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. “It was like a whole different setting that making glass ceilings was her birthright.”

“Never at any point in my life,” she declared, “did I ever want to do what 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 a bit of 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. 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 will get her staff to work hard to keep the UPS and FedEx trucks late so they could fill as many orders as possible. One year Robert laid down in front of a UPS truck and the lone protester at Tannersville Street, southfOr 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, makes bikes with some of the current cycling trends, including carbon wheels and lightweight frames.

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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 River Grange Hall, 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 Dan Block to ask cemetery commissioner James Lagere and “the contractor that does this” whether the fence’s location might need an adjustment. “They ultimately concluded that it shouldn’t be moved,” Block reported.

Normally, third-party contracts that exceed $5,000 require a competitive bidding process, though the actual installation of photocell panels may take place further down the road in a separate project requiring additional funding.

Faulkner acknowledged that the building could make use of solar— or propane- fueled backup generator.

Displaying computer-generated renderings of an updated design, Faulkner emphasized the proposed garage’s aesthetic virtues, with a focus on its unobtrusiveness. “This building is supposed to be inserted in the ground about 4 feet, so that reduces the height of it. The roofing overhang helps reduce the size of the building in terms of 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 Dan Block has calculated that, for a Charlotte who owns a house worth $500,000, the project’s proposal 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 maintenance companies, authorized a discussial not exceed $2,500. The board’s estimate for the cost of the emergency repairs is $2,088. A quote from Burlington’s Queen City Printers — $310 for making 1,600 copies and stuffing envelopes — didn’t include the price of postage.

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-known saying comparing the making of laws to the making of sausages. The point being, if you really don’t want to see how either one is made, the word “grizzly” comes to mind.

Now, we want to 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. You’re just not a bunch of hogs.

That said, we’ve done a good bit of housekeeping here at the paper (and on the web) 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 (has been for 46 years), in 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 foremost, 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 you, and we 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

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 relationship with local businesses, farm stands and at Grange on the Green.

TOWN GARAGE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

It also calls the building “fossil-fuel-free,” based on plans for an electric heating system and a solar-electric installation. Though the actual installation of photocell panels may take place further down the road in a separate project requiring additional funding. Faulkner acknowledged that the building could make use of solar— or propane- fueled backup generator.

Displaying computer-generated renderings of an updated design, Faulkner emphasized the proposed garage’s aesthetic virtues, with a focus on its unobtrusiveness. “This building is supposed to be inserted in the ground about 4 feet, so that reduces the height of it. The roofing overhang helps reduce the size of the building in terms of 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.”

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Affordable housing, two new downtown buildings

The board of directors of the Charlotte Community Housing Trust voted unanimously to pursue the acquisition of a building at 127 Main Street in Charlotte, VT, to be redeveloped into affordable housing.

Managing Director Frank Booka said the decision was made following discussions with a number of potential investors in the community. The board, which controls the building and owns the parking garage adjacent to it, decided to begin the process of acquiring the building.

The building is currently used as office space by several local businesses, including Charlotte Grange and Charlotte News.

The board of directors had been discussing the possibility of acquiring the building for several years, and the decision was made after meeting with several potential investors.

The building is located at the corner of Main and West River streets, and it currently contains about 14,000 square feet of office space.

The acquisition of the building will allow the Charlotte Community Housing Trust to add affordable housing units to the community.

The Charlotte Community Housing Trust is a nonprofit organization that provides housing opportunities to low- and moderate-income families.

The organization is also involved in the development of the Charlotte Community Building, a new downtown building that will include office space, retail space, and a community center.

The Charlotte Community Building is situated on the site of the former Charlotte Grange hall, which was destroyed by fire in 2019.

The Charlotte Community Building will contain about 47,000 square feet of space, and it will feature a mix of office space, retail space, and community center space.

The Charlotte Community Building is scheduled to open in late 2023, and it will provide much-needed affordable housing and community space for the Charlotte community.

