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The Charlotte News

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Sunset goodbye
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Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Mike Dunbar has entered into a lease arrangement that has revealed the warm and fuzzy side of Robert Mack, Charlotte farmer and former selectboard member.

Mack and his two partners are leasing property from Dunbar for farming on the 55 acres behind the town hall often referred to as the former Shirley Bruce Estate. The property also includes about an acre where the Charlotte Health Center had planned to build a new facility at 251 Ferry Road.

Behind an abandoned house at this address, which Dunbar said he plans to renovate into a home, there are now an assortment of farm animals, including pigs, turkeys, chickens — and goats. Dunbar developed the multi-use commercial building on Route 7 known as Charlotte Crossings that houses the Backyard Bistro, the Red Onion, the Gilded Elephant, Charlotte Work Club and Junapr, a public relations consultant group.

The goats and chickens are part of a partnership between Mack, Ko Gyi and his twin brother Ko Lay. Mack said they are calling the partnership Village Farm.

The brothers are immigrants from Myanmar by way of Thailand.

Their family is Rohingya Muslim, refugees from Myanmar which was formerly known as Burma. The persecution of the Rohingya has been decried by many international human rights organizations.

Ko Gyi said, as he walked through shoulder-high grass to 10 acres Dunbar has fenced for Village Farm, the goats and other animals will be raised and slaughtered to conform to halal, or Muslim restrictions on food. To be halal animals have to be slaughtered in a specific way and when an animal is killed for food the name of Allah needs to be invoked. Among other practices, all blood needs to be drained and organs removed.

He indicated where a barn or some type of shelter for the animals will be built. A pond is nearby which will supply water.

Just like kosher practices, no matter how pigs are slaughtered or prepared, pork is never on the halal menu. Sometimes when halal meats are not available, kosher meat can be substituted, but there are differences.

So, the pigs are just Mack's, as are the chickens being raised for eggs. Chickens being raised for eating are the Village Farm partnership's. Mack's farm animals are penned across the Dunbar property to the north, behind the dilapidated house at 251 Ferry Road.

Ko Gyi, 36, said their family initially fled Myanmar after a coup when he and his brother were 4-years-old. Myanmar has been beset by coups and fighting. The family moved back and forth between the two countries several times over the years.

A goat farm grows in Charlotte



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Ko Gyi points out where he hopes to realize his dream of raising halal meat on the former Shirley Bruce Estate.

He and Ko Lay moved to the United States 15 years ago when they were 24. Although he liked Thailand, he said he and his family didn't have much.

Much of his work there was tending other people's animals, including goats, and raising vegetables. He worked hard at whatever work he could find but didn't even have a home.

"I didn't have nothing," Ko Gyi said. "We worked all the time."

But he did have a dream. He dreamed of having his own farm animals to raise.

He and his brother now are independent vendors of sushi at Shaw's Grocery Store in Williston.

Ko Gyi still works all the time, leaving the grocery store and coming to Charlotte to tend their animals, and often going back to work.

Lots of times he brings his family with him to help tend the animals. And share the dream.

This last Wednesday, June 22, the Village Farm had about 50 goats. But this Monday, the herd grew again, as Dunbar returned with a load of goats from Joneslan Farm in Hyde Park.

That farm got out of the dairy cow business in the spring of 2020, just before the pandemic sent already volatile milk prices dropping precipitously. According to the News and Citizen of Morristown, the

brothers Steven and Brian Jones, researched switching to goat milk for several years, sold their cows and made the switch to goats at a very fortuitous time after the family farm had been in that business for over 150 years.

Mack said the Joneslan Farm has a herd of about 600 female goats, but they aren't interested in keeping the males. So, that farm has been a source of male, or billy goats, for the Village Farm.

When asked if this is a good time for him, Ko Gyi's face lights up. The United States and specifically Charlotte is making him very happy. He has a home in Williston, a wife and five children, and although he still works all the time, the future looks bright.

They hope to have 200 goats in two years when they will be ready for slaughter. Where they will be slaughtered is "to be determined," Mack said.

Mack plans to return most of the rest of the 55 acres to farming of various sorts. Some will be hay and some pasture.

He remembers when the property was a farm a couple of decades ago. "I've cut hay there. I remember when there was corn."

It's time to end the conversation. Ko Gyi has to go back to work at Shaw's again before his day is done.

Mack needs to go back to work, too. But he'll be returning later in the evening to nurse the baby goats with a bottle.



Photo by Mike Dunbar

Baby goats jockey for a position at the bottle as Robert Mack feeds them.

This is where his softer side comes out. Mack just "melts" around animals. Dunbar said, "It's funny because he's a tough guy. But when we get him around some baby goats, he turns to mush."

Charlotte Fire and Rescue names new chief of department

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

The name doesn't say it all. But it says a lot about the new chief of the Charlotte Fire and Rescue Department — Justin Bliss.

Bliss is extremely happy with his new job, but he's not just in bliss. He also has a lot of humility about heading the department. The need to be humble but confident was a common theme in a conversation with him.

Bliss was named to the post by a unanimous vote of the department's board on June 14, but he doesn't officially start until July 18.

He is replacing the sometimes-controversial Dick St. George, who has been chief of the department for seven years.

Bliss said he didn't know what the controversy was about and is confident it can be worked out. He sees St. George as a fantastic resource.

"I need him here to try and get as much knowledge from him as I can. He knows the town. He knows the equipment. Honestly, he's a really good firefighter, too. I'd love to keep him on in any capacity," Bliss said.

Bliss is from Liverpool, N.Y., about six miles north of Syracuse. Although his father wasn't a firefighter, his grandfather was a firefighter and two of his uncles were fire chiefs.

In fact, it was going with one of his uncles to a car-fire call when he was 8 years-old that set him on the path that eventually led to the Charlotte Fire and Rescue Department.

"That's where I caught the bug," Bliss said. "Gosh, I had never seen so much fire in my life."

The car was a total loss but no one was hurt. A future firefighter was born.

When he was 16, he joined the fire department and he's been involved in fire and rescue ever since,



Town

Restaurant planned for East Charlotte

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

After more than two centuries the weathered white building at the corner of Spear Street and Hinesburg Road in East Charlotte will finally become a tavern.

Built in 1810 as a tavern, the house in the center of the village has been a home for almost all of its existence, said Dan Cole, president of the Charlotte Historical Society.

The house sits on just over 15 acres Jonathan Maguire bought from Clark Hinsdale at the end of May for \$625,000.

Hinsdale had planned to build senior housing on the property, but lost enthusiasm for that project after the defeat of two articles intended to spur economic development in East Charlotte in the spring 2021. He said articles 6 and 7 would have helped but were not necessary to his development plans.

“The whole East Charlotte zoning brouhaha and some of the personal attacks — I just simply decided that I just wasn’t going to put up with that anymore,” Hinsdale said.

Twenty years ago, Hinsdale wouldn’t “have shied away” from the fight but now feels like he’s too old for that kind of battle, he said.

Although the property wasn’t for sale, Hinsdale decided to sell it to Maguire: “I was very satisfied that there was a new owner coming along that kind of shared my values and shared my point of view about what that property on the corner could contribute to making East Charlotte better.”

Maguire is just concentrating on the property where the 1810 house sits for the time being and will decide what to do with the rest of the property later. He is renovating the house into a restaurant which he will lease to someone else. The kind of restaurant and what sort of food it will serve will be determined by the eventual tenant.

Maguire said he plans for the restaurant to occupy both the first and second floor of the house, but what sort of food will be served will be decided by the tenant. He expects it will seat 50.

The design of the old house is consistent with old taverns with a large first floor room for dining and drinking and a second floor with four rooms off a central hall,



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

It doesn’t appear the house built in 1810 as a tavern actually was a tavern for many of its more than 210 years.

Hinsdale said.

Maguire had hoped to renovate an old barn near the house and put an accessory dwelling there, but found the structure too dilapidated to be restored and tore it down. He plans to rebuild on the barn’s footprint a building designed to look like an old barn but with a living space.

Maguire was motivated to purchase and renovate the house by the lack of a bar and restaurant in Charlotte.

The reaction he’s received from residents of East Charlotte has been positive, Maguire said, “There’s an appetite for it.”

Alex Bunten lives next door, just south on Spear Street in a home renovated from the Baptist church that was built in 1807 which gives the intersection one of its names — Baptist Corners.

He was part of the opposition to the articles proposed last year. Bunten said he wasn’t opposed but was waiting to see how he felt about the project until after he talked to Maguire.

Later, after they had talked, Maguire said he agreed to put in a buffer of trees between their properties.

“I’ve talked with all the neighbors and they’re all cool,” Maguire said, adding his plan for the property is 100 percent in line

“I’ve talked with all the neighbors and they’re all cool.”

— Jonathan Maguire

with Charlotte’s town plan.

He’s already gotten a permit to raise the house and put in a new foundation which he expects to start in a few weeks.

Maguire is the husband of Andrea Regan of the Charlotte Health Center. Her practice’s plan to build a new facility in West Charlotte ran into a good bit of opposition, but that doesn’t discourage Maguire. Every project is unique, he said.

Although the house, that many refer to as the Sheehan house after the family that lived there for years, was intended as a tavern, it wasn’t used for that purpose immediately after it was built.

Here is William Wallace Higbee in 1897 talking about the house in one of his historical essays collected in “Around the Mountains”: “Mr. Martin built the house now owned by Mrs. Henry Claxton and this also was destined for a tavern. William O. Barker bought it in an unfinished condition and after completion ran a public house here.”

It appears Mr. Martin’s plans for a tavern were thwarted through the machinations of Hezekiah Barnes.

Mr. Martin built the planned tavern “on spec” as we say today. A north-south stagecoach route was being planned to come through East Charlotte on what is now Spear Street. But, Cole said, Barnes had other plans for the route.

Barnes, a U.S. militia captain turned road surveyor and an early settler in Charlotte, was a state legislator at the time the stage coach route was being planned. Because of his clout in the legislature, Barnes was able to stop the proposal for the route to run down Spear Street. Instead, Barnes got the stagecoach route moved more than 2 miles to the west where Church Hill Road comes south from Route 7 and intersects Hinesburg Road at the Charlotte Museum.

Barnes owned a tavern on the northwest side of that intersection. That building was sold to the Shelburne Museum and moved there in 1949. It’s the building there that’s now named the Stagecoach Inn.

So, the planned tavern in East Charlotte sat unfinished for 10 years or more until Barker bought it and finished it in the 1820s. And it appears it didn’t function as a tavern for too many years.

For most of its existence, the house has been a home, but now it looks like it will be a tavern — or at least a restaurant with a bar.

Not so recreational



Photo by Elizabeth Bassett

An RV, or recreational vehicle, found its recreating shut down for more than two hours Monday afternoon on Thompson’s Point while it waited for a tow truck. And workers couldn’t leave to go home until the vehicle was unstuck.



