

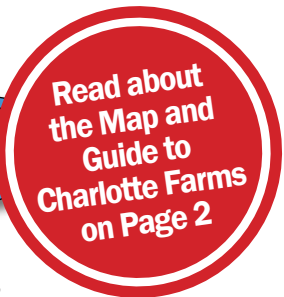
Your nonprofit community news source since 1958

The Charlotte News

THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2022 | VOLUME 65 NUMBER 02



**Charlotte Town Beach Party is
Saturday, July 16
See the story on page 5**



Succeeding by setting up employees to succeed



Steve Goldstein
Contributor

A dozen years ago, Elisabeth “Liz” Robert, a rising star in Vermont’s business firmament, gave a speech to the Vermont Women’s Fund in which she praised the strong, accomplished women in her family for demonstrating that shattering glass ceilings was her birthright.

“Never at any point in my life,” she declared, “did I imagine that I couldn’t do whatever I wanted to do because I was a woman.”

Not everyone among the audience of several hundred women stood and cheered; some felt Robert hadn’t acknowledged the struggle for equal treatment and advancement — and they let the speaker know it. “That got me into very big trouble,” said Robert, adding without apology: “I was able to grow up in the workplace and never feel as if I was somehow being dealt with unfairly or discriminated against.”

Robert — rhymes with “teddy bear” for the company she used to run — is no one’s idea of a plush toy. You want cuddly? Try Ben, her love-sponge of an Australian shepherd.

The Charlotte resident — her latest venture is running a specialty cycling company for women — has made her mark on Vermont’s business world much as she did playing varsity lacrosse and field hockey for Middlebury College: By being quick and decisive and unafraid to use her stick.

“I told her once she was a compassionate hard-ass,” said Katie Langrock, operations director at Shelburne-based Vermont Teddy Bear, who worked almost a decade with Robert. “She definitely asks people to do more than they think they are capable of doing. And they often prove her right.”

Valentine’s Day at Vermont Teddy Bear is comparable to Black Friday at many companies that

hope that day will make the year profitable. On Feb. 13, Robert would get her staff to think of ways to keep the UPS and FedEx trucks late so they could fill as many orders as possible. One year Robert lay down in front of a UPS truck like the lone protester at Tiananmen Square. Another year, Langrock recalled, Robert chartered a FedEx Boeing 727 so it would stay as late as she wanted. “Liz even went to Burlington Airport and drove the tow that leads the plane out to the runway,” she said.

Robert turned 67 in early June, and currently serves as president and CEO of Terry Precision Cycling, a Burlington-based seller of cycling apparel and accessories. The company, which was acquired by Flagg Bicycle Group in late 2021, meshes perfectly with her current lifestyle. Looking fit and road-ready in her Rapha vest and Middlebury cap, she described how her own wheel has turned.

“What motivates me now is a little bit different; it’s other people’s success,” she explained. “Like with my new batch of employees at Terry, it’s more about making sure they’re set up to succeed.”

In a four-decades long business career, the Charlotte resident has built an enviable resume of success in Vermont businesses, whether startup, like AirMouse Remote Controls, or sinecure like Vermont Gas Systems, companies trending up or sliding down. She has done so, colleagues and coworkers said, with an analytical mind, a rigorous work ethic and a leadership style that says “You don’t want to disappoint me, do you?” Robert embraces challenges like long-lost relatives at a family reunion.

Vermont Teddy Bear’s director of operations Cathy Carlisle recalled the company was struggling before Robert moved up to CEO from chief financial officer. “There was a lot of chatter about

Photo by Scooter MacMillan
Liz Robert biking on Greenbush Road in Charlotte.

SEE **LIZ ROBERT** PAGE 3

Selectboard plans to get town garage flyer printed

Brett Yates
Contributor

With a special town meeting approaching on Aug. 9, the Charlotte Selectboard will send out a last-minute pitch to voters on the merits of its proposed town garage.

According to an estimate by Russell Construction Services, which provided a preliminary design, the building will cost \$3 million, a sum that has raised eyebrows among residents.

“I don’t usually get phone calls, but I am,” board member Louise McCarren said.

Board Chair Jim Faulkner has, by his own account, explained “a dozen times” that — thanks to a federal infusion from the American Rescue Plan Act and accumulated

reserves in the town’s highway funds — local taxpayers will face a bill only half that size if they approve the project. But as he sees it, residents have remained distracted by the larger total.

“I think what’s happening here is that we need to get more information out to the public,” Faulkner said.

On Monday, July 11, the selectboard finalized an informational flyer that will go out to all Charlotte households in the coming days. The one-pager points out that the construction will take place on land owned by the town and that the state of Vermont has already granted an access permit for the facility.

SEE **TOWN GARAGE** PAGE 2



Garage rendering by Centerline Architects

The town of Charlotte released this rendering of some of the design ideas that have been discussed for the new town garage on Route 7. Town administrator Dean Bloch said this proposed design is intended to be solar ready, but the solar panels will not be part of the initial building project. Voters will be asked to approve financing of \$1.5 million of the total \$3 million cost of the garage. The rest of the \$1.5 million will be paid from a federal American Rescue Plan Act grant and \$500,000 of the town’s highway reserve and capital funds.

Committee budget management process stirs things up

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Spending by the energy committee — a topic that periodically rears its head at selectboard meetings — reared up and galloped around the conversation at the June 27 meeting.

As in the past, some of the selectboard members feel that the energy committee and other town commissions and committees should be more specific in their budget requests and spending. And when budget amounts are allocated to different expenses, they believe the selectboard should know soon after the change is made, even if the commission is spending under its budget.

Town administrator Dean Bloch shared the news that, at first glance, the energy committee looks like it’s gone over budget with spending of \$1,800 for an educational sign for the town compost shed at Charlotte Central School because only \$800 was budgeted for the sign.

But a conversation with chair Rebecca Foster revealed “some of the payments in the account should have been made from a grant rather than the operating account. And if that is done it actually isn’t over budget. It’s actually \$30 underbudget,” Bloch said.

Board member Lewis Mudge said both he and fellow member Frank Tenney knew about the sign expense because they’d been copied on an email in early May with the

information.

Mudge said the energy committee was just “mixing” its budget around. If the selectboard plans to closely supervise individual boards’ use of their budgets, the selectboard needs to make sure it communicates its commitment to overseeing budget details.

“I think we should learn a lesson from this and next budget season, when we sit down again and we’re hashing out budgets, we really reinforce to committee and commission chairs — if there is going to be this sort of moving around from pot to pot — that we have full oversight of it,” Mudge said.

Town clerk and treasurer Mary Mead

argued for closer oversight so that in May the selectboard would have had the opportunity to weigh in about whether it wanted to spend that much money on the sign.

The way the money was allocated for the sign was “a little messy,” Mead said.

The blame is not just on the selectboard, it’s on the committees, too, board member Frank Tenney said, “There’s got to be more discussion back and forth.”

Even though there are liaisons to the town committees, liaisons don’t make decisions, Tenney said. These issues should be brought before the board.

Board member Louise McCarren said she

SEE **BUDGET OVERSIGHT** PAGE 3

News from *The News*

Can't spell community newspaper without 'you'

Claudia Marshall, Board of Directors
John Quinney, Publisher and President

There's a well-worn saying comparing the making of laws to the making of sausages. The point being ... you really don't want to see how either one is made. The word "grizzly" comes to mind.

Now, we wouldn't say that the making of The Charlotte News is even remotely grizzly, but it's entirely possible that you'd really rather not know that much about it. You're perfectly happy to have this free public service arrive in your mailbox every two weeks, without a bunch of fuss.

That said, we've done a good bit of housekeeping here at the paper (and on the website) which might be of interest to you, the folks who generally like to be kept abreast of town developments. And since The Charlotte News is something of a pillar of this community (and has been for 64 years), the health of the paper is not only of interest, it's really rather vital. Plus, we are all about transparency and want you to know that the paper is on firm footing.

First and most importantly, the support of this community remains strong and readily apparent! We continue to receive many terrific contributions in the form of photos and articles. We truly are a community newspaper. And we've also received financial contributions sufficient to grow the paper and to hire our first-ever full-time editor. Thank you! We literally could not have done that without your support. Clearly, you do care about the community and value the way The Charlotte News keeps us connected.

The addition of Scooter MacMillan as our editor has proved not only popular but I



Claudia Marshall



John Quinney

venture to say ... entertaining. His nose for news and sense of humor appear to be a good fit for the town. We're sorry, Scooter, if we're making you blush, but you're a hit.

Behind the scenes, things are every bit as productive. We have a burgeoning board of directors and a strong staff. We remain in awe of the unflappable and super-organized Anna Cyr, our production manager; we are grateful for our advertising manager, Christy Hagios, who continues to thrive at the paper despite the ever-shifting economic climate; and we much appreciate our experienced and reliable bookkeeper, Susan Jones.

Our board has lost some substantial members to term limits and to other commitments, notably Vince Crockenberg and Bob Bloch, but we're delighted to welcome the talented Bill Regan, and the relatively recent addition of treasurer Margery McCracken has been a homerun. Although Gay Regan's term expires at the end of the month, she is staying on as a fundraising committee member, and for that we are grateful.

There are many other changes, large and small, that wouldn't necessarily become immediately apparent. The board has adopted

a conflict-of-interest policy, we've completed a handbook to guide the board's work, redesigned the paper and switched to online subscriptions for out-of-towners. Our website is being restyled, and our new strategic plan will be completed by the end of the year.

In other words, our house is in order, our financial situation is in hand and our readers and visitors to the website are telling us they like what they see.

As an independent, nonprofit we will always be in the position of asking for donations, but that's one of the things that makes the paper answerable to the community. And that's just the way we like it. Look for our traditional summer fundraising appeal in your mailbox in the next few days. And look for us to make it easier to become a sustaining member, so you will only need to think about making a donation once per year, but the payments can be made automatically, each month.

We hope it goes without saying that this community newspaper is always open to your feedback. You may email us at john@thecharlottenews.org or claudiamarshall@yahoo.com. And of course, we'd be happy to talk with you at any of the many events around town this summer — the library book sale, town party, senior center classes, music at the beach and more.

We'll see you around town.

Scan this QR code with your phone camera and donate today.



Donor to fund cemetery fence repair

Brett Yates
Contributor

A good Samaritan has stepped up to help Charlotte's dearly departed continue to rest in peace.

For the second time since its installation in 2019, an unknown culprit appears to have damaged the fence protecting the historic West Burying Ground, also known as the Barber Hill Cemetery, in a traffic incident on Greenbush Road. The cost for a repair will exceed \$5,600.

"The fence was pretty wrecked," board member Lewis Mudge said.

