of Antoine-Augustin Parmentier, the pharmacist and agronomist who used his skills, savvy and a few stunts to persuade the French to eat potatoes. Potatoes were on the menu when Benjamin Franklin joined Parmentier for dinner.

The French take their food seriously,

and they paid tribute to Parmentier with a monument, a long avenue, and a Paris Metro station named in his honor. Fittingly, his cemetery plot at Pere Lachaise Cemetery is ringed by potato plants.

You’ll find no couch potatoes at the Senior Center. Volunteers keep the place humming: Some peel those potatoes; some serve the food. Others host, garden, tinker and trim. We ask you to put on your volunteer hat and come help keep the community smiling.

Thursday, April 28, Grab-&Go menu: Pick up 11 a.m.–noon

Roast turkey with gravy, mashed potatoes, sliced carrots, pumpkin pie with cream
Be sure to register by Monday. Call or e-mail: 802-425-6371, lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org

Monday Munch, May 2, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Menu: Taco bar beef or bean taco bowls, Mexican rice, Mexican wedding cake with ice cream and dulce de leche sauce
Tortilla chips celebrating Cinco de Mayo.

If you’ve never had Mexican Wedding Cake and don’t look up the history, you are in for a sweet surprise.



Thursday, May 5, Grab-&Go Meal. Note new pick-up time: 10-11 a.m.

Menu: Chicken with Marsala sauce, mashed potatoes, carrots, blueberry crisp with cream. There is no charge for these meals, but Age Well always appreciates donations.

Celebrate Cinco de Mayo with song:

Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan 1956
Mexico Lindo y Querido:
tinyurl.com/yww2h3bx

Classifieds

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

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On the road again — the Green Mountain Bicycle Club

From Green Mountain Bicycle Club

The Green Mountain Bicycle Club is hitting the road again and has released its list of club rides for May.

Here are some of the club's guidelines:

- All riders must fill out one waiver of liability per season.
- Cyclists are asked to sign up online prior to doing a GMBC ride.
- All riders must wear helmets and obey the rules of the road. Please do not ride two abreast if there is traffic in either direction.
- For mornings with questionable weather, please call the ride leader to make sure the ride is still taking place. Ride leaders are obligated to go to the starting point and provide maps but may choose not to ride if the weather is miserable.
- Riders below the age of 18 must have a signed waiver from a parent.
- E indicates an easy ride, M is for moderate and S is for strenuous.
- Rides begin promptly 15 minutes after the meeting time.
- All riders should carry some basic tools, including a pump or CO2 cartridge, tire levers, and a spare tube or patch kit.
- Social rides are more leisurely versions of the mapped ride — usually the shorter route — with longer food breaks. Always contact the social ride leader before the ride to make sure those versions of the ride are taking place.

Here are the scheduled rides:

Sunday, May 1, 9:15 a.m. Covered Bridges of Chittenden County
23 (E), 30 (E/M) and 36 (M)-mile options of rolling hills through Shelburne and Charlotte, with the longer ride going through Ferrisburgh. Possible food stops include the Old Brick Store in Charlotte, or a convenience store in Ferrisburgh for the long ride. Visit up to four of the five covered bridges in Chittenden County: the Shelburne Covered Bridge, and the Holmes, Sequin and Quinlan bridges in Charlotte.
Meeting place: Veterans Memorial Park, South Burlington, Wheeler lot
Leader: Dorothy Pumo – 802-829-8729
Co-leader: Kevin Batson – 802-825-2618
Social ride leader: Donna Leban – 802-862-1901



Courtesy photo
Phyl Newbeck in purple jacket riding with the Green Mountain Bicycle Club's St. Albans Explorer ride. This year, the ride is May 29.

Sunday, May 8, 9:15 a.m. Vergennes Voyager
26-mile rolling (E) or 39-mile flat to rolling (E/M) rural ride running along Otter Creek to Middlebury for a bakery stop. The longer ride heads toward Kingsland Bay State Park before heading south to Middlebury.
Meeting Place: Vergennes Union High School, Monkton Road, east parking lot
Leader: Diane Meyerhoff – 802-495-8883
Co-leader: Josh Simonds – 802-355-4352
Social ride leader: Donna Leban – 802-862-1901

Saturday, May 14, 10 a.m. Introductory ride for new riders.
We will go 12–20 miles at a leisurely pace. Our goal is to teach new cyclists the rules of the road and how to ride in a group.
Meeting Place: Veterans Memorial Park, South Burlington, Wheeler lot
Leader: Brian Howard – 802-304-0610
Co-leader: Dawn Fragola – 802-238-8752

Sunday, May 15, 9:15 a.m. Kingsland Bay
The 35-mile (E/M) Ride rolls from Shelburne through Charlotte to Kingsland Bay Park and back. The 51-mile (M) ride heads towards Vergennes and climbs to Monkton Ridge, returning through Hinesburg; and a 65-mile (M/S) option heads into Huntington but will not have a leader.
Meeting place: Shelburne Village Shopping Center

Leader: Brian Howard – 802-304-0610
Co-leader: Mark Dupuis – 802-864-5567
Social ride leader: Donna Leban – 802-862-1901

Sunday, May 22, 9:15 a.m. Grand Isles Flats
One of the flattest rides of the season, this is longer than previous years, in an attempt to stay off Route 2 as much as possible. The 28-mile ride (E/M) circles Grand Isle. A medium option stops at the end of North Hero. Riders on the 73-mile (M) ride can visit St. Anne's Shrine (bathrooms and picnic tables, but no food) and a fossil bed, with a food break at Hero's Welcome in North Hero.
Meeting place: Folsom School, South Street in South Hero. Those coming from the Burlington area may consider carpooling.
Leader: Phyl Newbeck – 802-734-5166
Co-leader: Holly Creeks – 802-233-9013

Saturday, May 28, 9:15 a.m. Gravel: Stone Walls and Solar Panels
This scenic 30-mile (M) ride goes from Underhill to Cambridge on mostly dirt and gravel roads past a myriad of old stone walls and not so old solar panels. Our midway point is the store at the end of Upper Pleasant Valley Road in Cambridge. If there is sufficient interest, at the end of the ride we can add an extra eight miles roundtrip on pavement to Poorhouse Pies in Underhill to share a delicious treat.
Meeting place: St. Thomas Church

of Underhill, 6 Green Street
Leader: Phyl Newbeck – 802-734-5166
Co-leader: Phil Littler – 802-309-2464

Sunday, May 29, 9:15 a.m. St. Albans Explorer
Light, rolling hills with beautiful views by the lake. The 35-mile (E/M) route goes out to Kill Kare State Park and returns, while the 50-mile (M) route continues on to Swanton and back. Both rides can break for food at St. Albans Bay.
Meeting Place: Georgia Park and Ride – For those coming from the Burlington area, we suggest carpooling at the Colchester Park and Ride at Exit 17 off I-89, or perhaps meeting at UVM or Veterans Memorial Park in South Burlington.
Leader: Amy Otten – 802-878-4070
Co-leader: Ralph Kilmoyer – 802-878-4070
Social ride leader: Donna Leban – 802-862-1901

For more information, visit thegmbc.com.