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:

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- Letters may not exceed 300 words, obituaries 500 words and opinion pieces 750 words.
- All published letters and opinion pieces will include the writer’s name and town of residence.
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Letters to the Editor

Supreme Court decision sets women's rights back 50 years

To the Editor:

The anti-abortion majority Supreme Court's Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health decision overturning Roe v. Wade today sets women's right to make their own reproductive decisions back 50 years. Vermont established that right in 1919 and must continue to do so. Vermonters will have the opportunity to ratify Proposition 5 and guarantee that right in November.

The wrong direction taken by this court is further demonstrated by its decision to strike down New York's gun permit law which will put thousands of New York residents at a higher risk of gun violence. It is states' responsibility to stand up for the rights and safety of their citizens now being denied by the Supreme Court of the U.S.

Mike Yantachka
Charlotte

Time for a woman to represent Charlotte

To the Editor:

I'm sitting here at my desk on this beautiful sunny day with tears in my eyes and a sick feeling in my heart. Roe v. Wade was overturned today, and just like that, women across this country are in danger.

I'm running as a Democrat for the House of Representatives seat in Chittenden-5, which covers Charlotte and part of Hinesburg. I'm running because the incumbent, 12 years into his stint as our Representative, decided to pull a bait-and-switch and change his vote on Prop 5, which guarantees in the Vermont Constitution a person's right to reproductive freedom.

If you're an elected official, your job is to stand up for the people who chose you, in good faith, to represent them. I guarantee you that the majority of voters around here aren't OK with my opponent's vote against a woman's right to choose, and I'm pretty sure he didn't check with any of them before he switched his vote to a no.

This election isn't just about Prop 5, although that's important. It's about choosing someone who understands how even a seemingly innocuous "protest" vote against an important issue contributes to the erosion of our rights. It's time for a woman to represent Charlotte and Hinesburg in Montpelier. I'm willing to stand up for families, for women, for diversity in all its forms, for affordable housing, for farmers, for everyone who needs a little help being heard.

I'm happy to talk any time to anyone with questions or concerns, and I respectfully request your vote in this important election. Primary Election Day is Aug. 9, but you can vote early right now or get an absentee ballot by calling your town clerk.

Chea Waters Evans
Charlotte

Support for Becca Balint for U.S. House

To the Editor:

In politics, there are two types of candidates: those who run to win and those who run to work.

Over the last 16 years, Vermonters have been lucky to have a representative in the U.S. House who knows the real goal of running isn't winning but working every day on behalf of Vermonters. If we want that to continue, the clear choice for the U.S. House in 2022 is Becca Balint.

Balint's record in the Vermont Senate makes it clear that she understands her constituents and — equally importantly — her constituents understand her. They know she is honest and that she will keep her word. They know that even when they might disagree, they can trust her decisions are always on the side of making life better for Vermonters — not advancing her own career. And that is precisely what all Vermonters deserve to see in our lone U.S. House member. None of us are going to agree with our representative on every single issue or every single vote. But we can elect

someone who is clear about what they stand for, what drives them and how they will represent us.

Vermonters also deserve a representative who understands that their work in Washington is just half of the job. Just as important as the votes she casts, hearings she attends, meetings she takes or donations she accepts will be the work she does across Vermont.

I have spent over a decade and a half working for Vermont's congressional delegation, with more than half of those years spent here in Vermont. I know that a good member puts time and resources into their state offices. They hire staff who work hard each and every day on behalf of Vermonters. They prioritize going out into communities to listen to what people need and find ways to help; carefully recording callers' opinions on policy issues and helping them navigate complicated federal programs and bureaucracy; and highlighting stories of Vermonters doing good in their communities, spreading hope in challenging times.

I know firsthand that “Not me. Us.” is what being a member of Vermont’s congressional delegation is really all about. And in this race, I am confident that Becca isn’t running for Becca. She is running for us.

Kathryn Becker Van Haste
Shelburne

**Thanks for Mt. Philo
people-power rescue**

To the Editor:

I am so thankful for the rescue teams from Charlotte, Shelburne and Ferrisburgh and the Mt. Philo Park ranger for getting me safely off Devil's Chair Trail on Mt. Philo after injuring my ankle June 13.

The responders were very professional but also sensitive, and from the moment they arrived I had extreme confidence in their assessment and management of the situation. We are very lucky to have such dedicated and skilled rescue personnel in our towns.

I do want to make one correction to the article in reference to “mutual aid manpower;” make that “mutual aid man and women power.” Two of the 18 rescuers were women!

Francine Cohen
Burlington

The term 'NIMBY' is inaccurate and pejorative

To the Editor:

I'm writing to you in response to Peter Joslin's recent piece about balancing "NIM-BY-ism" with the greater good.

I have now read a handful of pieces on NIMBY-ism just in the past few weeks — in the New York Times, the Atlantic, as well as

Front Porch Forum and now The Charlotte News. It might be trendy, but all of them misuse the term NIMBY, which does not refer to the protest of development in general, but in protest of something perceived to be unpleasant or having a negative impact on property values — e.g. a garbage dump, a drug clinic, a shelter for the unhoused.

What is happening in Charlotte is something else entirely. Not only is it inaccurate to call our local kind of resistance “NIMBY,” it is pejorative. If we want to have a real discussion in town about development and the future, it will help if we don’t toss around insults, intended or not, and it will also help if we say what we mean.

Peter writes that what is occurring in our town is tension between NIMBYism and the greater good. But projects that are to the “greater good” are public. In the year and bit that I’ve been privileged to sit on the planning commission, the projects that have come before us have by and large been houses for upper middle-class homeowners and private businesses. But those things alone do not impact the greater good; to think that they do is to indulge in 80s-style trickle-down thinking, which has been debunked.

If the health center (which, full disclosure, I voted for) had been a genuine walk-in clinic (and not a private doctor's office) that might have been to the greater good. If the athletic fields on Spear Street (approved, by the way) were intended for use by the whole town and not by the attendees of a private school, that might have been to the greater good. If any of the housing projects proposed in my year of sitting on the planning commission were affordable, or even work-force housing, that also might have been to the greater good because it would mean that, for example, teachers or farm workers could actually live where they work. But zero projects geared towards affordable housing have appeared on our docket (nor arts organizations, nor public facilities of any kind, beyond researching a

pool so expensive it would have had to have been paid for by membership fees).

If we collectively are going to steer Charlotte into a future where we acknowledge that dairy farming is no longer the center of the economy that it once was, if we want our kids to stay here when they grow up, we need to make it thrive for more folks than just the ones with money. Building endless houses, building yet another unspecific American suburb, is not the same as building a community where young people can stay and thrive.

In any case, NIMBY is a bad descriptor, because we can see that developers don't build in their own actual backyards: it is always in someone else's. Developers also don't want to live next door to a parking lot, or a garbage dumpster, or a new pig farm, or a wastewater treatment center (these are all hypothetical examples). Or a housing development, for that matter. So, it's a bit rich for the rest of us to have to absorb the term NIMBY. I can think of one notable recent exception, on Lake Road, where the developer was an abutter — but since that development of lots for decidedly not-affordable houses was going in the middle of everyone's public viewshed, that brings up another question about the public good.

Really what it is, is that no one wants to be told that something is for the greater good when a developer stands to turn a profit. This is America, profit is what people do, but let's at least speak plainly to one another. The rest of us know when something is for profit and when it's for the general good of the public. Like a garage.

Meanwhile, perhaps if developers built things for the actual public good (and maybe they need incentives), they'd encounter less resistance. People would trust them more. Building goodwill is part of building.

Kyra Wegman
Charlotte

*Look who's
been married
50 years
on June 24th!*



*Here's to 50 more
Craig & Sharon Armell!*

Love you, mom & dad

Town

Selectboard approves August ballot for financing \$3 million town garage

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Since almost immediately after the private garage where road commissioner Junior Lewis housed his road clearing trucks and equipment burned just before Christmas, the Charlotte Selectboard has been working to get a new — town-owned this time — garage built.

That effort took a big step forward on Monday night, June 20, when the board voted unanimously to approve voting for a 9,000 square foot garage to be on the Aug. 9 ballot. If the town voters approve, it should be full steam ahead on building a new garage.

Except for winter. At the outset the selectboard members were cautiously optimistic that the garage could be built before the weather turned too cold for construction. Now, it looks likely that won't happen.

Board member Frank Tenney said even if the town found a builder who could build the garage before winter, there is almost no chance construction materials could be found that soon.

If approved, the proposed garage will be built on the west side of Route 7, south of Charlotte Crossings, on town-owned property where the old flea market used to be.

Voters will be asked to approve a new garage that will cost about \$3 million, but the cost to property owners will only be \$1.5 million.

The other \$1.5 million of the construction cost will come from \$1 million in town American Rescue Plan Act or ARPA funds, plus \$500,000 from highway reserve funds road commissioner Junior Lewis has saved from his annual budget over the years.

"We are building a \$3 million project, but we're asking for just \$1.5 million," selectboard chair Jim Faulkner said. "I want to make sure that's clear to everybody."

In spite of the misfortune of the fire, the town has the fortunate coincidence of

having available COVID-relief money and a sizeable highway reserve fund. Faulkner said he was sure the town could build the garage for \$3 million, but was pretty certain it couldn't be built for less.

The design is the same basic footprint as the garages in Hinesburg and Ferrisburgh, he said.

The cost was a shock to most when the estimate came in for Charlotte's garage. Those two towns' garages cost much less but were built before the pandemic pushed construction costs beyond exorbitant.

Town administrator Dean Bloch said a few months ago, when interest rates were 3 percent, the \$1.5 million would have raised property taxes on a \$500,000 home by about \$85 the first year. Over the 20 years of the financing, the increase would have gone down to about \$45, but he didn't have the amount of taxes at today's rates for a bond or loan.

Right now, the interest rates are 5.34 percent, board member Louise McCarren said.

It's "an odd market" Faulkner said, so the board doesn't know if the rate will be higher or lower when the town is ready to secure the financing.

All that was being approved at this selectboard meeting was the amount residents will vote on in August, Tenney stressed. The garage's design details, like whether it will have a flat or peaked roof, will be decided later.

In a social media post, town clerk Mary Mead pointed out that the Aug. 9 vote will be essentially two elections — a primary election and the vote on financing the garage construction — so voters who request absentee ballots will receive two envelopes mailed separately. The absentee ballots should be available this week and can be returned by mail, in person or dropped in a box at the door to the town hall.

Anyone with questions was encouraged to call the clerk's office at 802-425-3071 ext. 201.

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Roe v. Wade protest



Courtesy photo

Around 20 people gathered on the Charlotte Town Green on Friday evening, July 24, to protest the Supreme Court's decision overturning Roe v. Wade earlier that day. In the center are Chea Walker Evans, candidate for the Chittenden-5 House district, and Lewis Mudge, Charlotte Selectboard member and candidate for the Chittenden Southeast Senate District.

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August 5: with Brickdrop

September 2: with The Reflexions

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Hi Neighbor!

Gay Regan: Basking in family connections at Thompson’s Point



Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

Gay Regan was 13 when she first visited Thompson’s Point in 1955, and she never outgrew her summer home.

There were a few years when she wasn’t able to visit, but it was still a constant in her life. She inherited the camp from her mother and fully intends to pass it down to her children.