The recurrence prompted town administrator Dean Bloch to ask cemetery commissioner James Laberge and "the contractor that does the mowing" whether the fence's location might need an adjustment. "They ultimately concluded that it shouldn't be moved," Bloch reported.

Normally, third-party contracts that exceed \$5,000 require a competitive bidding process, but because the town's insurance will cover most of the cost in this case, the selectboard reasoned that, at its next meeting, it could simply rehire Middlebury Fence, the company originally responsible for the project. Only Board Chair Jim Faulkner disagreed with this informal decision.

As it turns out, the remaining \$1,000 bill won't come out of the municipal budget, either. Bloch announced that a town resident, whom he did not name, had offered to donate the sum.

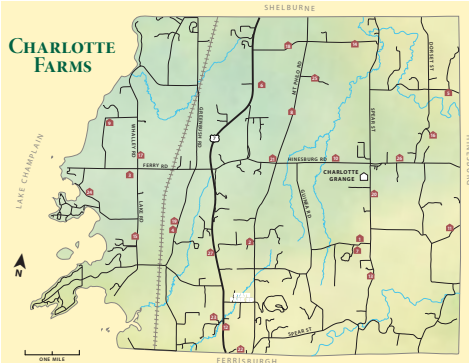
New map, guide to Charlotte farms

Tai Dinnan
Charlotte Grange

Last winter an idea was born when the Charlotte Grange held a roundtable discussion with local farmers asking how the Grange might help them. The result is the special insert in this issue of the Charlotte News: a map and guide to Charlotte Farms.

It highlights more than 25 Charlotte farms selling food directly to consumers. In addition, copies will be available at the Charlotte Town Hall, Charlotte Library, local businesses, farm stands and at Grange on the Green music concerts.

The map was developed in hopes you will visit local farms to nourish your family, enjoy the outdoors and deepen your roots in Charlotte's food system.



The map was part of the Charlotte Land Trust's work to produce a comprehensive farm study. The vision was made a reality by the graphic design work of Charlotter Rick Brokaw of SERIOUSdesign.

The production costs were covered by The Charlotte News and several local donors. Grange members did the legwork, collecting information and doing their best to create a beautiful, accurate, useful map and directory.

The Charlotte Grange has a new website at charlottegrange.org.

This is a new project and organizers would love to know what you think. Contact them at charlottegrangevt@gmail.com with suggestions for future editions of this Charlotte farm map.

appearance," he said. "All the trucks will enter from the back, from the west, so you won't be seeing a bunch of trucks at the front of the building."

Town administrator Dean Bloch has calculated that, for a Charlotter who owns a house worth \$500,000, the project's approval would result in an annual property tax increase of \$72 at first, but that amount would decrease over the life of the 20-year bond.

The board, which will forgo issuing a request for bids from mailing companies, authorized a disbursal not to exceed \$2,500. The board's estimate for the cost of the flyers is \$2,088. A quote from Burlington's Queen City Printers — \$1,310 for making 1,600 copies and stuffing envelopes — didn't include the price of postage.



Mission Statement

The mission of The Charlotte News is:

- to publish rigorous, in-depth, fair reporting on town affairs, and,
- to source stories of interest from our neighbors and friends.

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

Editorial independence

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

Letters, Opinions and Obituaries

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

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

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SEND YOUR CHARLOTTE NEWS TO:
news@thecharlottenews.org

Suspicious birdhouse shuts down railroad

A suspicious birdhouse shut down the train through Charlotte for about two hours on Monday.

About 10:30 a.m. on July 11, the Vermont State Police got a report of a possible grenade located in a birdhouse near the train tracks.

Train service, which at that time of the day was only freight traffic, was closed for safety.

State troopers found an item in the birdhouse that was shaped like a hand grenade, but that didn’t have the fusing system of a hand grenade and was made of plastic.

The troopers determined it was the remains of a firework that appeared to have already been shot off, Vermont State Police said in a release.

The incident is still under investigation



An exploded firework, looking like a grenade, shutdown the train tracks in Charlotte.

and anyone with information that might help in the investigation is asked to call 802-878-7111 or leave an anonymous tip online at vsp.vermont.gov/tipssubmit.

LIZ ROBERT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

who’s driving the bus,” said Carlisle, a Bear vet of 28 years. “On the day she was named she showed up in an official Green Mountain Transit uniform.”

The bus gained speed with Robert at the helm. The modest, lovable but underperforming company became a lean, mean teddy bear machine with annual net revenue hovering above the \$70 million mark. Using catalog and internet marketing she developed the PajamaGram and other instant gratification delivery systems.

Amidst the carnage of the 2007-08 recession, new ownership at Vermont Teddy Bear tried “financial engineering,” an approach little understood and opposed by Robert. The bear stuffing hit the fan and after she refused to resign, Robert was taken off-campus and fired, barred from returning to Shelburne Road. “I was devastated,” Robert said, “I felt like I lost my family.”

A shock, to be sure, but Robert didn’t spend much time drafting invites to a pity party, “It didn’t take me too long to realize in some ways it was fortunate because I got out on top ... while the company was absolutely at its peak.”

In 2009, a catalog consultant with whom Robert had worked mentioned that Rochester-based Terry was for sale. This meshed perfectly with Robert’s new passion for cycling; Terry had pioneered bikes and gear for women, including an anatomy-friendly bike seat.

Robert bought the firm, moved it to Burlington and switched gears on marketing. “I changed it from being primarily a catalog business and wholesale operation to selling to small independent bike shops and to being primarily an e-commerce driven company.”

In late 2021, Robert sold her controlling interest in the firm to Minnesota-based Flagg Bicycle Group, while remaining president and CEO of Terry.

Now Robert has more time to spend riding or in the company of her two grown daughters from a previous marriage, and three grandchildren. Younger daughter Ruthie manages a family real estate business and lives in Burlington with singer-musician Josh Panda and their two young boys.

Panda was inducted into the Robert family dynamic in 2007 when his then-girlfriend Ruthie invited him to Vermont for Christmas. His train from Brooklyn arrived late so Liz was asleep when he got to Charlotte.

“I’m awakened early in the morning by Catie, the older sister, and told there was



Courtesy photo

Even Snoop Dogg and Kelly Clarkson have served as inspirations for Vermont Teddy Bear creations.

a crisis at work and could I help,” recalled Panda. “The next thing I know I’m in the car and I’m heading to what I’m told is a teddy bear factory. And then, you know, I’m putting clothes on bears on an assembly line. And that’s when I met Liz.”

Panda — who swears that was his name even before he met the Bear-in-Chief — said Robert has aided his vocation whenever possible. “She’s really been a huge champion of my career and my life, my growth. She’s just one of those people you don’t want to disappoint. And you want to make proud.”

Pride and resourcefulness were indeed in play when Panda was selected to represent Vermont in NBC’s “American Song Contest,” where contestants from all the U.S. states and territories perform songs they’ve composed.

Panda learned that contestants were permitted to give gifts to judges Kelly Clarkson and Snoop Dogg. “I started thinking what kind of Vermont gift would get me to the top of the list. And we’re in the kitchen where Liz is preparing dinner for my little kids and she says what about teddy bears?”

Before Panda said anything, Robert hit speakerphone, got the current head of Vermont Teddy Bear’s voicemail and left a message asking for a favor.

“Next thing I know,” Panda said, “I’m on an email thread with folks making plans for teddy bears that look like Dogg and Kelly. I got to present the bears to them on live television!” That he didn’t make the semifinals seemed almost an afterthought.

Panda’s voice was filled with awe and admiration. Not an uncommon occurrence with folks who’ve met Robert — rhymes with “teddy bear.” And there the similarity ends.

BUDGET OVERSIGHT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

would approve the spending but she wasn’t happy about it.

Viewing the meeting via video, it is hard to tell how many members were holding their noses when they voted unanimously to approve the compost shed sign spending.

Who’s a Charlotter?

Trying to define what a resident of Charlotte is became a much more intricate and ethical discussion than one might have supposed.

This discussion was initiated by a proposal by McCarren — that she later withdrew — extending the right to a \$30 resident beach parking permit, rather than the nonresident \$50 fee, to leaseholders on Thompson’s Point.

However, Mudge said he was troubled by the idea of extending residency to non-residents.

Board member Matt Krasnow argued that rights of a resident in this situation should be extended to anyone who pays property taxes whether Charlotte is their primary residency or a second home.

“What’s the point of differentiating between a resident and a nonresident?” Krasnow said. “I know the beach was only made possible through federal funding and part of the caveat, the condition of that beach funding, is that the beach has to remain open to the public. It could not become a private beach for Charlotters.”

He said nine years ago when he first came on the selectboard the recreation commission was “the most admirable department. Both the commission and the rec coordinator at the time had the philosophy of revenue neutral operations.”

Krasnow said the recreation department and the recreation commission worked to bring in as much revenue as both rec programming and beach maintenance cost which he considers “an admirable” way of operating.

The town beach is maintained from the taxes paid by both residents and nonresident leaseholders in addition to their lease

amount. Krasnow urged the board to step back from the issue, consider what is fair and extend these benefits to anyone who has property that’s on Charlotte’s grand list.

“I’m not here to say, ‘You’re a Vermonter; you’re not a Vermonter; you’re a Charlotter; you’re not a Charlotter,’” Krasnow said.

Chair Jim Faulkner said he had problems with the policy as it stands now because he wasn’t aware of any town that had resident and nonresident memberships. But McCarren said she had researched the issue and found that a town can charge different rates for residents and nonresidents.

But Shelburne is not an example of this. Shelburne has only one rate — resident. They don’t have nonresident memberships at all because only residents are allowed to use their town beach. That town beach was not bought with federal funds.

Mead said she didn’t think it was a good idea to change the policy and allow nonresident leaseholders to buy resident parking passes: “I can’t imagine why you would want to micromanage something that has run quite smoothly without a problem.”

Mead also made a stab at embarrassing people who lie to the youthful beach attendants, claiming they are residents when they are not when buying parking permits.

“I’m the one who deposits checks and I see the addresses. I know quite a few people,” she said. “Shame on you.”

The board decided to put a “pin in” the resident-nonresident issue and make a decision later, after the season but before March when the stickers for the beach parking passes will be ordered for the next season.

Employee pay-rate increase

Bloch submitted a town employee pay-rate increase of around 7 percent — a 4.5 percent cost-of-living increase plus a 2-3 percent “salary administration” increase based upon an employee’s pay ranking, or quartile, as determined by qualifications including experience, training and education.

The board approved the town employee pay rate increase unanimously.

CSH Rotary Presents

DIAMONDS AND DENIM

CASINO NIGHT

SUNDAY AUGUST 7

OLD LANTERN BARN

FEATURING

LOWELL THOMPSON AND FRIENDS

6 P M

PRIZES!

\$40 per person

at the door or online

FUN!