The Charlotte Community Housing Trust is working closely with the Charlotte Community Building development team to ensure that the building meets the needs of the community.

The Charlotte Community Building will contain a mix of affordable housing units, office space, and community center space.

The organization is also working with local businesses and community organizations to provide programming and activities that will enhance the community center space.

The Charlotte Community Building is an important step in the development of affordable housing and community space in Charlotte, VT.
Vermont State Police got a report of a possible grenade located in a birdhouse about 10:30 a.m. on July 11. The troopers determined it was a hand grenade and was made of plastic. The troopers found an item in the birdhouse that was shaped like a hand grenade, but that didn’t have the fusing for detonation. They shut down the train tracks for about two hours. The train through Charlotte for about two hours.

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.

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

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

This discussion was initiated by a proposal by McCarron — that she later withdrew — extending the right to a resident 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 covenant, 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 Charlotteans.”

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 possible 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 Charlotte; you’re not a Charlotte,’” 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 McCarron 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 live to the youthful beach attendants, claiming they are residents when they are not when buying parking permits. “In 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 quantum, are determined by factors including experience, training and education.

The board approved the town employee pay increase unanimously.
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 Tunninga, Linda Hamilton, Marty Illick and Charlie Tagatz. 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 look on leading a group of volunteers to rescape and plant over 1,500 plants in the rain garden after the site contractors did the primary work and rain barrel and water 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 Commissioner 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 politics because he believed in 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 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 board but also as justice of the peace and board of directors. Mike and I served Charlotte well for decades. Mike and I served Charlotte well for decades. Mike and I served Charlotte well for decades. Mike and I served Charlotte well for decades.

I know Mike Yantachka to be an honest, loyal and engaged public servant who has served Charlotte well for decades. Mike and I served Charlotte Central School board during a time of unprecedented transition in education funding (Bingham 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 consider him a “hail-and-switch” kind of guy, as he was recently characterized in one of our town forums.

Not everyone is as clear as Mike on reproductive rights. Mike was transparent in publicly stating that he struggled with aspects of the law. Maybe he’s a good government decision maker 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 to reinforce the state’s 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” in Vermont. 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 other charges.” 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 left on 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.

Letters to the Editor
Congratulations

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

Julie Salva 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 their three children, she completed graduate studies in teaching at the University of Vermont, earning her master’s.

Barbara first worked at Smith Kline & French in Philadelphia supporting her family while her husband was finishing medical school. After the family moved to Vermont, earning her master’s.

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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 overturning Roe v. Wade. And I am proud and grateful that in Vermont abortion access is protected under state law, with abortion access for anyone present in 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.

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. This is 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.

Voting is our duty as American citizens. It is time for all leaders in our state to work closely with legislative leaders to ensure Vermont remains a safe haven for abortion access. 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.)

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. Refresh brewed coffee and baked cookies.

A pitcher is worth … $30

Courtesy photo

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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. Forcing someone to endure pregnancy and childbirth against their will is inhumane and anathema to the freedoms America stands for. Now all 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 overturning Roe v. Wade. And I am proud and grateful that in Vermont abortion access is protected under state law.

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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 20 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 can 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 7:00 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.

Barry Finette: Saving lives across the globe

8-95 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.”

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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 its 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 in the November general election.

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

E-lawn care 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 2.6 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 “christ” tools including string trimmers, chain saws or debris/leaf blowers which further adds to the many 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

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.
You could be mistaken for thinking it’s an 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 savour apple trees.

There is a bit of good news: “I’m encouraged to see refussing,” 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, but only if weather conditions are favorable.

The spongy moth, parasitic 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 a section of their bodies collapsed,” said Tapper. “When defoliated, it usually dies.”

In July 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.

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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 outsman 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 advantage. When the caterpillars appear upright on the bark, a section of their bodies collapsed,” said Tapper.

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.