Regan notes that in some ways, Thompson’s Point has changed. These days, the camps are more likely to be occupied by local people whereas in the past, there were more visitors from out of state. Years ago, it was also more common for wives to spend time at the camp with their children, while their husbands worked in New York or Boston. Another change is a more structured life for the visiting kids.

“When I was a teenager, we had a group that would just hang out,” she said. “Some worked at the marina or the farm, but these days, kids seem to have more structured jobs or internships, or they go to camps to acquire skills. The ability to have a free summer and knock around on the water isn’t as prevalent.”

There is one Thompson Point change that Regan wholeheartedly embraces. “The Country Club used to be quite snobby,” she said. “You had to have two letters of recommendation and then be interviewed, but now anyone can join.”

In other ways, however, Regan is pleased to see that some things haven’t changed. “The roads and the camps are the same,” she said, “and it’s still very generational.”

One of Regan’s joys is seeing people whose grandparents she knew. “It’s lovely to know families that go way back, even if you weren’t close,” she said.

Regan is also pleased that the annual Fourth of July tradition has been maintained. “We walk to the end of the point, and someone gives a speech, and we sing the Star-Spangled Banner,” she said.

The celebration also involves food and is attended by as many as 200 people. Musicians play for the crowd and there is dancing. Regan said that since the clubhouse is roughly 100 years old, the floor sometimes

bounces a bit.

A graduate of Middlebury College, Regan spent years teaching high school English. She served on the board of Champlain Valley Union High School while raising her three children, which allowed her to stay connected to the world of teaching. She subsequently taught students with learning disabilities at Pine Ridge School.

One constant in Regan’s life has been travel. As a child, she spent time in Europe with her parents and later travelled to South America, attending school in Mexico City for a year.

One memorable trip involved taking the Trans-Andean Railroad from Argentina to Santiago, Chile, through deep snow. “It was an amazing mountaintop experience” she said. “We spent a month in Peru including a night at Machu Pichu before there were so many tourists.”

Regan continued traveling when she was married and one daughter, Happy, picked up the travel bug and spent some time in the Peace Corps. Happy married a man from Satawal Island and that led Regan to travel through a chain of islands called Yap which includes Guam.

Regan has also been to China twice. “Travel has been an exciting thing for me,” she said. “I also like to read about where I travel, and I think it’s given me a broader world view.”

Regan is also connected to Charlotte through a writers’ group which is run by Sandy Detwiler. The group meets every week for memoir writing. “It’s fun but it’s also helpful,” Regan said. “It gives us something to work towards with a deadline, but it also makes for intimate friendships.”

Regan’s affection for Thompson Point is influenced in part by her love of the water. Her ex-husband was a sailor, and they also had a motorboat.

Regan recalls waterskiing as a teenager and being allowed to pilot the boat to Essex, N.Y., because there was no gas for sale on the Vermont side of the lake.

“Our camp isn’t fancy,” she said. “There is no air conditioning and only a little heater. It can be miserable when it’s cold but it’s very much a part of nature.” Regan has seen raccoons, foxes, and owls and recalls one neighbor who saw a moose walk down her driveway and into the lake.”

Regan hopes Thompson’s Point will be part of her family for many future generations. “There is that community with the lake,” she said. “It pulls family in.”



Gay Regan

Photo contributed

Around Town

Congratulations

Graduation

Moira Brown of Charlotte recently graduated from the College of William & Mary with a Bachelor of Science degree and in her last semester was named to the dean’s list for the spring.

Academic awards

Elizabeth Breen of Charlotte was named to the dean’s list at the College of the Holy Cross for the spring semester.

Genevie Lemieux of Charlotte has been named to the spring dean’s list at the University of Rhode Island.

Cassandra Franklin of Charlotte was named to the dean’s list for the spring semester at Connecticut College.

Sophia Kehr of Charlotte was named to the dean’s list for the spring semester at Hartwick College.

Vladislav Moore of Charlotte was named to the spring president’s list at the Community College of Vermont.

Stuart Robinson of Charlotte was named to the spring student honors list at the Community College of Vermont.



Cole Boffa of Charlotte, who is majoring in industrial design, was named to the president’s list at James Madison University for the spring semester.

Retirement

Commander Luc David Delaney, son of Sharron and Dennis Delaney of Charlotte, has retired from the United States Navy. Delaney attended the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis and is a member of the class of 1999. While in the Navy he completed a master’s in mechanical engineering. He is married to the former Asako Toda of Japan. They have a daughter Maya and reside in Virginia Beach.



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Community

FIRE CHIEF

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

except for about a year after graduating from Champlain College in 2005, while he worked in IT management, until he realized that desk work just isn't for him.

In 2008, Bliss was hired by the South Burlington Fire Department where he worked for eight years.

In 2016, Bliss and his wife Dani moved to Virginia. Dani Bliss, an anesthesiologist in the Navy, was transferred to the Naval Medical Center in Portsmouth.

Quitting a job he loved in South Burlington seemed tragic at first, but it turned into a blessing. He went to work for the fire service in Suffolk, Va. His three years there were great for him professionally — and personally. His wife gave birth to Wyatt, who just turned 5, and Naomi, who just turned 3.

One of the things he feels might have set him apart from other applicants for the Charlotte chief of the department was his three years in Virginia. He was able to learn from some very strong leaders. And he was able to learn from some very weak leaders.

He and his family moved back to Vermont in July 2020. Dani Bliss had gotten a job working in anesthesiology at the University of Vermont Medical Center, but it being the height of COVID lockdown, they couldn't even enter the state to look at the home they were buying in Hinesburg.

They bought a home they'd only seen in pictures after having three homes they were interested in bought out from underneath them, by buyers who offered cash.

Bliss thinks they were able to buy the

“It’s the nature of the fire service that we make do with what we have, but we can always use more people.”

— Justin Bliss

new home because the house needed some work. In fact, it needed lots of work. He jokes that their Wi-Fi password is money pit.

But from the dreamy look he gets when he talks about the property, it's clear he thinks the hassle and expense have been worth it. They live on Sunset Lake and can just walk out the door and climb into a kayak.

For the past two years, he's been working part-time jobs including teaching as a state fire instructor, a paramedic with the Colchester Rescue Squad and as a lieutenant with the Hinesburg Fire Department.

Because his schedule was flexible, he was able to be the primary caregiver for their two children.

Becoming chief of the department in Charlotte is going “to be challenging,” Bliss said. “I’m not going to lie.”

But the hiring committee has agreed to be flexible with him as long as he's getting the job done. And Dani Bliss may have to take sick days which she hasn't had to do.

He expects the biggest challenge of his new job will be recruitment and retention of rescuers.

“That’s not just a Charlotte thing. That’s a nationwide thing. There are constant

staffing issues everywhere,” Bliss said.

One of his ideas to work on this issue is working with other departments in the region, trying to tie the regional partners closer together. Towards that end, he would like to do joint trainings with other departments and increase radio operations with them.

“It’s the nature of the fire service that we make do with what we have, but we can always use more people,” he said.

He said the Hinesburg department recently had an open house and thinks that's something Charlotte might want to try.

“If we even get one recruit, it's worth it,” Bliss said.

Another idea he has for finding recruits is increasing ties with Champlain Valley Union High. This idea comes right out of his wheelhouse; every person who was a cadet with him when he joined in high school went on to become a full-time firefighter.

So, he hopes to have a booth at the high school's career days.

He thinks that the members of Charlotte Fire and Rescue are very well trained but is interested in seeing if there are ways to get even more training. Bliss said he knows it will cost some money, but he'd like to look

into the feasibility of bringing in trainers from out of state, to be on top of whatever is on the cutting edge of rescue training.

“I'd really like to see us become an area leader for training,” he said.

Bliss returns to the theme of humility and his sense that he has a touch of imposter syndrome — which he believes can be a strength: “I think humility is a very important characteristic of any leader and I do feel that I'm a very humble person.”

Because of this he feels he doesn't get married to a specific idea and is able to listen to others who may have a better idea.

His fondest memories in fire and rescue are of helping — the expression of hurting people when he's been able to give them medication that alleviated their pain, stabilizing a woman with a heart blockage, the relief of people in scary situations when he and other rescuers showed up.

The worst memories are of calls that involve children. Now that he's a father those calls hit harder and closer to home.

Bliss said, “I just really like helping people.” It could be the fire and rescue credo.

His funniest memory of fire and rescue didn't happen to him.

“A friend of mine was responding to a car accident, and the windshield was red,” Bliss said.

So, his colleague was expecting things to be really bad. And when he got the car door open, there was even more red. But the victim had just left the pizza shop and the pie did a face-plant on the windshield. Tomato sauce was everywhere.

The pizza could not be resuscitated.

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Ways to reduce pollution from backyard burning

With spring and summer cleaning underway, the Department of Environmental Conservation wants to remind and encourage Vermonters to follow a few guidelines for on-premise or backyard open burning.

Burning materials from spring cleanup can release harmful pollution that can impact neighboring properties. By following these guidelines, Vermonters can help reduce air pollution, avoid nuisance impacts and protect human and environmental health.

The on-premise or backyard burning of brush, deadwood or tree cuttings collected from normal property maintenance is allowed under the Vermont Air Pollution Control Regulations, as long as no public or private nuisance, such as excessive smoke, is created. These guidelines can help Vermonters avoid creating nuisance impacts during on-premise or backyard burning:

- Allow green materials to dry prior to burning
- Consider the wind speed and direction before beginning the burn
- Postpone burning if atmospheric conditions are not favorable to disperse the smoke (see Using Air Quality Forecasts webpage [https://bit.ly/3l65UzO])
- Ensure that the fire burns hot
- Obtain a local burn permit from the town fire warden (see the Fire Warden Directory at bit.ly/3wm85Eo to find their contact information)

“Our best suggestion is to avoid burning altogether and let the materials decompose naturally,” said John Wakefield, the Department of Environmental Conservation’s compliance section chief for the air quality and climate division. Additional tips on what to do with excess leaves, grass and wood — such as composting and brush piles — can be found on this Waste Management and Prevention Division webpage (bit.



Image by Alexas_Fotos from Pixabay

ly/3L6wVxy).

For more information on open burning in Vermont, go to the Air Quality and Climate Division’s webpage on backyard burning (bit.ly/3L9y3Au).

(The Department of Environmental Conservation is responsible for protecting Vermont’s natural resources and safeguarding human health for the benefit of this and future generations. Visit dec.vermont.gov and follow the Department of Environmental Conservation on Facebook and Instagram.)

Stronger Together

Push for more slow food options

Linda Hamilton
Contributor

We Are What We Eat: A Slow Food Manifesto is the title of the 2021 book by local food advocate and restaurateur Alice Waters. She is based in California, but her book’s message is relevant for all of us.

Whether you have an ample food budget, a modest one or are squeaking by with difficulty, it’s worth reflecting with her on what cultural values are embedded in the food options generally presented to the American public. It may influence the future food choices you make and encourage you to press for changes in the options available.