SCAN HERE!!

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New York Life, Fenn & Co Design Build

Greentree Real Estate, Vermont Farm Table

Church Hill Landscapes

Letters to the Editor

Thanks for all the help with library landscape plan

To the Editor:

Thanks so much for noting the Vermont Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects’ award my firm received. I would like to expand on the award credits and what actually received the award. The overall educational, public process used to create and begin implementation of the Charlotte Library Landscape Master Plan received the award. I shared the award with Karen Tuininga, Linda Hamilton, Marty Illick and Charlie Tagetz. The Charlotte Library, including the staff and board of directors, was the client.

The award recognized the overall very public, instructional process the Charlotte Library used to create and begin implementation of a Landscape Master Plan after it completed the expansion project. I was privileged to work with Karen and Linda, the codirectors of the Charlotte Seed Library, on organizing the educational program. Marty helped frame the educational sessions to include stormwater management considerations around the library for the Ahead of the Storm process. Charlie developed the initial plans for the rain garden that helped get the library its site plan approvals and served as the basis for the rain garden’s final design. Karen and Linda took the lead on beginning the implementation of the landscape near the new library entrance. I took on leading a group of volunteers to reshape and plant over 1,500 plants in the rain garden after the site contractors did the primary earthwork and rain barrel installations.

Many volunteers helped to create and start implementing the library Landscape Master Plan. Hopefully, it can be completed in the next few years. My thanks to the library staff

and board of directors, Karen, Linda, Charlie and our dear departed Marty for making the Library Landscape Master Plan process such a success.

Jim Donovan
Charlotte

Balint has experience no other candidate has

To the Editor:

We are reminded every day that our democracy needs us to step up and take action. For me, there is one clear choice for Vermont’s lone seat in the U.S. House of Representatives — Becca Balint. Balint is the current leader of the Vermont Senate — a post she was elected to unanimously by Democrats, Republicans and Progressives. Over the years I have seen firsthand how her leadership skills brought together folks from all parties. You can read her bio at beccabalint.com.

As the former executive director of the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, looking at housing statewide, I worked a lot with Balint on affordable housing and support issues. She is a fierce advocate for all Vermonters’ needs and has proven that in the legislature. As an elected Democratic City Councilor from Burlington, I see her interest in helping our Vermont cities and towns thrive. Now, more than ever, we need her advocacy in Congress; we need Becca to represent us in Washington.

Balint has the trusted experience that no other candidate has. Please support her in the Aug. 9 Democratic primary.

Sarah Carpenter
Burlington

Mike Yantachka for state representative

To the Editor:

Mike Yantachka is the kind of person you’d think, “Gee, I bet he volunteered for politicians he believed in as a young man in college, and I bet he quietly served on the school board, and things like that.” And you’d be right. He has, in his own modest words, “helped out where I could.”

In Charlotte that means over 30 years of continuous service not only to the school board but also as justice of the peace and chair of both the Charlotte and Chittenden County Democratic Committees, as well as

volunteering with various local groups.

For the 12 years I’ve lived here I’ve seen Mike show up to meetings — many, many, many meetings — not to critique them but to listen to what Charlotters are up to and see where he might be able to help out. On the hectic last day of this year’s legislative session, he popped out during a short break to join a town garage meeting because he wanted to let us know about a funding opportunity that had just been passed by the Legislature.

Mike’s real, walk-the-talk engagement in the community has given him a diversity of perspectives that he’s put to use for Vermonters. Did you know that during this last session he introduced the agritourism bill that eases the liability of farms that want to expand their business? He got 49 co-sponsors for that bill, and it passed unanimously in both the House and the Senate. To pull off that feat takes perseverance, yes, as well as nuance and experience.

Mike isn’t showy. His years of service is authentic; through action his commitment to doing good for the community is plain to see. As has been exhaustively hashed out, he also has the rare humility and care to listen, then recognize and apologize when he makes a mistake. Remember, in 2019 he voted to support comprehensive abortion rights legislation, which is the actual law of the land now. Fortunately, his erroneous 2022 vote was irrelevant and Vermont voters have the chance this fall to be the first state in the country to secure reproductive rights in its constitution.

I respect the modesty, civility, hard work, constructive engagement and longstanding dedication of Mike Yantachka.

Rebecca Foster
Charlotte

Yantachka’s voting candor is breath of fresh air

To the Editor:

I know Mike Yantachka to be an honest, loyal and engaged public servant who has served Charlotte well for decades. Mike and I served on the Charlotte Central School board during a time of unprecedented transition in education funding (Brigham v. State).

We could depend on Mike to be consistently measured, thoughtful and considerate of the best interest of the students and his broader constituency. He has spent

countless hours as a lawmaker on myriad issues whose outcomes were critical to our community. I don’t believe that those who know Mike would ever regard him as a “bait-and-switch” kind of guy, as he was recently characterized in one of our town forums.

Not everyone is as clear as I am on reproductive rights. Mike was transparent in publicly stating that he struggled with aspects of the law. Maybe his faith made decisions murkier for him; perhaps he had an epiphany about a woman’s inalienable right to choose and realized he cannot have it both ways; or maybe, if one is especially cynical, he simply succumbed to the lure of political expediency which led him to ultimately voice his support for Prop 5. Regardless of how he got there, when Mike says he supports a constitutional amendment prohibiting government infringement of reproductive autonomy, I take him at his word. These days, a man in politics who explains his voting record, revisits and analyzes the issue at hand, and has the courage to change his mind, is not only an anomaly, he is a breath of fresh air.

Charlotte voters may well decide on a change in leadership for their state representative. Mike may not be the youngest (a fact recently cited) or the prettiest candidate, but he shouldn’t be disqualified for either, nor should he be for taking a circuitous route that ultimately led him to the right destination.

Joyce Cameron
Charlotte

Prop 2 helps end Vermont’s slavery legacy

To the Editor:

This November, Vermont voters have a rare chance to weigh in on not one, but two proposed amendments to the state constitution.

Prop 2 states that “slavery and indentured servitude in any form are prohibited.” Although Vermonters have been told that the state was the first to abolish slavery, this is not accurate. In the current constitution, there are exceptions to the abolition of slavery on three grounds, including for “those bound for payment of debts, damages, fines, costs or the like.”

These exceptions in the Vermont Constitution have led to similar exceptions in the constitutions of 25 other states and in the U.S. Constitution, with its exception for punishment of a crime in the Thirteenth Amendment.

Vermonters, let’s take action during this election cycle to end the morally reprehensible practice of slavery and the legacy of hatred and systemic racism it has given our country. To find out more information or to join the campaign as a volunteer, go to abolishslaveryvt.org/.

Nina Regan
Charlotte
(Nina Regan is the wife of Bill Regan, a member of The Charlotte News board of directors.)

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Beach bash



Courtesy photo

This year’s Charlotte Town Beach Party is Saturday, July 16.

Free food, free music
— It’s the Town Party

Bill Fraser-Harris
Recreation Commission

Come meet and greet and eat — the Charlotte Town Beach Party is this Saturday, July 16, 4-8 p.m.

Join your friends and neighbors for a free barbecue with all the food from local vendors Fat Cow Farm, Misty Knoll, Stoney Loam Farm, Adams Berry Farm and gelato by Backyard Bistro and Patterson Fuels.

Live music will be supplied by Mystic Party Band. Grilling by Fortin’s Lawncare and Snowplowing and Ceres Farm.

Bring your favorite potluck dish to share. There will be tables of food. Bring your own beverages, plates and utensils.

Please no dogs or grumpy people.

The entire event is free with free parking

after 4 p.m. Dinner served around 6 p.m. Please bring a donation for the band.

And then the summer fun continues with Music at the Beach. These concerts are free with a season parking pass or a paid day pass.

On Wednesdays — July 20, July 27, Aug. 3 — the Vermont Symphony Orchestra Quartet will perform classical concerts in harmony with the sunset. Picnicking at 5 p.m. and music at 6 p.m.

Then to finish off the season the Green Mountain Chorus, a group that reportedly sings a cappella like no other, will perform on Wednesday, Aug. 17, at 6 p.m. As always, donations encouraged.

All events are weather permitting with updates on the Charlotte Recreation Facebook page and details available at billandeva@gmavt.net or 802-343-4350.

Around Town

Congratulations

Riley Jonathan Marchand of Charlotte was named to the University of Utah’s spring dean’s list.

Julie Sulva of Charlotte was named to the dean’s list for the spring at the University of New Hampshire.

Obituary

Barbara Ann Berg Lewis was a beloved mother, grandmother, aunt, sister, teacher, wife and friend during her amazing 87 years. She died peacefully on July 7, 2022, at the University of Vermont Medical Center from chronic medical conditions.



Barbara graduated summa cum laude from Mount Holyoke College, majoring in chemistry, and remained sharp up to the end of her life. She loved reading and read almost every mystery novel from the Pierson Library. We will remember her for her incredible courage, determination and never-ending love and support for her family and friends.

Barbara lived a full life. She was born on April 24, 1935, in Newark, New Jersey, to John F. and Mildred (Pearl) S. Berg and was raised with her sister Millie in Maplewood, New Jersey. She graduated from Columbia High School and went to Mount Holyoke College where she excelled in her studies and formed lifelong friendships. After marrying John D. Lewis in 1957 and the birth of her three children, she completed graduate studies in teaching at the University of Vermont, earning her master’s.

Barbara first worked at Smith Kline and French in Philadelphia supporting her family as a chemist while her husband was in medical school. After the family moved to Charlotte in 1968, she worked at Champlain Valley Union High School teaching

chemistry for a decade, where she won State Teacher of the Year and was invited to attend an award dinner at the White House. She also won the Timm Award from New England Association of Chemistry Teachers in 1990.

Later, Barbara moved to higher education, teaching chemistry at St. Michael’s, Norwich University and the University of Vermont. After she and John moved to Colorado for a decade and a half in 1994, she taught chemistry at Colorado College in Colorado Springs.

Barbara loved Vermont and was an avid volunteer giving many tours at Shelburne Farms. She and John traveled widely and saw all the continents of the world, often traveling with “The Slapdash Crew,” four of their closest college friends. She also thoroughly enjoyed watching her grandkids play basketball, soccer and volleyball, as well as attending their many extraordinary musical performances.

Barbara was predeceased by her daughter, Jeanette, and her parents. She is survived by her husband John, her daughters Judy Lewis Pugliese and Jacquie Lewis-Wang, their spouses Sam Pugliese and Qiang (John) Wang, and her grandchildren Annabella and Antonio Pugliese and Sophia and Phillip Wang. She is also survived by her sister Millie Cunningham and nephews Derek and Bob Cunningham. She has a large and loving extended family group on both sides, and a large and loving friend group in Vermont and beyond.