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

Photo by Scooter MacMillan

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

Photo by Sheri Larsen

Outdoors

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

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 cucurbits). 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 younger ones. Immediately after the eggs hatch, the larvae larval stage of the pest bores into 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.

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.

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

Outdoors

Yoga gathering

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.

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Yoga gathering

Outdoors

Yoga gathering

Outdoors

Yoga gathering

Outdoors

Yoga gathering
Best kestrel nest?

Peter Demick took this picture of American kestrels. He said this was the ninth installation in the state. Vermont, with over 3,000 allearthrenewables.com

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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 vinvasives.org/cab. 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 fall 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.)
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 Elliott in Brattleboro; the panel discussion will also be live-streamed for free. Event is part of the Vermont Reads initiative of Vermont Humanities. For the link to register at tinyurl.com/vmbat8c3.

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 farmtoforkfondo.com/destinations/ champlain-islands.

Bushkin tanning
Friday, July 15-17, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.
During this hands-on three-day workshop, participants learn how to transform a deer skin 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. Environmentally safe cleaning, tanning and finishing. Fee on a sliding scale. More info, to learn more or register, email closeathomeshin@gmail.com or see tinyurl.com/4m6fdx.

More kids theater
Friday, July 15, 6:30 p.m.
The Very Merry Theatre troupe again performs Annie Jr., this time at Stage Hill Farm. 1211 Green Road in Charlotte. Free and open to all. More info at verymerytheatre.org.

Wood carving class
Saturday, July 16, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Rescheduled from June 18: All levels of wood carvers are invited to participate in this class, led by David Tuttle of Green Mountain Woodcarvers. Participants learn how to transform a tree stump into an animal, a bird, or a face. Learn carving techniques. 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/y6ps3ik.

Kids baking camp
Monday-Friday, July 18-22, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
This camp at the Richmond Community Kitchen is geared toward ages 6-15, 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/y6ps3ik.

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 closeathomeshin@gmail.com to register.

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 802-867-3406.

Blueberries and bluegrass
Tuesday, July 19, 6 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 order empanadas from Paprika Catering and ice cream from The Udder Guys bike truck, both from Waterbury. No dogs. Show is weather dependent. For updates, or more info, call 802-834-3387.

Dinner and a show
Wednesday, July 20, 5 p.m.
Come for dinner and a show 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.

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See Calendar Page 16
Bingo with books for chance to win Flying Pig*

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 charlottenvt.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/mwtf63p

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.

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 our 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 Charlotteans 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:
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 Bannalec. 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/3hbeBj.

Library contact information:
Margaret Woodruff, director
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian
Susanna Kahn, tech librarian
Phone: 802.425.3864
Email: info@charlottelibrary.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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Let your voice be heard.

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Visit to senior center could lead to trip on the water

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, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Jill Abock leads the meditation classes via Zoom. The Zoom information is provided upon registration.

Pilates fitness

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:30-9:30 a.m. Join Phyllis Bongiorno 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 Frank. It’s free and no registration is needed.

Gentle yoga

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

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 Schwier at danielle@unitedwaywv.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.

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

Susam Ohanian

Contributor

Monday Munch

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

From left, Colleen Hsag, Sean Moran, Andy Hodgkin, Louise McCaaren, Patty Blair and Glenn Willett volunteering with the Monday Munch cooking team.

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Calendar of Events

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 bllandeva@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 Tenderbelles, a Vermont-based acoustic quintet with a range of styles from bluegrass to Americana 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 Keiller. 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/yeyrv79.

Choir of Christ’s College
Friday, July 22, 7:30 p.m.
Christ’s Choir, 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/3Fx9c9F.

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 seek to establish a permanent location. The museum will provide safe, imaginative space for children to learn, play, explore and connect. Jon Galmor 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.

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.

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/uej75th. 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.

 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.

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Saturday, July 23, 10 a.m.-1 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.

Paint with watercolors, en plein 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.

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