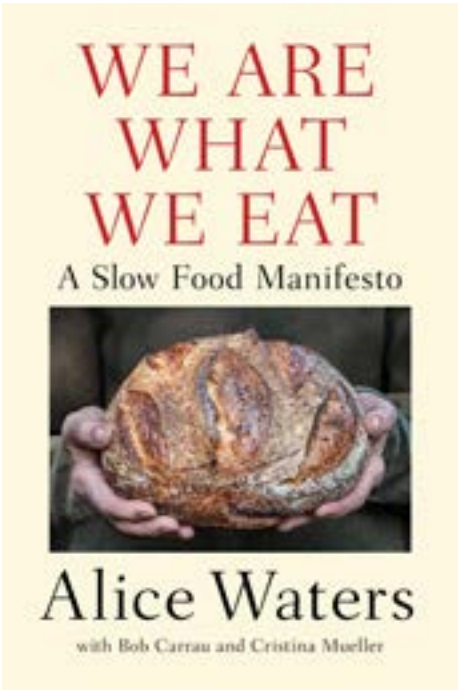
After World War II, U.S. agricultural policy shifted from price protections for farmers and consumers, to treating the products of agriculture as commercial commodities — something to make money on rather than a way to meet people’s need for nutritious food.

Chemical industries responded by creating and aggressively marketing fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, etcetera. Agribusinesses grew large and influential. They were so large and so influential that President Nixon’s 1971 choice for Secretary of Agriculture was their champion, Earl Butz. Butz advocated maximum production of commodities such as corn and soy to be sold here and abroad, using all possible farmland, fencerow to fencerow. Farmers were incentivized to buy larger equipment and the newest chemicals as ways to deal with the fertility, erosion and pollution problems that came with this approach. Earl Butz’ infamous rallying cry was “Get big, or get out!” Agribusiness, not food and farmers, has controlled US agricultural policy ever since.

This history made possible the rise of industrialized fast food, marketed as not only fast but cheap. Concerns about that industry in turn triggered the rise of local, often organic, minimally processed slow food, marketed as healthy for people, local economies and the land. Alice Waters looks at the very different values reflected in fast food compared to slow food, and the long-term ramifications of living by those values.

Culture is constructed based on what we believe to be basic truths. It affects how we look at the world and ourselves, and subconsciously guides all our decisions. Since culture is reinforced or modified through repeated behavior, when people act a certain way again and again, the behavior begins to seem “normal” and is accepted.

So it was with the development of a fast-food culture in the U.S., starting with the commodification of agriculture dependent on chemical inputs and leading



to industrially mass-produced food, most often processed or ultra-processed with additives and preservatives. Fast-food restaurant chains and processed “convenience foods” in supermarkets are now generally accepted and expected. When we buy those products, we financially support the systems that make them available and accept the values of those systems.

Alice Waters provokes a hard look at these values, asking if we really do embrace them as core values we want to live by, especially when compared to the quite different values embedded in slow food culture.

Cultural values of fast food:

Convenience — Finding food to eat should be easy and as effortless as possible.

Uniformity — Food should look and taste the same wherever we are.

Availability — We should have access to anything we want, wherever and whenever.

Trust in advertising — We trust and like attention-grabbing promotion which tells us a product is good for us, even when more information often reveals it is not.

Cheapness — “Getting a good deal” is most important, regardless of quality of the product or the real cost to people or the environment.

More is better — Always.

Speed — Things should happen fast, even though that means there’s no room for patience, reflection, maturing. Time is money and everything comes down to money.

Cultural values of slow food:

Beauty — Universal qualities of beauty arise from Nature (including in food), and connect us to the mystery of life, to awe and joy. We need the nourishment of

beauty.

Biodiversity — Unlike uniformity, edible and general biodiversity demonstrate how varying traits of individual species together make a powerful network. This appreciation of “the other” naturally promotes acceptance, cooperation and integration in our lives.

Seasonality — Eating in rhythm with the changing seasons promotes patience and discernment and living in harmony with Nature.

Stewardship — Eating responsibly is part of being a good steward of the land and all that depend on it.

Pleasure in work — Finding purpose in our own, or others’, paid and volunteer work (even the difficult or repetitive) promotes a welcome sense of dignity, worth and appreciation of skills.

Simplicity — By identifying and cherishing the core elements of our lives, we connect with what is authentic and true for us. Simplicity fosters clarity, reminds us that less is actually more and to trust in the power of small actions.

Interconnectedness — We can eat because we are connected to the people who grew, picked, transported, sold and prepared most of that food. Appreciation of our relationship with Nature and other people reminds us to act responsibly.

What are your core values, and how do they inform what you eat?

(Linda Hamilton is a member of the Charlotte Grange.)



Sunset goodbye

From the Cover

After Louisa Schibli took this picture of Catherine Akin wading in the distance at the Town Beach, she was struck by the image and waited until Akin came back up to see if she had a story to share. Akin told her she grew up in Charlotte but lives in Montana now. She came home because her parents were selling her childhood home on Greenbush. During tough times growing up, Akin said she found lots of comfort from the natural areas of Charlotte, like Mt. Philo, the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge — and the beach, adding, “I hope other individuals, especially if they are going through a hard time, know that those special places are available to them.”

Food Shelf News

Unlike song, summertime living isn’t always easy

Maj Eisinger
Contributor

With apologies to George Gershwin, we note that although it is summertime, living isn’t always easy.

The Food Shelf continues to work to combat food insecurity and serve individuals and families in need of food and assistance. The Food Shelf is an all-volunteer organization supported by the Charlotte community, the Charlotte Congregational Church and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church.

At the present time, volunteers support over 20 families in tasks including, but not limited to: food purchasing, receiving food deliveries from the Vermont Food Bank, food distribution, supply organization, accounting, outreach, and assessment and response to special needs for assistance.

Monthly, the Food Shelf volunteers purchase significant quantities of food from local grocery stores and Costco to supplement the available product obtained from the Vermont Food Bank. The Food Shelf benefits from the support of caring individuals and businesses and, as a 501c entity, continues to accept tax deductible donations with gratitude.

The Food Shelf also accepts with thanks any fresh produce on the second and fourth

Wednesdays of the month. Call 802- 425- 3252 for specifics on vegetable donation if you “grow, and have planted an extra row.”

This month, the Food Shelf is grateful to the Charlotte postal carriers who, as part of the USPS Food Drive, put flyers in mailboxes announcing the food drive and then accepted donations for it.

The Food Shelf is also grateful that the Vermont Food Bank has announced it is able to reimburse the organization for fees, and it will continue to waive fees and provide some free inventory through Sept. 30. It thanks Our Lady of Mount Carmel parishioners for their generous monetary donation. It also appreciates the ongoing supply of fresh eggs from Linda Hamilton’s hens and beautiful loaves of O’Bread.

The Food Shelf is open for food distribution from 4-6 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Curbside delivery continues and masking is encouraged during the ongoing pandemic. For emergency food, please call John at 802-425-3130. If you cannot come to the Food Shelf due to COVID symptoms or seek further information about the Food Shelf, call 802-425-3252.

Monetary donations are appreciated, tax deductible, and can be addressed to: Charlotte Food Shelf, Inc., P.O. Box 83, Charlotte VT 05445.

Pandemic efforts recognized



Photo by Teena Flood

At the Charlotte-Shelburne-Hinesburg Rotary club’s annual dinner on Friday, June 24, Dr. Mark Levine of Shelburne was acknowledged for his work as Vermont’s Commissioner of Health during the pandemic with the Paul Harris Fellow award. Charlotters Carrie Fenn will be president and John Pane vice president for the coming year.

SCHIP spring grants announced

The Shelburne, Charlotte, Hinesburg Interfaith Project, commonly known as SCHIP, has announced its spring 2022 grant awards.

Recent monies in the amount of \$22,000 were awarded to 13 non-profits in SCHIP’s towns.

The recipients for this cycle included: Hinesburg Community School; Shelburne Craft School; Shelburne Food Shelf; Carpenter-Carse Library; YMCA Camp; Vermont Parks Forever; Hinesburg Artist Series; CVU Home School Fund; Stern Center; Hinesburg Nursery School; Joint Urban Ministry Project (JUMP); Common Roots; and Habitat for Humanity.

These awards are made possible by SCHIP’s fundraising through the sale of donated, gently used clothing, household items, accessories, art and collectibles at its resale shop in the distinctive yellow building on Route 7, next to the Shelburne town offices. Since the first grants given in April 2005, more than \$801,000 has been distributed.



SCHIP accepts grant applications twice a year. The deadlines are April 15 and Oct. 15 of each year. The maximum grant size is \$3,000. Application forms are available on the “Contacts” page at schipstreasure.org.

As a member of our communities, you too are an intimate part of our mission. Come shop, donate, volunteer, and help us continue to meet our objectives for the future. For more information on grant recipients or the organization, please visit our website (schipstreasure.org) or our Facebook page (SCHIP’s treasure resale shop) or call the shop for volunteer or donation inquiries at 802-985-3595.

The faith communities participating are: All Souls Interfaith Gathering, Shelburne; Ascension Lutheran Church, South Burlington; Charlotte Congregational Church; Hinesburg United Church; Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church, Charlotte; Shelburne United Methodist Church; St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, Shelburne; St. Jude’s Catholic Church, Hinesburg; Trinity Episcopal Church, Shelburne.

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Education

Consider adding college visits to vacation itinerary



Margo Bartsch
Contributor

Long road trips typically include noticing the various college stickers on the back of car windows. This can be a conversation starter: Where is that school?

In planning your summer road trips, consider adding a convenient college campus visit to your existing itinerary. Sometimes it is the detoured side trip that makes the journey memorable.

This Father’s Day weekend, we drove nine hours to Washington, D.C., which celebrated its first Juneteenth event in our nation’s capital. It was also the perfect opportunity to explore three colleges along the way: University of Maryland at College Park, George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and University of Richmond in Virginia. Each has a distinct campus community; however, they all share access to many internship and job opportunities in government and various industries.

University of Maryland is eight hours from Vermont and just a half-hour after crossing through the Baltimore Tunnel. The stately red brick gate and tree-lined, manicured grass is a welcoming, contained campus. The Maryland Terrapins are in the Big 10 Conference with a rah-rah spirit and exceptional academics. Its 26,000 undergraduate students are a bit less than its competitors at the Michigan Wolverines in Ann Arbor and the Wisconsin Badgers at Madison, both at 30,000.

University of Maryland has its own Metro train station on the red line that is 20-minutes to the National Institutes of Health and a half-hour to Washington, D.C. The campus offers both the collegiate feel and access to incredible professional experiences.

To make a big place small, the Honors College at the University of Maryland, College Park has 4,000 students and six living-learning programs. Two new dorms and various student organizations foster community and teamwork. Honors College applicants must submit additional essays for

admissions. Continuing to drive a half-hour to Washington, D.C., George Washington University’s urban campus is situated on the Foggy Bottom Metro stop with the orange, blue and silver lines. The phrase, “location, location, location” epitomizes the ability to walk to internships, cultural events, and city night life. George Washington University has 11,000 undergraduate students, similar to University of Vermont at 10,000.

George Washington University celebrated its bicentennial birthday in 2021 and is located between the White House and the Washington Monument. Its neighbors include the U.S. State Department, International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which are great internship opportunities (among others) during school or in the summer.