We will miss Barbara — mother, grandmother, aunt, sister, teacher and wife — dearly for her constant caring, love, understanding and support. She was the social networker, organizer and memory bank for our family, and her lively spirit will be missed dearly.

A memorial service will be held at 10 a.m. on July 23 at the Charlotte Congregational Church on 403 Churchill Road in Charlotte. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Pierson Library (piersonlibrary.org).



Re-elect
Representative
Mike Yantachka
for
Charlotte-Hinesburg

Experienced! Effective!
Democratic Values!

I have worked hard for you in Montpelier for the past 12 years, and I’m proud of my record of support for Democratic values. During my 36 years in Charlotte my civic involvement has included service on the Charlotte Central School Board, Justice of the Peace, Chair of the Charlotte Democratic Committee, and Chair of the Chittenden County Democratic Committee. I am an active member of Charlotte Community Partners, a Greenup Day volunteer, and a Senior Center volunteer. I am also the Treasurer of the Vermont Disaster Recovery Fund Board.

- I have been a leader on legislation to:
- ✓ expand access to mental health services
 - ✓ raise the minimum wage
 - ✓ support childcare and Pre-K opportunities
 - ✓ promote local agriculture and forestry
 - ✓ enact reasonable firearm regulations
 - ✓ promote social equity principles
 - ✓ promote a healthy environment
 - ✓ require greenhouse gas reductions to combat climate change and save Vermonters money.

Please vote for me in the Democratic Primary to continue this work as your State Representative.

Voting begins June 25.

Paid for by Mike Yantachka for State Representative, 393 Natures Way, Charlotte, VT 802-233-5238
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Opinion

Our freedom is at stake

Charity R. Clark

I don't have an abortion story, I have a pregnancy story. And pregnancy is much more dangerous, much more risky than abortion. A pregnant person is 14 times more likely to die in childbirth than someone undergoing an abortion. And that statistic is disturbingly higher for Black women.

To deprive a person of their basic right to an abortion is an outrageous affront to their freedom, privacy and right to control their own body and life. Like most women, my body remains transformed by my own pregnancy and childbirth. Forcing someone to endure pregnancy and childbirth against their will is inhumane and anathema to the freedoms America stands for. Now only portions of this country are free, thanks to the protections fought for on the state level.

As a woman and a mother, I stand with every Vermonter and American enraged and personally affected by the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision overruling Roe v. Wade. And I am proud and grateful that in Vermont abortion access is protected under state law, and that our state will be voting this fall to enshrine our right to an abortion in the Vermont Constitution.

Like all pregnancies, mine changed my body and my perspective forever. My pregnancy was typical — I spent more than 40 weeks in various stages of nausea, acid reflux, joint pain, sleeplessness and fatigue. The nausea was particularly challenging for the first 20 weeks. Water made me nauseated so I kept popsicles in the work freezer, which I would eat at all hours.

My pregnancy thankfully ended with a longed-for and healthy baby — after 30 hours of hard labor during which time I was in so much pain that if I sat down, I vomited.



Charity R. Clark

I lost so much blood that my co-parent later told me he thought I was going to die. And then my body began to recover — while it transformed into, for six months, the sole food source to my big, cherished baby. Eventually, I lost the 47 pounds I had gained.

My experience is likely familiar to many people who have gone through pregnancy and childbirth. And it has deeply affected my perspective on the impact of Dobbs.

Now is the time for all of us to be formulating our responses to this devastating decision. As the first woman elected to be Vermont Attorney General, I would work closely with legislative leaders to ensure Vermont remains a safe haven for abortion access. I would help craft legislation that will ensure anti-abortion states cannot punish people in Vermont for assisting with abortion access for anyone present in our state. Some businesses have already developed policies to support employees.

It is time for all leaders in our state to stand up for people harmed by this decision. We must use creativity, courage and all available tools to protect anyone affected by the loss of the right to an abortion. Our freedom is at stake.

(Charity R. Clark is a Democrat running for Vermont Attorney General.)

A pitcher is worth ... \$30



Courtesy photo

The grand opening of the u-pick wildflowers at Glory Flower Farm is this Saturday, July 17, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at 1162 Church Hill Road. It's \$30 a pitcher with as many flowers as you can stuff in. Fresh brewed coffee and baked cookies.

Help keep democracy healthy with your vote



Rep. Mike Yantachka

As we watch the January 6 hearings it is evident that the democratic form of government that we take for granted has been threatened and still is under tremendous stress. Never before in the history of our country, from George Washington to Barack Obama, has a chief executive not executed a peaceful transfer of power. The events of Jan. 6 demonstrate just how tenuous is our hold on the foundation of our country. Intrinsic to that foundation is our ability as citizens to exercise our right to be heard through the voting booth.

We are currently in the midst of the primary election cycle, normally characterized by a much lower voter turnout than the general election in November. However, it is important to recognize that primaries are just as important as the general election. In our political party system, the primary election determines which of several candidates are considered the best to represent the party in November.

Circumstances this year make the

primaries more important than usual because of the many candidates vying to fill so many vacant seats at the state and national level in Vermont. If we want to have the best choices available to us on the November ballot, then it is our responsibility to determine those choices between now and Aug. 9.

Vermont has made voting highly accessible to all qualified Vermont voters. Registered voters have been able to cast their primary ballots since June 25. Qualified but unregistered voters can register online at mvp.vermont.gov or in person at their town clerk's office.

Since Vermont has an open primary, no party declaration needed, voters receive a ballot for each of the major parties (Democrat, Republican, Progressive) but can only vote on one of the ballots. The two unused ballots must be returned with the voted ballot to avoid voiding the voted ballot. So, follow the directions carefully.

I urge everyone to vote between now and Aug. 9 and generate a record turnout in this year's primary to keep our democracy healthy.

(Mike Yantachka is Charlotte-Hinesburg's Democratic state representative and is running for re-election.)





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Barry Finette: Saving lives across the globe



Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

Most people run away from disasters, but Dr. Barry Finette runs toward them.

The University of Vermont professor and pediatrician has run to a variety of humanitarian projects and disaster relief missions in Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Togo and Uganda. He’s also the founder of a clinical intelligence platform called THINKMD which is designed to help those nations help themselves and lessen their reliance on healthcare specialists from other countries.

Finette has a very simple explanation for what he does. “It’s important for me to leave things better than where I found them,” he said. “When people go through a disaster or challenging times, I enjoy working with them and seeing what I can do to help make their situation better.”

Finette said he grew up with two parents who cared for him and provided food and shelter, but in other parts of the world, children might have the same kind of loving parents, but they don’t have access to the same opportunities because they live where there is political and economic insecurity. He noted that in many low-income countries, there is only one physician for every 2,000 to 50,000 people.

In 1989, Finette began teaching pediatrics, microbiology and molecular genetics at the University of Vermont while also practicing pediatrics and taking part in humanitarian relief efforts with Project Hope.

“After 25 or 30 years, I was looking to explore other things,” he said. “I was particularly interested in global health and humanitarian aid.”

Finette took a sabbatical in the hope of finding new ways to contribute. Upon his return he founded the Global Health and Humanitarian Opportunity Program at University of Vermont.

“In Vermont and in particular at UVM there are a lot of incredible, highly-qualified global health specialists,” he said. “I wanted a forum for us to work together.”

Realizing that there was the potential to do more, Finette founded THINKMD in 2014.

“There is a global shortage of physicians and highly trained nurses across the globe,” he said. “That’s not going to change. I thought we could build technology that could transfer position-based skill sets into a simple digital format which could be used by those without those skills.”

Finette’s background is in science and medicine, not entrepreneurship, but he is happy with the success of THINKMD.

“We’ve survived long enough that we’re no longer considered a start-up,” he said. “That’s a very difficult thing to do but I love doing challenging things.”

THINKMD is used by a variety of humanitarian organizations in 11 countries in Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia. “It’s designed for low-income countries,” Finette said, “but it can be used anywhere.”

Finette has travelled extensively and appreciates each of the countries he has had the opportunity to visit, but the trips that stand out most in his mind are the ones he has been able to take with family members. His son Ezra has worked with him in the field and both Ezra and Finette’s wife Sharon joined him for validation studies for THINKMD in Zambia.

“Our technology allows non-professionals to do clinical evaluations,” he said. “You need to demonstrate that it does that and they were with me when we trained people and started implementing the program.”

Validation studies were conducted on over 1,000 children in four countries and the diagnoses by local practitioners correlated



Courtesy photo
Barry Finette bringing medical care to children in the central highland region of Peru.

80-95 percent with those made by remote physicians.

One of the reasons Finette chose pediatrics as his specialty is the variety of research opportunities with the young. Another is the complexity and the challenge of dealing with children.

“You’ve got everything from premature infants to adolescents,” he said. “Each has its own challenge, and you also need to understand the dynamics between your patients and their caregivers. That makes it incredibly challenging.”

Finette said many pediatricians gravitate to the larger children’s hospitals in Boston,

Dallas and Philadelphia, but he is thrilled that he and his wife chose to work in Vermont.

“There are things I was able to do here that I wouldn’t have been able to do elsewhere,” he said. “I did a cancer research project at UVM and was able to enroll every patient which might not have been possible at a larger hospital. The cooperation and collaboration with my colleagues is unique.”

Finette is taking some time off from disaster relief to build THINKMD which he hopes will make it easier for local people to respond to disasters within their borders, as he works to leave the world better than he found it.

Conservation commission seeking conservation commissioners

The Charlotte Conservation Commission has two open seats.

This position is perfect for someone who feels deeply about our town’s wildlife and natural resources.

If you have some time — and maybe expertise — to contribute, join one of the monthly meetings, held on the fourth Tuesday of the month from 7-9 p.m. The next meeting is Tuesday, July 26.

For now, meetings are still being held on Zoom. You can find the Zoom links on the town website: charlottetvt.org and click on meeting calendar. To learn more about the conservation commission, visit: charlottetvt.org and click on conservation commission.

If you have any questions or want to learn more, send an email to conservationcharlotte@gmail.com.



Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay

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Environment

Let’s bring Vermont’s recycling into the 21st century

Sarah Reeves

Nearly 30 years ago, the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) built Vermont’s first recycling sorting facility, known as a materials recovery facility where “blue-bin” recyclables are sorted. In this same year — 1993 — Jurassic Park was the big movie hit, a gallon of gas cost \$1.68, and Janet Jackson and Mariah Carey dominated the music charts. In other words, it was a long time ago. And just like people’s taste in music has changed, people’s recycling needs have evolved.

The current materials recovery facility can no longer keep up with modern packaging and the recycling needs of Vermonters today. The facility is inefficient and outdated. Employees are still hand sorting some materials, and the facility is at capacity.