Since 1884, George Washington has the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences; whereas, the other D.C. colleges like Georgetown University and American University lack engineering degrees. More engineering and technology companies are moving to the D.C. area, like Boeing and Amazon. This creates internships and jobs for students with the academic backgrounds that fit with the work requirements.

With the networking connections in Washington, D.C., George Washington encourages students to take cross-school majors, which is the ability to minor or double major outside of their academic school. For example, a school of business student can take classes at the Milken School of Public Health or the Elliott School of International Affairs. This prepares students for a range of career options.

Crossing over the Key Bridge in Washington, D.C., toward Richmond, Virginia, begins the almost two-hour drive to University of Richmond. Also, Amtrack is a nearly two-hour train ride that costs around \$11 with 10 daily trains.

University of Richmond is a liberal arts college with around 3,000 undergraduate students, similar to Middlebury College with 2,600. University of Richmond includes the Robins School of Business. Students may declare a business major after studying one year in the school of liberal arts.

Richmond is the capitol of Virginia and only a 15-minute drive from University



Photo by Margo Bartsch

A road sign on I-95 that includes three college destinations: the University of Maryland at College Park, George Washington University in D.C. and the University of Richmond in Virginia.

of Richmond. This creates an expanded social outlet and internship opportunities. Also, the Richmond Spiders is a Division-1 athletic program competing in the Atlantic 10 Conference. With its gated green campus and sprawling athletic fields, University of Richmond offers a balance of living and learning in a picturesque setting.

When planning your summer road trip schedule, remember to add college visits near your destination. Beforehand, visit the admissions tab on the college’s website to register for an information session and tour,

if available. Just taking a walk around campus provides context and personality. Bring a notebook to reflect on your impressions for your college list and essays. Seeing is believing to make college planning come to life.

(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.)

The long and winding trail project



Photo by John Limanek

Jonathon Weber, manager of Local Motion’s Complete Streets program, spoke with at least 20 people at the library and online on June 16 about the survey Local Motion and the trails and energy committees did of residents about walking and biking in Charlotte. The group discussed how the trails are for recreation but also for transportation, the benefits of a town master plan for biking, walking and connections to other forms of transportation.



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Opinion

Fish and Wildlife board appointments are fishy

Lisa Jablow

Once upon a time, human behavior obeyed an equivalent of Newton’s third law — for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. In other words, when someone stepped on your foot and you said, “Ouch!” they reacted by saying, “I’m so sorry. I didn’t see your foot there.” Nowadays, with everything going off the rails, it’s really no surprise that human interactions are less and less bound by etiquette or fair play.

And so go Governor Scott’s Fish and Wildlife board appointments. From the governor who likes to talk about everyone working together, there’s been nothing resembling fair play in this instance. What there has been is political doublespeak. He conveniently ignored the public’s massive protest over his Fish and Wildlife board appointments, seemingly oblivious to the frequent criticisms of cronyism, lack of transparency and a good ol’ boys’ club mentality.

The public’s reaction has been so loud over the last five or six years that legislators have introduced bills seeking to change the appointment process. But from the governor ... crickets. He is brazenly ignoring the majority of Vermonters to pander to a privileged special interest group. He appears resolutely uninterested in modernizing the Fish and Wildlife board that makes public policy decisions on our shared public “resource” (wildlife) without broad representation of the Vermont public. The good ol’ boys club is alive and well, and if you’re interested in wildlife protection, you’re not invited.

The Fish and Wildlife board consists of 14 members, one from each county in the state. Each board member serves for a six-year term. Thirteen of the 14 members are white men and all are avid members of the hunting/trapping/angling community. One of the latest appointees included his NRA membership on his application, so we can add that to the list of “assets” that the governor looks for.

Typically, when a board seat is nearing expiration, Protect Our Wildlife contacts the governor’s office to ask that consideration be given to candidates that can provide a fresh perspective to offer more balance to the board. For example, a recent applicant is a retired environmental sciences teacher who is not opposed to hunting but would like to see some restrictions on certain activities, such as trapping and hounding. Another applicant is a wildlife rehabber who also supports hunting, but with some exceptions.

Both of these applicants would have been excellent additions because their perspectives would have offered some balance to the current echo chamber of interests and opinion. Neither of these applicants even received an acknowledgement, yet hunters are appointed who don’t even fill out an application.

What’s more, there’s no requirement to disclose potential conflicts of interest. There have been concerns in the past over certain board members not recusing themselves from votes that might have benefited them personally. And new appointments seemingly come out of nowhere, no doubt from some offline conversations that are never publicly disclosed. Nevertheless, these appointees are making public policy. The only reason the public even knows anything about the Fish and Wildlife board appointment process and the appointees is because Protect Our Wildlife submits public records requests.

Bill S.129 was a modest bill that sought incremental change that would have modernized the Fish and Wildlife board to include a broader spectrum of interests and voices and changed its role to an advisory capacity. S.129 was not successful, in large part because Fish and Wildlife senior staff opposed it. Why doesn’t the commissioner want his biologists to have the final say on regulations? Why give uncredentialed, volunteer Fish and Wildlife board members the authority to make policy? The answer is simple: It is because wildlife “management” has less to do with what’s best for wildlife and more to do with what’s best for hunters and trappers.

The whole wildlife governance paradigm is mired in a 1950s mindset that is bent on perpetuating destructive activities like the use of leghold traps and hounds to run down bears, even in the face of tremendous new challenges and threats to our wildlife and wildlands. We won’t see any positive changes for bobcats, bears, beavers and other wildlife until Vermont wildlife advocates truly have a say, and that starts with us having a literal seat at the decision-making table: the Fish and Wildlife board.

(Lisa Jablow of Brattleboro is a board member of Protect Our Wildlife.)

Crossing guard



Photo by Nancy Wood

A mama bear was headed to the north crossing Ferry Road when she became concerned about the cars. She ended up turning around and shepherding her family back to cover.

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Sacred Hunter

Silvery flash of salmon is a sign there’s still hope for the lake



Bradley Carleton
Contributor

The late June morning has yet to begin to show striations of dark purple over the mountains to the east.

The truck starts easily and it’s warm enough to roll down the windows as I cruise the backroads of town toward the boat access. Fragrances of warming lake water swirl, mixing with the cool night air rolling off the foothills. A whiff of the first cut of hay slips through the cabin.

In the darkness I navigate closer to the lake. Pulling into the access, there are already two trucks with boats on their trailers waiting for a third one to pull up off the launching ramp. I will save us a place in line. Moments later, my fishing buddy, Chris shows up with his 18-foot Hawk center console. Behind him is Ozzie, our other lake fishing pal.

Within minutes we are launching into the misty darkness. The motor fires up in a whining, gurgling staccato. The acrid smell of fuel sweeps by the bow where I sit.

I know it is politically incorrect nowadays but having been raised in my early childhood in the Greater Pittsburgh area, the smell of burning fuel conjures memories of my adolescence when I received my first combustion engine equipped minibike from JC Penney, “El Tigre.” Electric bikes are great, and they are certainly more environmentally friendly, but my generation was raised with gasoline and oil, and the small suburb of Beaver, Pa., was awash in fumes that we didn’t know were

bad for us or our planet. Someday maybe they will make an electric “El Tigre” that growls and rumbles like the 1970 model but without the noxious fumes that are no longer “cool.”

The old Yamaha outboard on the boat’s stern revs up and the boat jumps up and lurches forward as the horizon begins to paint the sky a Cezanne pastel of sage, helio and salmon. Salmon. That’s the point of getting up this early. I almost forgot. Chris aims the boat west, then south toward Long Point. As we fly by the rocky cliffs and around the point toward Town Farm Bay, the sky is now beginning to show hope of a clear sunrise.

Chris drops the throttle back a little quickly and the Ozzie and I lurch slightly forward to regain our balance. Nothing radical mind you. Just a little enthusiastic deceleration. Enough for Chris to crack a small grin.

Now our captain begins delegating chores like the charismatic pirate humoring his crew. He is all business, and we are his captive audience, Ozzie and I. Downriggers are deployed out at a 45-degree angle and lead cannonballs attached to the steel cable. We are ordered to let out 10 feet of cable as the downrigger ticks out the depth of the ball on the counter. The releases are then added, bending the cable above the surface toward the stern of the boat then attached.

The lures will be lowered down attached to the releases so that they are 10 feet above the ball, which will be 50 feet below. As the rods with their spoons with names like “sausage and gravy,” “Michael Jackson” (because it looks like the legendary white glove on the iconic entertainer) and of course the penultimate Crazy Ivan spoon “Copper Bikini.”

With names like these you’ve got



Courtesy photo

Bradley Carleton with a tasty Lake Champlain Atlantic landlocked salmon.

to wonder how much time passionate fishermen spend on the water, and if it’s possible to overdose on Vitamin D, causing a cerebral aberration, whereby those affected begin to invent entirely new languages. So, the wacky-named spoons descend to their assigned depth and the reels whine as they roll out line. Captain Chris gets to call the “set” on the line being released. At his command, the rods begin to bend toward the surface, creating tension on the releases below.

Next is the wait. Trolling speed is set at 2.4 - 2.6 mph. We are in search of landlocked Atlantic salmon. Lake Champlain once had an abundance of these terrific fish. To watch a 6-pound silvery flash jump a foot or more out of the water behind the boat was much more common 10-15 years ago. But alas, so many factors have affected our beautiful lake that many of the most avid salmon fishermen have given up, selling their boats and losing the will to go all day with no bite.

Reasons for the decline in the number of salmon caught have been attributed to many factors; invasive species like alewives, which contain an enzyme called thiaminase, which when ingested by salmon render them incapable of reproducing. Add in zebra mussels, cormorants, which eat up to 2½ times their weight of fry and smolts every day, add in the algae blooms stealing precious oxygen from the bays, Eurasian milfoil, water chestnuts, massive amounts of effluent escaping outdated wastewater treatment plants and on and on, and it’s a recipe for extirpation.

As we ponder the many reasons why the salmon seem to be disappearing, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife has stepped in to perform a federally funded restoration study, that

will undoubtedly reveal and quantify what we already know, and hopefully provide us with an action plan to bring the fishery back to its previous glory.

Aboard the boat, we are lamenting the current status of the lake, and just when our melancholy has beaten us down, it happens. Two rods pop up powerfully, straightening their spines and alerting us to the fact that, right now, we have two fish on at the same time!

I take the rod on the starboard side and Ozzie the one to port. We begin retrieving the line on the Penn reels and the rods are throbbing with powerful pulls. Suddenly, 30 yards behind the boat, two strong silvery fish jump at the same time, flashing their flanks in the sun. Ozzie and I simultaneously laugh out loud and give a big “Whooooop!”

Perhaps there is still some hope to keep this dream alive. Let’s be grateful for what we do have, and all of us work hard to educate ourselves on the value and the spirit of our most cherished resource, our lake. Enjoy!

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

Artistic whimsy



Photo by Judith Tuttle
An anonymous rock sculptor has been creating at the Charlotte Town Beach.