To address these challenges, CSWD is proposing to build a new materials recovery facility that will be more efficient and effective, providing affordable, in-state processing for Vermonters’ recycling for years to come. It will be built with enough capacity and flexibility to adapt to changes in volume and types of recyclables over the next 30 years. The new materials recovery facility will be better equipped to deal with the vastly diversified packaging formats that didn’t exist in the 20th century.

CSWD functions much like a school or water district, only we manage solid waste. As a municipally owned district, we serve the public without profit as a driver. Because we’re a municipality, we need voter approval for long-term borrowing so that we can finance the new materials recovery facility project. CSWD will be seeking voter approval in this year’s general election to borrow no more than \$22 million to build the new

materials recovery facility.

In 1993, it’s doubtful that anyone could have imagined the variety of packaging that exists in our modern world. Because packaging has changed significantly since then, we are not able to process all of the types of packaging that we would like to. The new materials recovery facility, however, will allow CSWD to have the flexibility to adapt to future packaging innovations. And where markets are available, we will also be able to add things like packaging and containers made from black plastic to our list of recyclable items. The new materials recovery facility will allow us to grow for the next 30 years, with 40 percent more capacity.

Vermonters know that recycling has immense benefits for the environment, the climate and the economy. CSWD’s new materials recovery facility will be able to process up to 70,000 tons (140 million pounds) of recyclables every year. Recycling these materials has significant greenhouse gas reduction benefits, the equivalent of removing 52,500 passenger vehicles from the road and conserving nearly 28 million gallons of gas annually. Recycling these materials saves 634,000 trees from being cut down, every year.

Recycling reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills, conserves natural resources, reduces carbon emissions and creates jobs in the recycling and manufacturing industries. For all of these reasons, Vermonters want to recycle, and they want to recycle more. Building a new materials recovery facility will allow our state to recycle more volume and types of packaging, which means removing more materials from the waste stream and sending less trash to Vermont’s one and only landfill.

The benefits of a new materials recovery facility go beyond protecting the environment and extend to our economy. The new materials recovery facility will



replace repetitive, hand-sorting jobs with more diverse, skilled jobs. It will also provide our hard-working team members with a cleaner facility and improved working conditions.

While the new materials recovery facility is an exciting prospect, what is perhaps even more appealing is the fact that this new, high-tech facility will be built at no cost to taxpayers. This bond will not increase taxes and CSWD will pay back the loan over 25-30 years through our operational revenue.

CSWD does our best with what we have, but the current facility has us stuck

in the past. It is high time we move into the 21st century and help the next two generations of Vermonters recycle more. The benefits of a new materials recovery facility are clear. It is a win for Vermonters, our environment and our economy. I hope you will join CSWD in realizing our vision by supporting the new materials recovery facility and voting for the bond in the November general election.

(Sarah Reeves is the executive director of the Chittenden Solid Waste District.)

Energetic activity



Courtesy photo

Wolfger Schneider (left) and Kitt Urdang mix up concrete to anchor bike racks at the Charlotte Central School solar-compost shed for the energy committee. The racks are close enough to the solar-powered electrical outlet at the shed that an e-bike can be charged while someone is playing on the playground or hiking up Pease Mountain.

Environment

E-lawncare movement gaining momentum

Steven Wisbaum

With the existential impacts of human-caused climate change becoming ever more obvious, it’s also more obvious that we need to do everything possible to reduce the volume of fossil fuel consumed. And while the huge quantities of gas and diesel burned in lawn care equipment hasn’t previously drawn much attention, that’s beginning to change.

A 2019 U.S. Department of Transportation report estimated that Vermonters consume approximately 5.4 million gallons of gasoline on lawn care every year, which is associated with the release of approximately 108 million pounds of CO2. And these numbers don’t even include all the diesel-powered “commercial” lawn mowers used by contractors, our public schools, colleges/universities, towns and cities, state government, resorts, golf courses, etcetera.

Commercial gas/diesel-powered riding mowers consume an average of 1 gallon of gas or diesel fuel per hour. Since burning 1 gallon of gas or diesel releases roughly 20 pounds of CO2, every commercial mower operated for 600-800 hours over Vermont’s roughly five month growing season consumes between 600-800 gallons of fuel, which generates between 12,000-16,000 pounds (6-8 tons) of CO2. Cumulatively, for every 100 of these mowers operating in Vermont, 1.2-1.6 million pounds (600-800 tons) of CO2 is being released every year.

By comparison, a typical commercial battery-electric riding mower consumes roughly 3 kilowatt hours, and in Vermont, the generation and distribution of that electricity is associated with the release of roughly .26 pounds of CO2. So, when a commercial e-mower is operated for the same 600-800 hours, it consumes between 1,800-2,400 kilowatt hours of electricity, which is associated with the release of approximately 468-624 pounds (almost a quarter to a third of a ton) of CO2, which is about 25 times less CO2 emissions compared to a gas/diesel mower.

Residential gas-powered walk-behind mowers have smaller engines, but they’re inefficient, so they also burn a half to a full gallon per hour, which in-turn releases 10-20 pounds of CO2 per hour. This means that for every 1,000 residential gas-powered walk-behind mowers operating in Vermont, they’re collectively releasing 10,000-20,000 pounds (5-10 tons) of CO2 per hour.

Vermonters also operate thousands of gas-powered “chore” tools including string trimmers, chain saws or debris/leaf blowers which further adds to the many



Photo by Satchel Blood

Steven Wisbaum, founder of the Mow Electric! campaign, mowing with the Ten Stones Village Association’s Mean Green battery electric zero-turn “commercial” lawn mower.

environmental impacts of conventional lawn care practices.

The good news is that switching to battery-electric lawn care equipment has never been easier, and Vermonters are increasingly making this switch. There are now lots of brands to choose from, including over 20 manufacturers of e-walk-behind lawn mowers and chore tools, and six manufacturers of residential e-riding mowers. And although there’s currently only four manufacturers of commercial e-riding mowers (with run times of up to eight hours), more are coming.

While e-lawn care equipment may cost more to purchase, cost of ownership, or its “life-cycle” cost, is a lot less due to the lower cost of electricity compared to fossil fuel, and much lower maintenance and repair costs. It also eliminates the need to transport gas, is a lot quieter and has no tailpipe emissions.

To help make this equipment even more affordable, all of Vermont’s electric utilities now offer incentives or rebates for both residential and commercial e-lawn

equipment based on the expected reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Thousands of Vermont homeowners and renters have already begun to make this switch, as has Shelburne Farms; the city of Burlington Parks and Recreation Department; the Burlington Airport; the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation; and the University of Vermont.

The Ten Stones homeowners association in Charlotte is also now in its third season using an e-riding mower to maintain about 6 acres of private lawns, shared green space and walking trails.

While there are now about a dozen Vermont contractors offering e-lawn care services, there are hundreds more still using conventional equipment, as is the case with the majority of homeowners and renters, cities and towns, public schools, colleges and universities, state agencies and

departments, museums, resorts, golf courses, etcetera.

To help facilitate the broader transition to e-lawn care, the Mow Electric! Campaign has been working with the Vermont Clean Cities Coalition, town energy committees, citizen advocates, equipment vendors, local and state government representatives, and others. The Mow Electric! website (mowelectric.org) supports this work by providing links to utility incentives or rebates, links to manufacturers’ websites, interactive “life-cycle costs and CO2 emissions comparison” spreadsheets, a list of e-mowing contractors, access to “We Mow Electric” yard signs and lots of other resources. All Vermonters are invited to help bring about this important transition.

(Steven Wisbaum is the founder of the Mow Electric!)

Free workshop focuses on calf and heifer management



Image by Cally Lawson from Pixabay

Farmers are invited to join Pete Erickson, University of New Hampshire dairy production state specialist, for a walk and talk farm tour on July 27.

The tour will take place from 10 a.m. to noon at the Laggis Brothers Farm in East Hardwick.

Erickson will discuss calf and heifer management practices and how farmers can apply these to their own operations. He also will talk about dry cow management for healthier calves, calf feeding, calf and

heifer housing and pasture management for heifers.

There is no charge to attend, but advance registration is required by July 25 at go.uvm.edu/moo. Lunch is included.

University of Vermont Extension is hosting this workshop in collaboration with UNH and the University of Maine. It is part of the 2022 Summer Dairy Series, which includes a number of informational tours, workshops and events for farmers. To learn more, go to go.uvm.edu/summer-dairy.

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Outdoors

Patches of dead leaves but all is not lost to spongy moths



Elizabeth Bassett
CONTRIBUTOR

You could be mistaken for thinking it’s early spring as you gaze at Pease Mountain: bare tree branches in a haze of green as young leaves push out. What’s going on in July? A scourge has descended upon our town — spongy moths, formerly known as gypsy moths, have been consuming their favorite foods — leaves of oaks, birch, poplars and conifers. They also savor apple trees.

There is a bit of good news: “I’m encouraged to see reflushing,” said Chittenden County Forester Ethan Tapper of the re-growth of leaves he sees on many trees. “That is a good sign. If a tree is healthy, it can survive one or two years of defoliation. Mortality starts to kick in the third year.”

Tapper adds that hemlock trees are particularly vulnerable. “In Milton last year, some hemlocks succumbed to spongy moths. If a hemlock is one-third defoliated, it usually dies.”

Other relatively good news: There’s only one generation of spongy moths per year in this climate. When the caterpillars pupate, the defoliation is over. In addition, they are an early season visitor, which gives the trees time to put out new leaves.

This exotic pest, *Lymantria dispar* or spongy moth, was introduced accidentally to the United States about 150 years ago. Historically, infestations have occurred in Vermont about every 8 to 10 years. We have had a reprieve, however, as the last major outbreak was in the early 1990s.

In 2020 there were a few reports but 2021 saw moths across the state. Tapper said that infestations are generally in the same locations as last year. Charlotte is an exception. Mt. Philo was badly hit last summer. This year the moths have migrated a few miles north to Pease Mountain.

Populations usually collapse after two to four years. Natural enemies that attack spongy moth eggs, caterpillars or cocoons include white-footed mice, some birds,

predatory insects or mites and parasitoids, which are specialized wasps or flies.

Two naturally occurring biological controls can also come to the rescue and one or both appear to be at work locally this season. “We have had more reports this year of the fungus and virus that attack the caterpillar,” Tapper said.

Native to Japan, the fungus *Entomophaga maimaiga* was introduced to the northeastern United States in the 1900s as a biological control for spongy moth. Its spores overwinter in soil or on tree bark and will germinate in May or June with moisture and high humidity. Frequent rainfall in May and June can lead to robust growth of the fungus. Caterpillars ingest the spores as they consume leaves. The fungus grows inside the body and can kill a caterpillar within a week.

“You can tell it was the fungus; dead caterpillars appear upright on the bark, a section of their bodies collapsed,” said Tapper.