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Calendar of Events

Calendar written by Mary Landon.
Submissions welcome,
especially for Charlotte events. Send at least
three weeks in advance to
calendar@thecharlottenews.org.
Always check websites
for cancellations and COVID info.

Farm Night Market
Thursdays, June 30, July 7 and 14,
4-7 p.m.
Gather with neighbors, have some fresh
food and purchase direct from farmers at
Earthkeep Farmcommon on Route 7 in
Charlotte (formerly Nordic Farm). Earthkeep
Farmcommon is a farmer's collective
focused on regenerative agriculture and
sustainable practices. The farm hosts a
market every Thursday evening through
Oct. 13 with products from the members.
The market also features a variety of food
trucks. For a complete schedule, see
earthkeepfarmcommon.com/events.

Strawberry maintenance
Thursday, June 30, 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Work alongside horticulturalist Chad
Donovan in the Red Wagon Plants display
gardens. Learn about successful strawberry
growing with other local gardeners. Free
workshop in Hinesburg. Space is limited:
register at redwagonplants.com and bring
gloves.

Music and art in Burlington
Thurs., June 30 and ongoing
Burlington City Arts (BCA) has a full schedule
of midday music, evening music, and art to
enjoy over the summer. Concerts are free
and take place on the BCA patio next to City
Hall Park. New summer art shows include an
exploration of the still life genre, as well as
two short films by an Indigenous artist, Sky
Hopinka, who reflects on his culture, identity,
and homeland. BCA also hosts a Summer
Artists Market on Saturdays in the Park. A
full schedule of all events and times is at
burlingtoncityarts.org.

Pasture walk
Friday, July 1, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Presented by the University of Vermont's
Northwest Crops and Soils Program,
this walk happens at the Chalker Farm
in New Haven. The host farmers will
discuss management of their pasture-

Drawing botanicals

Friday, July 8, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Jane Neroni leads a class in the art of
the plant world at Horsford Gardens
and Nursery in Charlotte. With years of
experience in natural science illustration,
Jane takes participants into the gardens to
look at shape, structure and form of plants.
No experience necessary. To register or
for more info email Neroni at neroni.jane@
comcast.net.

Art by Jane Neroni



based operations, including the transition
of more of their acreage from crops to
pasture. Registration required for this free
program; water and snacks provided, or
you may bring your lunch. Questions may
be directed to Susan Brouillette at 802-
524-6501, ext. 432. Register by June 30 at
kayhartchalkerfarm.eventbrite.com.

Sun to cheese
Friday, July 1, 2-4 p.m.
Meet the crew that makes the cheese that
came from the milk that came from the
Brown Swiss cows that ate the grass that
grew in the sun. Shelburne Farms gives
participants a behind-the-scenes tour of the
cheesemaking process, including a cheese
tasting and a visit to the dairy barn. Adult
program with registration required. See
shelburnefarms.org for more info or register
at tinyurl.com/46hssvsz. Event repeats
every Friday in July.

Music in the Vineyard
Friday, July 1, 6 p.m.
The funky and soulful music of High Summer
entertains at Lincoln Peak Vineyard in New
Haven. Bring a picnic or enjoy dinner from
Creed's food truck. Gates open at 5 p.m.
Bring lawn chairs or blankets. More info at
lincolnparkvineyard.com.

Free First Friday Eve
Friday, July 1, 5-7:30 p.m.
Shelburne Museum opens its grounds and
collections buildings for an evening of music,
food trucks and lawn games. From 5-6
p.m., artist Nancy Winship Milliken leads a
walking tour through her outdoor sculpture
installation; music with the Ray Vega Latin
Jazz Sextet begins at 6 p.m. Free family
event. For more info, call 802-985-3346 or
see shelburnemuseum.org/calendar.

Chamber music series
Friday, July 1, 7:30 p.m.
The Green Mountain Chamber Music
Festival series of faculty concerts is held at
the Elley-Long Music Center at St. Michael's
College in Colchester. This evening's
performance includes music by Bowen,
Kodaly, and Brahms. Six more concerts are
scheduled on July evenings. To buy tickets or
read more, see tinyurl.com/33x6ddjt or call
802-503-1220.

On the road again
Sat., July 2 - Sun., August 14
It would be unfortunate to miss the
outstanding traveling youth circus that is
Circus Smirkus. Thirty circus stars, ages
11-18, are joined by a live band playing
an original score written for the show. The
circus opens July 2 in Greensboro, its home
for 35 years. There are four shows in Essex

Junction at the Champlain Valley Exposition:
July 6, 7, 8 and 10. The troupe's theme, On
The Road Again, refers to their excitement
to perform again after two-year's hiatus.
Tickets and more info at smirkus.org.

Little ones yoga
Saturdays, through July 30, 10:30-11 a.m.
Songs, games and yoga postures for ages
2-5, plus caregivers at Shelburne's Pierson
Library. Led by Suzanne of Water and Rock
Studio, the free class repeats weekly on
Saturdays through July 30. Space limited. No
registration required: arrive early to assure
a space.

Bird club for kids
Saturday, July 2, 10:30 a.m.-noon
An Audubon birding club for kids ages
5-11 will meet at the Fletcher Free Library
in Burlington on Saturdays, once or twice
a month through the summer. Activities
include reading related books, crafts, and
time outside watching for birds. Dress
appropriately. Masks required indoors. Bring
binoculars if available. Next class is July
16. Register for this free class at tinyurl.
com/57unk9t4. Caregivers encouraged to
attend. Email questions to carter.larsen@
audubon.org.

Myra Flynn in concert
Sunday, July 3, 6-9 p.m.
Originally scheduled for June 18, the Myra
Flynn Band performs at the Shelburne
Vineyard. Bring picnics, blankets and chairs
for an evening of indie/soul originals from
this Vermont-raised artist. Email questions
to joe@shelburnevineyard.com. Tickets on
sale at shelburnevineyard.com/events-list.

Happy Independence Day
Many towns have parades, fireworks and
other activities for the 4th. The Burlington
waterfront offers food, entertainment and
fireworks on Sunday, July 3 from 5:30-10
p.m. Info at btvjuly3.com. Warren has a "wild,
wacky, and wickedly fun parade" beginning
at 10 a.m. on Monday, July 4. Kids' games,
food, music and a street dance are part of
this celebration in its 73rd year. Main Street
will be closed at 8:30 a.m. sharp. More info
at madrivervalley.com/4th.

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Honky tonks and driver ants

Katherine Arthaud
Contributor

It’s hard to believe I have read all the books now stacked on the table before me since the last time I reported to you, but it’s true. Twelve plus hours on airplanes and in airports might account for this. Here is what I have to say about four of them.

Wait for God to Notice, by Sari Fordham, is a book I never would have found on my own. A friend of mine (who happens to hail from South Africa) recommended it, and since she has never steered me wrong in the past, I picked it up as soon as I could get my hands on it. It is a memoir, whose unusual title comes from a letter the author’s mother wrote to her father on Sept. 27, 1979:

“We just found out that the price of one roll of toilet paper is \$5, and its size is not enough to use a dozen times. I’ve read that the sellers rarely have bananas and beans. Wait for God to notice.”

The book chronicles the author’s years growing up in an Adventist missionary family in Uganda and Kenya. It begins with a scene in which a giant parade of driver ants marches through the author’s bedroom. She is in her bed; she is very young.

“When they turn on the light, I stir beneath the blanket. A river of ants cuts across the floor and straight to my bed. It moves up the thin quilt, journeys over the bump I create under the covers, and continues down the other side.” She continues, “My parents do not try to make connections between what has happened and what could happen. They do not see the ants as a warning, that peril can slip in through the smallest of openings, that Uganda is too dangerous, that we should pack up and leave. Nor do they see my escape as a miracle, a sign that we are supposed to be here, that we will be protected. They are not seeing metaphor or prophecy. They are too practical. The ants have given them a scare, but they do not consider them a threat; there are too many other dangers out there. My mother eases me from under the covers. As the blanket moves, the ants spread like a blooming flower. She pulls me clear and stands up straight. ‘There you are,’ she says. I blink in the sharp light.”

In this memoir, we learn about the daily life of this family living on the edge of the jungle, not far from the school where the author’s minister father teaches. We get to know the members of her family and some of what it was like to grow up in a beautiful, exotic, faraway place amidst driver ants, geckos, mosquitos, malaria, political unrest, the pulse of bat wings at night, closing hymns, near escapes, letters home, troupes of monkeys chasing each other through the trees, mambas, cobras, vipers, flowering trees, morning worship on the veranda, Idi Amin on Radio Kampala, passionfruit that looks like rotten eggs, in the embrace of a family often “innocent about how bad things had gotten, and like the ignorant often are ... rewarded with dumb luck.”

Though the author’s mother worries a good deal about civil war on the horizon, military checkpoints, malaria, iron deficiency, etcetera, her father remains focused and faithfully intent upon staying: “We knew my father didn’t like making mountains out of molehills, and that relative to human history, most anything we faced was a molehill.”

This is a loving, gentle book — a view I might not otherwise have had into a life very different from the one that I know. I recommend it.

Then, for a complete change of pace, I read John Grisham’s shiny new book, Sparring Partners, which I assumed was a novel. I am a big fan of Grisham, as his books always move at a fast pace and never fail to provide a page-turning escape from the world — which many have the desire

these days to do some escaping from.

Sparring Partners is a collection of three long stories, but with each one I found myself wanting, well, more. It’s not that I don’t like stories ...

it’s just that each one of these could have been a full-fledged novel, and with each one I found myself with questions and a sense of unfinishedness. They are all very good, though. I don’t want to dissuade you from reading this. In “Homecoming,” we are taken back to Ford

County, where we meet up again with Jack Brigance, called upon to help an old pal trying to re-enter a world he escaped from a few years earlier. “Strawberry Moon” is about a young man on death row who has only three hours before he is executed by the state. The third story, “Sparring Partners,” is about two brothers, both successful lawyers, who hate each other’s guts. Their father is in jail, and the young men collude on a plot to take over Dad’s once-prosperous firm.

If you like Grisham, you won’t be disappointed, but like me, you may be left wanting more.

Not long ago, I reviewed a novel by Maggie Shipstead: Seating Arrangements. I really loved it. One of the best books I read all year. You Have a Friend in 10A

(published in 2022) is a collection of short stories, each utterly unlike the others. One is about Sammy Boone, a skinny 16-year-old who gets hired as a wrangler on a Montana dude ranch — one of the most unlikely romantic heroines ever, but she catches the eye,

heart and passions of her boss, and then of his nephew. Beautifully written, expertly weaving in the love and deep connection some human beings have with animals.

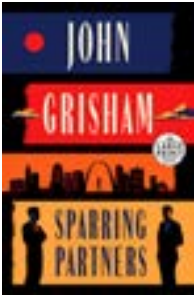
There are a whole bunch of good ones in this superbly crafted collection. Highly recommend.

At the end of my trip out to California to visit my eldest son, worried that I might run out of reading material on the endless flight back home, I picked up a paperback copy of John Steinbeck’s Cannery Row. It seemed the perfect read. This past year, my son has lived in Pacific Grove, where Steinbeck’s family had a weekend cottage when Steinbeck was a boy, and where the author would often retreat when he needed to write or regroup. Dylan and I had just visited the Monterey Aquarium, walked down Cannery Row and strolled along the wharf there, so, yes, I figured this novel would be just the thing.

I had read some of Steinbeck’s books in the past and had liked them all, but hadn’t, till this moment in the Monterey Airport, had a desire to revisit his work. But I will be doing a good deal of that in the future, as this short novel blew me away. I had either forgotten what a stunning writer Steinbeck is, or maybe was too young to appreciate it back in the day, but wow.

“Cannery Row in Monterey in California is a poem, a stink, a grating noise, a quality of light, a tone, a habit, a nostalgia, a dream,” it begins. “Cannery Row is the gathered and scattered, tin and iron and rust and splintered wood, chipped pavement and weedy lots and junk heaps, sardine canneries of corrugated iron, honky tonks, restaurants and whore houses, and little crowded groceries, and laboratories and flophouses. Its inhabitants are, as the man once said, ‘whores, pimps, gamblers, and sons of bitches,’ by which he meant Everybody.”

Touching, deeply empathetic, acutely observant, poignant, at times funny, at times heartbreaking ... this is a wonderful book. Published in 1945, it is as alive today as the tidepools on the beaches there. Highly recommend.



Library News

Library sponsoring projects for play-based learning



Margaret Woodruff
Director

Please note the Charlotte Library will be closed July 2, 4 and 5 for the Independence Day holiday.

Want to get the latest information about our new books? Sign up for the library e-newsletter.

New books this month

Notable new titles include 6:20 Man by David Baldacci, The It Girl by Ruth Ware, Dead Romantics by Ashley Postonn, Not Exactly What I Had in Mind by Kate Brook, a new Kate Burkheimer mystery by Linda Castillo, and a new novel by Gabrielle Zevin who wrote The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry.

Summer reading details are available on the library website or on our print calendar available here: bit.ly/summer05445.

Preschool free play

Mondays, 10 a.m., July 11-25

Play in the preschool years enables children to explore and make sense of the world around them, as well as to use and

develop their imagination and creativity. We'll be exploring the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks, playdough ... these are a few of the open-ended projects planned for Monday morning play-based learning on the Charlotte Library porch. Ages 3 and 4.

Family Game night

Mondays, 5:30 p.m., July 11-25

Try your hand at cornball or bocce or share your Pokemon successes and gaming fun during this family time. Indoors and out. No registration required.

Summer story time

Tuesdays, 10 a.m., July 12-26

Join us on the Charlotte Library porch for summertime stories, crafts and activities. No registration required. Age 5 and over.

Project Micro

Wednesday, July 13, 1 p.m.

Join Jan Schwarz of Project Micro to study sand from all corners of the globe and other treasure from the sea. Registration required, ages 7 and up. This is a live event, please register via Eventbrite: bit.ly/events05445.

Adult Programs

Library book discussion

The Beginning of Spring

Thursday, July 7 at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom

March 1913. Moscow is stirring herself to meet the beginning of spring. English painter Frank Reid returns from work one night to find that his wife has gone away; no one knows where or why, or whether she'll ever come back. All Frank knows for sure is that he is now alone and must find someone to care for his three young children.

Into Frank's life comes Lisa Ivanovna, a quiet, calming beauty from the country, untroubled to the point of seeming simple. But is she? And why has Frank's bookkeeper, Selwyn Crane, gone to such lengths to bring these two together? Print copies available at the library circulation desk. Register for the discussion in advance: bit.ly/3z8KmdR.

Grange on the Green:

Thursday, July 14, 5:30-7 p.m.

The Charlotte Grange and Charlotte Library invite you to the Charlotte Town Green for the second concert in our series of live music. Bring a picnic supper or grab a pizza from Stone's Throw to enjoy with the show.

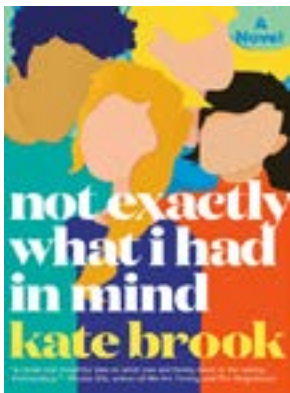
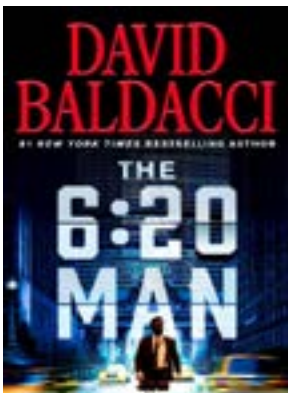
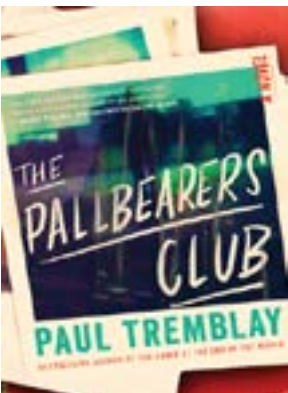
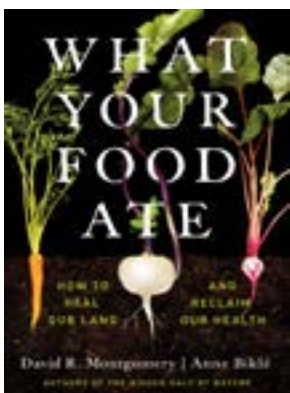
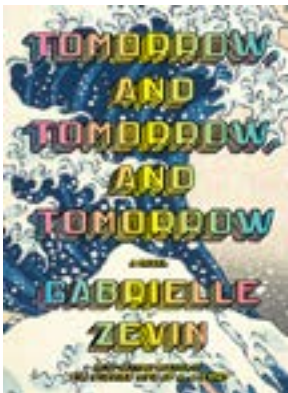
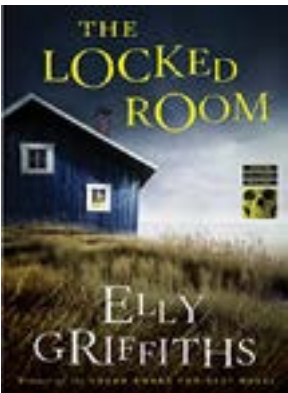
Mystery Book Group:

Murder on Brittany Shores

Monday, July 18, 10 a.m.

Ten miles off the coast of Brittany lie the fabled Glénan Islands. Boasting sparkling

Books for the Summer Reading Program



white sands and crystal-clear waters, they seem perfectly idyllic, until one day in May, three bodies wash up on shore. At first glance the deaths appear accidental, but as the identities of the victims come to light, Commissaire Dupin is pulled back into action for a case of what seems to be cold-blooded murder. Copies of this book by Jean-Luc Bannlec are available at the library circulation desk.

Men's book group: Apeirogon

Wednesday, July 20, 7:30 p.m.

Bassam Aramin is Palestinian. Rami Elhanan is Israeli. They inhabit a world of conflict that colors every aspect of their daily lives, from the roads they are allowed to drive on, to the schools their daughters, Abir and Smadar, each attend, to the checkpoints, both physical and emotional, they must negotiate. Their worlds shift irreparably after 10-year-old Abir is killed by a rubber bullet and 13-year-old Smadar becomes the victim of suicide bombers. When Bassam and Rami learn of each other's stories, they recognize the loss that connects them and they attempt to use their grief as a weapon for peace in a book by Collum McCann. Copies available at the library circulation. Via Zoom.

Ongoing Programs

Free Little Art Gallery

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. Thank you to Marcia Vogler for her help and inspiration.

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. Register at bit.ly/3BtebDj.

Library contact information:

Margaret Woodruff, director
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian
Susanna Kahn, tech librarian
Phone: 802-425-3864
Email: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org.

The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets the first Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. For information about agenda and Zoom access, contact the library director.



**The Town of Charlotte
MEETINGS**
**Visit charlottetv.org
for more information.**

Planning Commission:
Thursday, June 30, 7-8:30 p.m.

**Monthly Meeting of the Trails
Committee:** Tuesday, July 5,
6:30-8 p.m.

Classifieds

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



On the water with the senior center's kayaking for women program.

Photo by Susan Hyde

Senior Center News

A cool place to hang out in more ways than one



Lori York
DIRECTOR

The lazy days of summer have arrived, and in Vermont it feels like there is always this balance between spending as much time outside while also looking for ways to escape the heat.

The Charlotte Senior Center and Charlotte Library are designated cooling centers with air-conditioned facilities to cool down during hot weather. Feel free to come out of the heat, play board and card games, watch a movie, enjoy a tasty lunch or spend time catching up with friends.

There are also opportunities to spend time outdoors whether it is kayaking, joining a birding expedition, playing croquet on the side lawn or just hanging out on the patio and reading a book.

Community cooling centers help provide temporary relief and are especially helpful when the National Weather Service issues a heat advisory or excessive heat warning. During a heat advisory or excessive heat warning, notices will be placed in Front Porch Forum in addition to notices on other social media, the senior center and the library websites.

The July/August newsletter is now available at the senior center and on the website at charlotteseniorcentervt.org/monthly-newsletter.

Programs

Italian for Total Beginners
Fridays, 10-11 a.m., July 8, 15, 22, 29, Aug. 5 and 12 (six weeks)

Are you interested in learning Italian? Do you dream of traveling to Italy and ordering your morning cappuccino in a sun-drenched piazza? Then this class is for you. Join Nicole Librandi and begin your study of Italian — while also having fun. Cost: \$48. Register by July 5.

Writing group

Personal non-fiction: Memoir, poetry and personal essays
Tuesdays, July 12 and Aug. 9, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

This new writing group, focused on writing memoirs, poetry or personal essays, will meet monthly during the summer and weekly in the fall. It's free but registration is required. Space is limited.

Outdoor activities

Birding
Wednesdays, July 13 & Aug. 17, 9 a.m.
Join Hank Kaestner for the July and

August birding expeditions. It's free but registration is required. Group size is limited. To register, email cscbirding@gmavt.net and include your name and phone number.

Kayak trips for women Friday mornings
July 8: Kayak Missisquoi Bay and July 22: Kayak Lamoille River

Kayak trips for active women who share a love for exploring local lakes, ponds and rivers. Weather permitting, the kayak trips will happen on the second and fourth Friday mornings of the month throughout the summer and early fall. To register your interest, email Susan Hyde at susanfosterhyde@gmail.com to be placed on a list of paddlers. An email will be sent to the list regarding the details of the specific kayak trips.

Presentations

Clear the clutter
Wednesday, July 6, at 1 p.m.

Feeling confused, overwhelmed or even ashamed of the clutter around your home? Looking to downsize but don't know where to begin? Join Vermont professional organizer Ellen Gurwitz of De-clutter Me! for a discussion on how to clear clutter in the different rooms of your home and tips on how to get started.

Understanding terrorist ideologies
Wednesday, July 13, 1 p.m.