The naturally occurring virus is nuclear polyhedrosis. Caterpillars ingest the virus and it then destroys their internal organs. Dead and dying caterpillars hang limply like an upside-down U. The cadavers liquefy and disintegrate rapidly, producing a foul odor. The virus is present to some degree in all spongy moth populations. The stress of competing for food and resting space intensifies when the population peaks during an infestation, making the caterpillars more vulnerable to nuclear polyhedrosis.

The dynamics of the two diseases differ. The spongy moth nuclear polyhedrosis is not affected by spring rainfall or temperatures and is seldom prevalent until spongy moth populations reach very high levels. In contrast, *E. maimaiga* may kill spongy moth caterpillars even when populations are low, but only if weather conditions are favorable.

What can we do?

Keep your eyes open, especially if you have oak trees. You will surely notice if you have an invasion of leaf-chomping caterpillars. An adaptation to outsmart birds and other predators makes the caterpillars vulnerable to trapping. They devour the leaf canopy by night and descend to hide in leaf litter and bark crevices by day. This gives humans an



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Above: Large patches of trees with dead leaves blacken the side of Pease Mountain.

Below: Spongy moth caterpillars trapped below a sticky band and ready for picking at Airport Park in Colchester.

Photo by Sheri Larsen

opening to capture and kill them.

The University of Vermont extension service recommends wrapping an 18-inch-wide strip of burlap around the tree at chest height. Tie a string around the center and fold the top portion down to form a skirt, with the string acting as a belt. Caterpillars hide beneath the burlap. Pick off the caterpillars daily and submerge them in soapy water or alcohol. If you are prone to allergies, cover your skin before collecting these critters — seems like a good idea in any event.

Another physical block is a sticky band or duct tape that can be installed on the trunk and lower branches of high-value trees. When caterpillars crawl up the trunk, they get stuck and die.

Removing egg masses is another important step in conquering the moth. The eggs overwinter and hatch in the spring, so removing them between August and May will reduce infestations the following summer. Each egg mass can have 50 to 1,500 eggs, so this is a worthwhile step. The masses appear on the bark of trees and can be removed with a scraper and, like the caterpillars, killed by submerging them in soapy water or alcohol.

Check the website for Vermont Forest



Health Department, vermont.gov/forest/forest-health, for more detailed information. The department will conduct an egg-mass survey this fall and the results will determine recommendations for next year.

So, trap those caterpillars and crush those eggs. We have a job to do to protect our trees.

Outdoors

Researchers seek Lake Champlain angler help

Kris Stepenuck

Attention Lake Champlain anglers: University of Vermont researchers need your help this summer with two important studies. The first, in partnership with Dartmouth College, measures mercury concentrations in sport fish including walleye, yellow perch, smallmouth bass, lake trout and white perch. This survey is conducted every five years in collaboration with the Lake Champlain Basin Program. Its purpose is to assist scientists in understanding how changing environmental conditions impact mercury levels in fish. The information also helps inform consumers about healthy eating choices as eating too many lake-caught fish with high mercury levels may cause neurological damage. Lake Champlain boat launch stewards are collecting fish samples Thursday through Monday until Sept. 5. Daytime hours vary from site to site. Anglers may donate whole fish or fish muscle tissue and will be asked to indicate the section of the lake where the fish was caught. Information about the study can be found at site.uvm.edu/hginfish, which includes an interactive map showing the GPS locations of boat launch areas where samples will be collected. To learn more, email

hginfish@dartmouth.edu. The second study tracks lake trout. This native species disappeared from Lake Champlain around 1900 and only recently has shown signs of recovery due to annual stocking, which began in the mid-1970s. For this study, University of Vermont researchers implanted acoustic transmitters into lake trout to collect data. These small black devices relay a coded signal to receivers placed around the lake, providing information such as the location and depth of a fish, along with the water temperature when it swims past a receiver. Anglers can help by checking for an external, numbered pink tag on the belly of any lake trout they catch as these fish have been outfitted with a transmitter. Before releasing, they should record the number and email that to fishtag@uvm.edu. If harvested, they should retain the internal, black transmitter and contact the researchers at the same email to arrange for retrieval. Data from this study, conducted by University of Vermont doctoral student Matt Futia and supported by Lake Champlain Sea Grant, will help guide restoration efforts for lake trout as well as contribute to public education about this popular sport fish species. If questions, contact Futia at fishtag@uvm.edu or kstepenu@uvm.edu.

Yoga gathering



Courtesy photo

A group rises, shines and yogas on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Join them for an hour of personal engagement and physical wellbeing at the Charlotte Town Beach. Some knowledge of yoga is helpful but not necessary. All are welcome. Please bring a yoga mat or blanket. Donations (cash or Venmo) to benefit a beach meditation rock are requested. For notifications register at charlotterec.com.

(Kris Stepenuck, extension leader and associate director of the University of Vermont Lake Champlain Sea Grant, develops, implements and oversees its outreach activities.)

Squashing ... er ... curbing squash vine borer

Squash is one of the easiest types of vegetables to grow. Plant a seed in some soil, give it water and a lot of space and before long you have more than you know what to do with. Squash are a part of the family Cucurbitaceae (also known as cucurbit). Members of the cucurbit family include winter and summer squash, zucchini, pumpkins, cucumbers and watermelon. Cucurbits grow luscious fruits with near-endless uses. However easy to grow, cucurbits are threatened by a number of unfortunate pests that can make growing these fruits and vegetables much more difficult. One of these pests is the squash vine borer (*Melittia cucurbitae*), a particularly destructive pest. The adult clear-wing moth lays individual eggs at the base of the plant in late June or early July, preferring larger stems over smaller ones. Immediately after the eggs hatch, the larval stage of the pest bores into the base of cucurbit plants and feeds on the stem, slowly severing the plants' food and water supply. After feeding and growing, the larvae pupate and overwinter in the top 1-2 inches of soil, restarting the life cycle. To check for this pest in your garden, inspect the stem at the base of your cucurbit plants in late July to see if there are feeding holes and frass (pest excrement). Another sign is that the leaves on the plant will begin



Photo by Brantlee Spakes Richter, University of Florida/bugwood.org

The larvae of the squash vine borer are white with a brown head and can grow to around an inch long. To crisp and wilt, beginning to die even before the fruit has ripened. As with all unwanted insects in the garden, it is important to understand the life cycle of the insect before pursuing a treatment. Correctly identifying the species and life cycle stage responsible for the damage is one of the first steps of practicing integrated pest management. Integrated pest management is a targeted approach to managing unwanted plants and insects in the garden, starting with observation and identification, followed by treatment methods that start with cultural control, biological control and as a last resort, chemical control. Cultural control includes using mechanical methods to prevent infestation (such as picking the eggs off the plants by hand or using row covers). Biological control could mean using a beneficial insect that will

prey on the insect. Chemical control uses chemicals to treat the specific life cycle of the pest. There are a few techniques that the home gardener can try to manage the squash vine borer. One is to scout your plants for eggs in late July. Brown-red eggs are oval-shaped and can be found along the base of stems. If you find eggs, remove them from the stems by hand. Covering your plants with floating row covers can help to create a barrier between young plants and pests, providing that the pest isn't already present in your soil from a previous year. One issue with this method is that cucurbit flowers need to be pollinated to produce fruit, so the row covers will need to be removed during flowering. In the fall, bag up infected plants into trash bags and dispose. Other options include hot composting or breaking up the plant and tilling it back into the soil. Tilling the soil also can disturb the pupae, sending them deeper into the soil to help break the life cycle. One silver lining is that the squash vine borer doesn't like butternut squash, so if you can't grow other cucurbits, give butternut squash a try.

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

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Outdoors

Best kestrel nest?



Peter Demick took this picture of American kestrels. He said this was the ninth year he's had American kestrels nesting in his barn. This year it was twins — a female and a male.

Prepare for emerald ash borer before it arrives

Mark Dillenbeck
Contributor

The good news is that the emerald ash borer has not yet been detected in Charlotte.

The bad news is that it has now been found in almost every county in Vermont, including Chittenden County.

This includes a recently discovered infestation in a shopping mall in Williston that is near enough to our town to put us within the “emerald ash borer infested area” as defined by the state. These are 10-mile zones around locations where the beetle has been identified.

But Charlotte is still in a yellow zone on state maps, indicating a lower severity infestation area where trees are not yet showing infestation symptoms or decline, but where emerald ash borer has been detected.

Emerald ash borer populations remain low in our state and infestations to date have impacted a small percentage of our ash trees. This good fortune may be due to robust public outreach by state forestry authorities and Vermonters’ relatively strong adherence to rules and guidelines regarding movement of wood.

Unfortunately, the long-term outlook remains bleak and we expect almost all ash trees to eventually succumb to emerald ash borer.

To prepare for this unfortunate eventuality, we are encouraging land owners and seasonal leaseholders on Thompson’s Point to take the following proactive steps:

- Cooperate with Vermont State “Slow-the-Spread” guidelines
- Chemically treat high-value landscape trees
- Preemptively remove potential hazard trees,
- Report potential emerald ash borer infestations.

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation has recently updated its Slow-the-Spread guidelines. The basic recommendations can be boiled down to: do not move emerald ash borer infested logs or firewood, especially during the insect flight season which runs from June through September. More detailed guidelines can be found at vtinvasives.org/eab. Slowing the spread will help give us more time to prepare for the death of ash trees.

Chemical treatment is a highly effective, but expensive way to preserve ash trees. The treatments must be done by a properly licensed arborist or tree service company and they need to be repeated every two to three years in perpetuity.

We recommend preemptively removing trees that, once dead, may pose hazards to homes or infrastructure. The reason for felling trees before they are infested is that ash wood tends to crumble and fail in unpredictable ways. They become dangerous for chainsaw operators and are therefore more expensive to remove.

At the town level, we are removing ash trees along town roads. Sometime after October a contractor will remove roadside ash trees on Thompson’s Point.

Please keep an eye out for telltale signs of emerald ash borer infestation. These include “blonding” of bark from woodpecker activity and S-shaped galleries below bark. If you think you have detected emerald ash borer, please report it to me or other authorities.

(Mark Dillenbeck is Charlotte’s tree warden.)