In the past decades the news highlights an increasing level of criminal activity and terrorism both internationally and domestically on U.S. soil. What are the common ideologies of criminals and terrorists and what risks and vulnerabilities allow for the rise in these criminal attacks? Join Victor Vella, retired director of the Antiterrorism Service Program U.S. Department of Defense, as he shares his experience in federal law enforcement, as a security director for the U.S. Navy, United Kingdom and Northern Europe.

Dragonheart Vermont
Wednesday, July 27, 1 p.m.

Join Dragonheart Vermont's executive director Nina Atkinson and team paddler Ellen Gurwitz for a preview of the Lake Champlain Dragon Boat Festival, benefitting local cancer survivors, on Sunday, Aug. 7. Just back from the Club Crew World Championships, they also will share stories about competing there, representing Dragonheart Vermont and the United States.

Community health
COVID-19 vaccine clinics
Tuesdays, July 12, 12:30-4:30 p.m.
and July 26, 9:30-3:30 p.m.
Free Garnet Healthcare walk-



Photo by Ron Ulmer

The Charlotte Senior Center's monthly birding expedition with Hank Kaestner (left) and Larry Haugh.

in COVID-19 vaccine clinics — no appointments necessary. Vaccines and boosters are available for Pediatric Pfizer (ages 5-11); Adult Pfizer (12+) and Moderna (18+). As the state of Vermont releases details about the newly approved COVID-19 vaccines for children under 5, the senior center's website will be updated about the availability of these vaccines. Also check out the state of Vermont website for the most updated information, healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/vaccines-children.

Volunteer opportunities

The Charlotte Senior Center would not be able to provide the wide variety of programming without the support of dedicated volunteers. Please share your time and talents to build a stronger community. If you are interested in volunteering,

please contact Kerrie Pughe at KPughe@CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org.

Senior center contact info:

Lori York, director, lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org
Kerrie Pughe, coordinator, kpughe@charlotteseniorcentervt.org
2 Ferry Road, Charlotte
802-425-6345
charlotteseniorcentervt.org

Follow the senior center on Facebook or Instagram at charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Participate in the “intangible culture” and get a meal at the senior center

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

Volunteers continue cooking and serving the weekly Monday lunches beginning at 11:30 a.m. Note: The Charlotte Senior Center is closed Monday, July 4.

Chef Arnd from the Residence at Shelburne Bay will provide lunch at the senior center on Wednesday, July 20, at noon.

Celebrate Independence Day
Wednesday, July 6, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Cookout with hot dogs, vegetarian choice, Montreal-style slaw, chips and dip, and frozen dessert. Registration required. You may register for this cookout through this Friday, July 1. The number will be capped at 60 for this social event. A \$5 contribution is appreciated.

Grab-&Go Meal

Thursday, July 7, Pick up: 10-11 a.m.
BBQ chicken breast, baked beans,



cauliflower, strawberry shortcake. Remember to register by Monday. Call or e-mail: 802-425-6371, kpughe@charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

There is no charge for these meals but Age Well appreciates donations to help keep them coming.

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

Couscous salad, lemon mousse with

blueberries. Takeout is available.

Thursday July 14
Men's Breakfast: 7-9 a.m.

The guest speaker is professional photographer Jonathan Hart.

Grab-&Go Meal, Pick up: 10-11 a.m.
Spaghetti and meatballs with marinara sauce, green beans and cannellini beans, Father's Day cake.

About that July 11 couscous: Algerian folklore credits the Jinn with inventing couscous. A staple food throughout North Africa, couscous gained popularity throughout the Mediterranean and Sicilian cultures and by the 20th century was popular worldwide.

In 2020, it was added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list. The fact that Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia submitted jointly for official recognition for their knowledge and know-how pertaining to the production and consumption of couscous was hailed as an example of international cooperation.

This UNESCO list is thought-provoking. Along with a few foods and Belgium beer, you'll find the tango, summer solstice fire festivals, Japanese papermaking, the Luxembourg hopping festival and much, much more.

We invite you to participate in the intangible culture available at the Charlotte Senior Center. There are plans for more summer special social event meals. To make this happen, we need volunteer dishwashers and people peeling carrots, chopping onions, and so on. Come give it a try.

No one has written a song about life being a bowl of blueberries, but look up "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries" and then take your pick. This song spans the ages: you can hear it sung by Rudy Vallee; Judy Garland; Doris Day; Bing Crosby, Dean Martin, and Patti Page; Johnny Mathis; Ben Vereen and a host of others.

For more information about meals, the menus and registration information, please see charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

CALENDAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Symphony at the Museum
Monday, July 4, 7:30 p.m.
The Vermont Symphony Orchestra takes the stage at the Shelburne Museum as part of the T.D. Bank Summer Festival Tour. The musical theme is “Celebrate!” and will feature lively and familiar works in honor of our nation’s independence. Gates open at 5:30 p.m. for picnicking. Concert is followed by a light show, not fireworks. Rain site is Shelburne Field House. For tickets and complete concert guidelines, see tinyurl.com/mpe74n8a.

Veggie fermentation
Tuesday, July 5, 5:30-7 p.m.
Learn the basics of lactofermentation in a hands-on workshop held at the Intervale Center in Burlington. No experience necessary. This outdoor class is led by Christa Gowen and presented by City Market Coop. Register at tinyurl.com/yvpzf6w6.

Music from New Orleans
Thursday, July 7, 6-8:30 p.m.
A free concert at Shelburne Vineyard features the New Orleans group, Dose. Unwind with food, wine and some saxophone. Concert will be outside if nice weather; blankets and chairs encouraged. The New Deal food truck serves up dinner choices for meat-eaters, vegetarians and vegans. No tickets needed. See the full summer schedule at shelburnevineyard.com/event-list.

Drawing botanicals
Friday, July 8, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Jane Neroni leads a class in the art of the plant world at Horsford Gardens and Nursery in Charlotte. With years of experience in natural science illustration, Jane takes participants into the gardens to look at shape, structure and form of plants. No experience necessary. To register or for more info email Neroni at neroni.jane@comcast.net.

Nights at the farm
Friday, July 8, 5-8 p.m.
The Fisher Brothers Farm on Spear Street in Shelburne hosts Friday Nights at the Farm through August 26. Featured are food trucks, local live music and treats from Sisters of Anarchy ice cream, which is made at the farm from farm ingredients. For more info,

see sistersofanarchyicecream.com or call 802-495-5165.

Music by Mukana
Friday, July 8, 5-8 p.m.
Mukana means “opportunity” in the Shona language of Zimbabwe. Mukana is an artistic collaboration between musicians from Chile, Haiti, Zimbabwe, Brazil and the U.S. Together they fuse traditional songs and rhythms with jazz and their own unique styles. Their music is a celebration of our global community and will make you want to dance. They play at the Lincoln Peak Vineyard in New Haven. Doors open at 5 p.m. for picnicking or dinner from a food truck. For tickets, see lincolnpeakvineyard.com/concerts.

Poetry in the parks
Saturday, July 9, 10 a.m.
Words in the Woods is a project of Vermont Humanities, and features in-person poetry readings at Vermont State Parks. Poet Toussaint St. Negritude will read at Boulder Beach State Park in Groton and may also perform on his bass clarinet during the free event. Registration is at tinyurl.com/mu8d5nb3. Info on future performances at vermonthumanities.org.

Lasagna gardening
Saturday, July 9, 10 a.m.-noon
Julie Parker-Dickerson leads a class on the lasagna technique of gardening at Red Wagon Plants in Hinesburg. Learn how to create a no-till bed that can be filled with plants to increase pollinator habitat. Registration required. For more info, see redwagonplants.com.

Forest management walk
Saturday, July 9, 10 a.m.-noon
Take a walk through an active forest management project at the Hinesburg Town Forest with Chittenden County Forester Ethan Tapper. Tapper will speak to the restorative and regenerative aspects of successful forest management during this free event. Registration required at tinyurl.com/5xcadyu4. Event is rain or shine: dress for walking in all conditions.

Butterflies and bugs
Saturday, July 9, 10 a.m.-noon
Explore the trails and grounds at the Birds of Vermont museum in Huntington with Vermont Entomological Society experts. The butterfly and bug walk is free

and appropriate for families. Bring binoculars, magnifying glasses and insect nets if you have them. Dress for the outdoors and bring a water bottle. Pack a lunch if you’d like to picnic after. No registration necessary, but limited class size. Call 802-434-2167 for more info.

River walk
Saturday, July 9, 10:30 a.m.-noon
Naturalist educators at the North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier lead a walk along the shallow areas of the North Branch River in search of critters. Free, family-friendly event appropriate for ages five and older. No registration required. Bring swimsuits, water footwear, bug spray, sunscreen, water and snacks. Repeats Saturday, July 16. For more info, see tinyurl.com/3t432j2h or call 802-229-6206.

Jamie Lee Thurston
Saturday, July 9, doors at 5 p.m., show at 6 p.m.
Fans will enjoy a free concert with Thurston, a Montpelier native and popular country music singer/songwriter. He'll perform at The Essex Experience in Essex Junction. For more info or directions, see essexexperience.com.

Farm to ballet event
Sunday, July 10, 4:30 p.m.
The Farm to Ballet Project is an original ballet about life on a farm through the seasons. This evening, the troupe performs at the Breeding Barn at Shelburne Farms. Gates open at 4:30 p.m. for picnicking; the show starts at 6 p.m. For a full schedule of performances or to buy tickets see balletvermont.org.

Festival on the green
Sunday, July 10-Saturday, July 16
The Middlebury’s Festival on the Green features a wide variety of free musical performances at different times, and a street dance. There is food and lots of fun for families. For the full schedule, see festivalonthegreen.org.

The Rough Suspects
Weds, July 13, 5:30 p.m.
The Shelburne summer concert series begins with a performance by the Rough Suspects at the Farm Barn at Shelburne Farms. Bring blankets and picnics and the whole family. Gates open 5:30 p.m., music starts at 6:30 p.m. Kids can visit the animals,

too. No dogs please. No tickets needed. Donations encouraged to the Shelburne Recreation Department.

Midsummer wildflowers
Thursday, July 14, 7-8 p.m.
The Vermont Land Trust’s director of conservation science, Liz Thompson, leads an online photographic exploration of midsummer wildflowers. Thompson, as well as her photographer friends, has explored the nooks and crannies of Vermont, the lowlands and the highlands to find, identify and learn about these native plants. Free event; pre-register at vlt.org/events/midsummer-wildflowers.

Music in the barn
Thursday, July 14, 7:30-9 p.m.
The Jennings String Quartet performs indoors at the West Monitor Barn in Richmond. Pre-concert talk begins at 7 p.m.; show at 7:30. Purchase tickets through the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps website. More info on the quartet at musicinthebarn.com/jennings-string-quartet.

Lady of the hills
Ongoing exhibit
At the Vermont Historical Society museum in Montpelier, a current exhibit focuses on the three “toppers” that have had the honor of being atop the Vermont State House: the original 1859 statue, the 1938 statue, and the newest wooden version placed in 2018. All three sculptures represent Ceres, the Roman goddess of agriculture. The exhibit has statue remnants, tools, photography and information about the artists. For more info, call 802-479-8500 or visit vermonthistory.org.

Find more events on
The Charlotte News website
charlottenewsvt.org

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