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Calendar of Events

Calendar compiled by Mary Landon	
Please send event listings to calendar@thecharlottenews.org at least three weeks in advance. Weather cancellations and COVID guidelines are available on individual websites.	
Book discussion Thursday, July 14, 7 p.m. Three editors of The Most Costly Journey discuss this anthology of comics depicting the oral histories of migrant farm workers. In-person event at 118 Elliot in Brattleboro, the panel discussion will also be live-streamed for free. Event is part of the Vermont Reads initiative of Vermont Humanities. Find the link to register at tinyurl.com/vmbat8s3.	Eun Hee Park, organist and music director at Shelburne United Methodist Church. No reservations; \$10 donation asked at the door of the newly air-conditioned church. More info at shelburneumc.org.
	CHARLOTTE Potluck beach party Saturday, July 16, 4 p.m. Neighbors, friends and newcomers gather at the Charlotte Public Beach for a free dinner of local food products, beginning at 6 p.m. Bring a potluck dish to share, as well as plates, utensils and beverages. Live music with Mystic Party Band. A special local event to bring us together, with thanks to Fat Cow Farm, Misty Knoll, Stony Loam Farm, Adam’s Berry Farm, Backyard Bistro and Patterson Fuels. Rain date is July 17. Free parking after 4 p.m.
Farm to Fork Fondo Friday- Sunday, July 15-17 Try local products as you bicycle between stops in the stunning scenery of the Champlain Islands. Hosted by Snow Farm Vineyard, the fondo offers a variety of distance options on mostly flat routes with no sustained hill climbs. For a complete schedule, maps, tour stops and registration info, see farmtoforkfitness.com/destinations/champlain-islands.	The Sweet Remains Saturday, July 16, doors 5:30 p.m. This folk-rock band of three singer-songwriters is known for three-part harmonies and melodic writing. They appear at the Essex Experience in Essex Junction with music beginning at 6:30. Show is outdoors in good weather. For more info, or to buy tickets, see essexexperience.com.
Buckskin tanning Friday, July 15- Sunday, July 17 During this hands-on three-day workshop, participants learn how to transform a deerskin into buckskin, the softest and most supple leather. Learn the physically demanding skills necessary to this traditional activity. Workshop held at Bread and Butter Farm in Shelburne 9 a.m.-5 p.m. each day. To learn more or register, email closetotheskin@gmail.com or see tinyurl.com/4mvx6d8d.	Guitar on the farm Saturday, July 16, 7 p.m. The Isham Family Farm in Williston hosts soulful guitarist/singer Nick Cassarino for a solo outdoor show. Bring blankets or lawn chairs. Cassarino’s music features jazz and gospel influences for a unique sound. For more info, or tickets, see ishamfamilyfarm.com/firstearth-summer-series/.
Chasing butterflies Friday, July 15, noon- 1 p.m. Professor Ellery Foutch of Middlebury College examines why so many artists have been captivated by the study and representation of natural history subjects, particularly butterflies and moths. Free talk at the Henry Sheldon Museum in Middlebury; limited seating. For more info, see henrysheldonmuseum.org or call 802-388-2117.	Hidden history of Burlington Sunday, July 17, 2-4 p.m. Author and historian Glenn Fay discusses stories and photos from his book, Hidden History of Burlington, Vermont. Held at the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum in Burlington, Fay’s talk is followed by questions and book signings. Free; donations appreciated. For more info, email ethanallenhomestead@gmail.com or call 802-865-4556.
More kids theater Friday, July 15, 6:30 p.m. The Very Merry Theatre troupe again performs Annie Jr., this time at Staige Hill Farm, 121 Garen Road in Charlotte. Free and open to all. More info at verymerrytheatre.org.	Kids baking camp Mon.- Fri., July 18-22, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. This camp at the Richmond Community Kitchen is geared toward ages 6-9, and covers basic and intermediate baking techniques. Kids take a sweet tour around the world to create delicious treats. For more info, email info@richmondcommunitykitchen.com or call 802-434-3445. Ticket sales are at tinyurl.com/yp8sp3kc.
Wood carving class Saturday, July 16, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Rescheduled from June 18: All levels of wood carvers are invited to participate in this class at the Birds of Vermont Museum in Huntington. Expect to carve and paint a male Northern Shoveler (a colorful duck), with instruction, wood, and paint included in fee. David Tuttle of Green Mountain Woodcarvers leads the workshop. More info about what to bring and registration is at tinyurl.com/3yyzxp6e.	Leather sewing workshop Monday, July 18, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Learn the best methods, stitches, and simple patterns for sewing hides or leather pieces. Work on your own project or make a medicine pouch from the instructor’s pattern and local leather. More info at breadandbutterfarm.com or email closetotheskin@gmail.com to register.
Origami for children Saturday, July 16, 10 a.m.-noon Families are welcome to drop by the Sheldon Museum in Middlebury for a morning of origami box making. Boxes will be strong enough to hold precious collections and meaningful bits and bobs. The event is presented by the Vermont Children’s Museum, a non-profit looking to open a children’s indoor play/education space in Middlebury. Free activity; no reservations needed. For more info, see henrysheldonmuseum.org or call 802-388-2117.	Rokeby storytime Tuesday, July 19, 3:30 p.m. Come to Rokeby for a free story time and sing-along outside on the lawn. Presented in partnership with the Bixby Library in Vergennes, the theme of the activities is freedom. On Tuesdays after 1 p.m., admission to Rokeby is “pay what you can.” Come early to explore the exhibits and trails. For more info, see rokeby.org or call 802-877-3406.
Pride Hike Saturday, July 16, 1-3 p.m. Audubon Vermont is pleased to host a hike for all community members at the Green Mountain Audubon Center in Huntington. All ages welcome; youth under 18 accompanied by parent or guardian. No dogs. Bring binoculars, bug spray, water, and anything else that keeps you comfortable outdoors. Pre-register at tinyurl.com/2p8js2m9 or email gwendolyn.causer@audubon.org.	Blueberries and bluegrass Tuesday, July 19, opens 5 p.m. You will love picking blueberries as the musicians pick their strings at Owl’s Head Farm in Richmond. Berry picking begins at 5 p.m., with a 2-quart minimum purchase per adult. Music is from 6-8 p.m. Bring your own food and beverages to picnic, or enjoy empanadas from Paprika Catering and ice cream from The Udder Guys tricycle, both from Waterbury. Please, no dogs. Show is weather dependent. For updates, or more info, call 802-434-3387.
Recital in Shelburne Saturday, July 16, 1:30 p.m. Distinguished performer and teacher Dr. Sohyun Ahn presents a program of piano works by Chopin, Debussy, Mozart and Schumann. She is joined by her friend, Mrs.	CHARLOTTE VSO quartet in Charlotte Wednesday, July 20, opens at 5 p.m. Charlotte’s Recreation Committee is pleased to welcome the Vermont Symphony Orchestra quartet for several performances at the beach park. Other dates are July 27 and

Library News

Bingo with books for chance to win Flying Pig*



Margaret Woodruff
Director

Looking to extend your reading horizons?
Summer reading bingo might be the start of that journey. Pick up a copy of the library's summer bingo card and get started.
The library welcomes your suggestions for additional titles and genres. Score a bingo and enter a chance to win a Flying Pig gift certificate, a library tote bag or a Cookie Love gift certificate.

Hiking challenge

If you'd like to walk and talk books, pick up a Hiking Challenge Checklist and maps at the Charlotte Library and get moving.
You can also view many of the trails at Trailfinder.info or on the town of Charlotte website at charlottetv.org and click on maps and trails of the town.
Want to get the latest information about



our new books? Sign up for the library e-newsletter at tinyurl.com/mwtfx3zp
Town cooling centers
The Charlotte Library and the Charlotte Senior Center are designated cooling centers with air-conditioned facilities where you can cool down during hot weather. 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 social media and the library and senior center websites.

Plastic Free July
Take the challenge for a day, a week or a lifetime. Join millions of people reducing their plastic waste. Plastic Free July is a global movement that helps millions of people be part of the solution to plastic pollution — so we can have cleaner streets, oceans and communities. Pick up a Plastic Free July calendar at the library circulation desk to get started.

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. Exploring the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks, play dough ... 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 for ages 5 and over.

Adult programs
Friends of the Library Book Sale
Sunday, July 17, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
A mini version of the traditional book sale, taking advantage of our beautiful new porch and program room. Come to browse, buy, enjoy lu•lu's ice cream, take a tour of the Quinlan Schoolhouse and, don't forget, take part in our 2030 mural project.

Mural on sustainable community
Sunday, July 17, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Join participants contributing to a mural project planning for our sustainable community's best prospects. State statute requires a reduction of 40 percent emissions by the year 2030. What will that mean for Charlotte? What positive impact could this bring to make our community even stronger and more welcoming? This is a great chance for Charlotters of all ages to explore new ideas and indulge in some creative thinking and thoughtful creation. Meet under the tent on the town green. Stay for a half hour or half the day to design Charlotte's landscape of the future.

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 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 in the book by Jean-Luc Bannlec. Copies available at the library circulation desk.

Ongoing programs
Free Little Art Gallery
Come by the circulation desk for a visit to the smallest art gallery in Charlotte. Feel free to take a piece that you like, add a piece of artwork of your own 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.

Book chat
Fridays, 9:30-10:30 a.m.
Join Margaret Friday mornings on Zoom to discuss new books, old books and books we might have missed. Each week, Margaret selects a theme and highlights related titles from the library collection. Please register here: bit.ly/3BtebDj.

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. with the exception of August. For information about agenda and Zoom access, please contact the library director.



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MEETINGS
Visit charlottetv.org
for more information.

Planning Commission:
Thursday, July 21, 7-8:30 p.m.

Selectboard
Monday, July 25, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Development Review Board Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Wednesday, July 27, 7 p.m.- 9 p.m.

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Senior Center News

Visit to senior center could lead to trip on the water



Lori York
DIRECTOR

Come in and cool down during the heat of the summer.
Or join a women’s kayaking trip, learn about dragon boats, or meet other people during lunch. All of these activities plus exercises, games and more will be happening this month at the Charlotte Senior Center.

Community Health

COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic
Tuesday, July 26, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Free Garnet Healthcare walk-in COVID-19 vaccine clinics — no appointments necessary. Vaccines and boosters are available for Moderna (ages 6 months-5 years); Pediatric Pfizer (ages 5-11); Adult Pfizer (12+) and Adult Moderna (18+).

Cooling Centers
The Charlotte Senior Center and Charlotte Library are designated cooling centers with air-conditioned facilities to cool down during hot weather. 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 social media and the senior center and library websites.

Programs & Activities

Kayak Trips for Women
July 22: Kayak Lamoille River
Kayak trips for active women who share a love for exploring local lakes, ponds and rivers. And it’s free; you just have to register. Weather permitting, the kayak trips will happen on the second and fourth Friday mornings throughout the summer and early fall. To register your interest, email Susan Hyde at susanfosterhyde@gmail.com to be placed on a master list of paddlers. An email will be sent to the master list regarding the details of the specific kayak trips.

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, benefiting local cancer survivors, on Sunday, Aug. 7. Just back from the Club Crew World Championships, they will share stories about competing there, representing Dragonheart Vermont and the United States.

Movie afternoons
Wednesdays, August, 1 p.m.
The listing of movies for the month is posted at the Charlotte Senior Center. Sign up to receive the Week Ahead email newsletter at charlotteseniorcentervt.org and you will receive notification on Fridays for the upcoming movie.

Exercise classes
The senior center offers daily exercise programs for a wide range of fitness and activity levels. A complete list of exercise programs and class descriptions is on the website charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Chair exercise
Mondays, 9:30-10:30 a.m., & Wednesdays, 10-11 a.m.
These classes with Tiny Sikkes cost \$10 a class. Registration is not required.

Mindfulness meditation
Mondays, 3:30-4:30 p.m.
Jill Abilock offers free meditation classes via Zoom. The Zoom information is provided upon registration.

Pilates fitness
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:30-9:30 a.m.
Join Phyllis Bartling for pilates classes. It costs \$8 per class and no registration is needed.

Strength maintenance
Tuesdays, 11 a.m.-noon, & Fridays, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Strength maintenance classes are free.

T’ai Chi Ch’uan for beginners
Thursdays, 10-11 a.m.
An introduction to T’ai Chi Ch’uan with John Creech; \$8 a class and no registration required.

T’ai Chi practice
Thursdays, 11 a.m.-noon
Practice T’ai Chi with Katie Franko. It’s free and no registration is needed.

Gentle yoga
Mondays, 11 a.m.-noon
Heidi Kvasnak leads a gentle yoga class on Mondays for \$10 a class. No registration required.



Photo by Lori York
From left, Colleen Haag, Sean Moran, Andy Hodgkin, Louise McCarren, Patty Blair and Glenn Willett volunteering with the Monday Munch cooking team.

Volunteer opportunities
Looking for volunteer exercise instructors
RSVP Bone Builders, a program of United Way of Northwest Vermont, is looking for volunteers 55+ to lead weekly osteoporosis prevention classes at the Charlotte Senior Center. Bone Builders is a no-impact, weight training program designed to prevent and even reverse the negative effects of osteoporosis in older adults. Interested in becoming a volunteer instructor? Contact Danielle Schwer at danielle@unitedwaynwvt.org or 802-861-7821.

The Charlotte Senior Center would not be able to provide the wide variety of programming without the support of dedicated volunteers. There are many opportunities to volunteer at the senior center ranging from welcoming and registering visitors as a reception desk host to helping out with the weekly lunch teams. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Kerrie Pughe at KPughe@CharlotteSeniorCenterVT.org.

Meals
Menus are posted on the website: charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday lunches
Served weekly. Lunch is served 11:30

a.m.-12:30 p.m. No registration required. Suggested lunch donation \$5.

Wednesday lunch
July 20, noon
Chef Arnd from the Residence at Shelburne Bay will provide lunch at the senior center on Wednesday, July 20 at noon. Suggested lunch donation \$5. Registration required by noon on Monday, July 18.

Weekly Age Well Grab & Go meals
Pick up on Thursdays 10-11 a.m. at the Charlotte Senior Center. July menus for these free meals are posted on the Charlotte Senior Center website at charlotteseniorcentervt.org. Registration is required by Monday for the Thursday meal. To register, contact Kerrie Pughe at 802-425-6345 or kpughe@charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Senior center contact info:
Lori York, director, lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org
Kerrie Pughe, coordinator, kpughe@charlotteseniorcentervt.org
212 Ferry Road, Charlotte, 802-425-6345, charlotteseniorcentervt.org
Follow the Charlotte Senior Center on Facebook or Instagram at charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Thanks to ancient Aztecs for salsa and guacamole

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

Monday Munch
July 18, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Or until the food is gone.
Taqitos and chips with salsa and guacamole, Tex-Mex salad combo with pasta, corn, black beans and tomatoes, and Ruth’s Boston crème cake.

Grab-&-Go Meal
Thursday July 21, Pick up: 10-11 a.m.
Beefsteak with mushroom sauce, mashed potatoes, broccoli florets and pumpkin cookie.
Remember: You must register for this meal by Monday. Call or e-mail: 802-425-6371, kpughe@charlotteseniorcentervt.org

Monday Munch
July 25, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Chicken taco salad, chips and salsa and rainbow sherbet.



Grab-&-Go Meal
Thursday, July 28, Pick up: 10-11 a.m.
Breaded chicken breast with tarragon sauce, mashed cauliflower, spinach and a raisin and date cookie
For Monday Munches, a \$5 donation is appreciated. Age Well provides the Thursday meals with no charge, but they always appreciate donations, too.
Bienvenides! Nuestra casa es su casa.

Extend a nod to ancient Aztecs for the appearance of salsa at both Monday Munches.
We can also thank the Aztecs for guacamole: This wild avocado plant in the fruit family is native to Mexico, dating between 7,000 and 5,000 B.C. As you enjoy your guacamole, know that of all fruits, the avocado is highest in protein. Guacamole Day is celebrated on the same day as Mexican Independence Day, Sept. 16.
You can find lots of guacamole songs streaming on the Internet. Let’s go with Sesame Street’s “Do the Guacamole” at youtube.com/watch?v=HgXfLe4l5aA.
Then, celebrate the spirit of both Monday meals by singing “South of the Border” along with Gene Autry, who introduced the song in the 1939 movie of the same name: youtube.com/watch?v=uZYPa6tI43Q.

Special Wednesday lunch
July 20, noon-1 p.m.
Chef Arnd and his team from the Residence at Shelburne Bay are returning to provide this special meal. To reserve your

place, call 802-425-6345 or stop by the reception desk at the senior center from July 11 to noon on July 18. Stay tuned: This fantastic crew is coming back in August.

Help needed
Please think about the fact that putting on lunches at the senior center involves lots of people. Whether it’s shopping for tomatoes, peeling onions or washing dishes, come lend a hand.

Food for the mind
As you enjoy good food at the Charlotte Senior Center, consider contributing to food for the mind for a Charlotte child. Take a young friend to the Little Free Library outside the Grange to choose a book to take home.
Research shows that when children choose their own books, very good things happen. The Little Free Library stocks titles for toddlers to teens.

Calendar of Events

CALENDAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

August 3. Bring a picnic, chairs, blankets, and sit back to enjoy some fine classical music. Free with a day or season pass; donations encouraged. Please, no dogs at beach events. For more info, email billandeva@gmavt.net.

Art reception

Wednesday, July 20, 5 p.m.

Burlington City Arts holds a reception celebrating its summer exhibitions. Free and open to all. More info at burlingtoncityarts.org.

Music at the Farm Barn

Wednesday, July 20, 6:30 p.m.

The Tenderbellies, a Vermont-based acoustic quintet with a range of styles from bluegrass to blues, from Americana to jazz and rock and roll, performs at Shelburne Farms as part of its summer concert series. Final concert in the series is on Wednesday, July 27, featuring Dave Keller. Picnics, blankets, lawn chairs, and all are welcome. Gates open at 5:30 p.m. and music begins at 6:30 p.m. at this free event. No dogs. If weather is questionable, call the Shelburne Recreation Department at 802-985-0551 for updates.

Action after 60

Thursday, July 21, 6 p.m.

Keep Vermont Cool is pleased to offer a free online webinar with author and educator Bill McKibben. McKibben, the founder of Third Act, discusses his hopes to bring about change in the world, starting with those over age 60. All ages are welcome for the webinar, especially those who want to take climate action. More info and registration at keepvermontcool.org.

Bluegrass and barbecue

Friday, July 22, 6-9 p.m.

Shelburne Vineyard again hosts great music and a food truck for a summer evening on the lawn. Bring chairs and blankets; enjoy the music of Bloodroot Gap and food from Southern Smoke. Lake Champlain Chocolates will be on hand with ice cream. For menu, more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/yeyrv7t9.

Choir of Christ's College

Friday, July 22, 7:30 p.m.

Christ's College, in Cambridge, England, has had a chapel choir since 1505. They perform at St. Paul's Cathedral in Burlington, presenting a variety of music from both religious and secular traditions. Masks and proof of vaccination required. More info at stpaulscathedralvt.org. Tickets available at tinyurl.com/3fvx9c9f.

Children's concert

Saturday, July 23, 10 a.m.-noon

This concert is a fundraiser for the Vermont Children's Museum of Middlebury, as they

Getting the Town Green hopping

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

The Buck Hollers entertain on Charlotte's Town Green with high-energy, soulful R&B, Americana/bluegrass and Irish tunes, witty lyrics, and some comedy mixed in. All are welcome to bring picnics or buy some food locally, and relax on a blanket for a great evening. This is the second concert in the Grange on the Green series; thanks to Teachers Tree Service for generously supporting this town gathering for all ages. Please consider bringing a shelf-stable food donation for the food shelf.



seek to establish a permanent location.

The museum will provide safe, imaginative space for children to learn, play, explore and connect. Jon Gailmor and Moose Jr. entertain, and there are games, art, snacks and other activities. Concert is at Addison County Fairgrounds in New Haven. For more info, see vermontchildrensmuseum.org/events.

Brushes and blossoms

Saturday, July 23, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Paint with watercolors, en plain air, learning techniques for vibrant florals from workshop leader, Annelein Beukenkamp. Bring your own supplies to Horsford Gardens and Nursery. To register or learn more, email Annelein at beukwin@gmail.com or call her at 802-864-3840. She will contact you directly with a supplies list and class details.

Intro to monarch monitoring

Sunday, July 24, 1-4 p.m.

Join other community members to monitor monarch butterfly habitat at Farm Craft VT in Shelburne. Farm Craft VT participates in the Monarch Monitoring Blitz July 24-31. On July 24, the farm will introduce local individuals for their recording tasks. Participants return to the herb farm to continue monitoring through July 31, on their own schedules. Farm Craft VT, an herb farm of over five acres of milkweed where plants are monitored for eggs, caterpillars, chrysalises and butterflies. Free; register at farmcraftvt.com.

Wine and cheese pairing

Wednesday, July 27, 5:30-7 p.m.

City Market and Shelburne Vineyard partner to host a guided wine and cheese pairing for ages 21 and over. Learn how to discern flavors in wines and match them with complementary cheeses. Explore the world of growing grapes and making wine in Vermont. Register at tinyurl.com/c3vdk58z.

Garden tour

Thursday, July 28, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Walk through the historic, terraced formal gardens at Shelburne Farms. Knowledgeable gardeners and guides discuss plants, garden history, garden updates and some botany. Registration required at tinyurl.com/uej75thy. Event repeats Sept. 8 and 22. For more info, see shelburnefarms.org.

Fish with a warden

Thursday, July 28, 6-8 p.m.

Join the local warden on a fishing expedition at Waterbury State Park. Ask questions and get fishing guidance at Little River Dam. To register, see vtfishandwildlife.com.

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