Consider the plight of volunteer cooks at the Charlotte Senior Center. The deadline for the Dec. 1 newspaper is Nov. 25. Yes, the day while people are still recovering from a culinary extravaganza. But time waits for no man, nor can newspaper presses pause for volunteer cooks.

Thinking about other special meals — a recent New Yorker (Nov. 2) offers "Ingredient Substitution Guide for Thanksgiving Recipes." These hilarious substitutions need not be confined to Thanksgiving repasts. See newyorker.com/humor/daily-shouts/ingredient-substitution-guide-for-thanksgiving-recipes.

In "Foodimentary: Celebrating 365 Food Holidays with Classic Recipes," we find that national food holidays run the gamut: National Turkey Neck Soup Day (March 30) to National Chocolate Cookie Day (Aug. 4).

Certainly, December being National Fruitcake Month offers dubious delight. Calvin Trillin pointed out, "Nobody in the United States has ever bought a fruitcake for himself." Johnny Carson realized, "There's only one fruitcake in the world, and people keep sending it to each other."

Fruitcake worries aside, consider these two culinary adventures. In "We Are What We Ate: 24 Memories of Food," Julia Alvarez notes that her husband likes to tell about when, before they were married, she invited him over for dinner: "I served him salad with bottled dressing with a side plate of fried onions and tofu squired with chili sauce. … I'm always aggrieved that he forgets the dinner rolls, which I bought at Grand Union bakery."

In contrast, there's Jim Harrison's eating extravaganza, "A Really Big Lunch" (The New Yorker, Aug. 29, 2004). Before Harrison and 11 comrades embarked on their 37-course (and 13 wines) meal, meticulously drawn from 17 cookbooks published between 1654 and 1823, the chef had one word of advice: "Courage."

After five different soups, came hors d'oeuvres, with oysters and cream of Camembert on toast — the only item Harrison didn't eat. After calf's brains, omelet with sea urchins, filet of sole with champagne sauce and monkfish livers, he did "pause to consider whether all these hors d'oeuvres might dampen my appetite for the main courses." After suckling pig stew, hare terrine with plums and poached eel, Harrison wondered if he should fax the menu to his cardiologist before proceeding with the third service.

Rest assured: Diners at the Charlotte Senior Center won't encounter sea urchin omelet or monkfish livers. They will find good conversation while enjoying good homestyle food. For a look at the menus for Monday munches and Thursday Grab & Go meals, see the website at charlotteseniorcenter.org/lunch/meals.

It's December, and time for "Winter Wonderland," covered by more than 200 artists since it was written in the 1930s. Here's the original: youtube.com/watch?v=L2msLwz5V-U.

Expect more good food and conversation than sea urchin omelet or monkfish livers at senior center...
Scooter MacMillan          
Editor

It’s December, so Christmas is in full swing with celebrations planned by a number of town organizations.

**Charlotte Senior Center**
This Friday, Dec. 2, the Charlotte Senior Center plans to start its Yule revelry by decorating its Christmas tree from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

The center’s volunteer cooking teams of cooks, bakers and dishwashers will have a holiday party at noon on Dec. 9.

The center will repeat the sort of drop-in it sponsored on Thanksgiving, with the facility open on Christmas morning for people who are alone for the holiday invited to drop by for coffee and conversation.

**Volunteer Fire and Rescue**
This Saturday, Dec. 3, Santa will visit the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service 1-3 p.m.

**Charlotte Historical Society**
The Historical Society will celebrate its Christmas Party at the Charlotte Museum on Church Hill Road 2-5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 4.

*Although the historical society tried to have a Christmas in July party, it didn’t work out, said president Dan Cole. This will be the organization’s first Christmas party with all the seasonal trappings since COVID hit.*

The museum will be open with free admission, but there will also be a fire pit on the lawn. Light refreshments will be served, and books on local history will be available for sale.

The rain date is Dec. 11. For more information email info@charlottehistory.org.

Dan Cole helps a younger Charlotte history fan get a drink at the Charlotte Historical Society’s Christmas party in 2019.

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**Selectboard sets up commercial cannabis commission**

Scooter MacMillan          
Editor

Julian Phelps          
Contributor

After hearing from a number of residents who live near proposed commercial cannabis growing operations, Charlotte officials are looking into such enterprises.

But it appears the town is limited in what it can do.

Town administrator Dean Bloch told the selectboard at its Nov. 21 meeting, “I didn’t think the town could outright deny permits for commercial cannabis growing, but licensing and such operations would be subject to the town’s conditions if they are passed.

At a first step, the selectboard decided to form a cannabis control commission. The cannabis control commission will be the town’s liquor control board, which means that, for the time being, it is the selectboard.

Like the liquor control board, at meetings the selectboard could vote to convene as the cannabis control board when the town needs to consider license applications.

“Let’s do the same thing we do for the liquor control board — have the selectboard be the cannabis control board in its infancy,” chair Jim Faulkner said.

“As we get more feedback, we may want to make a separate board.”

The advantage of having a cannabis control commission is that it gets the town some skin in the game, so to speak, because once the state knows Charlotte has such a board, it will confer with the town when considering a commercial cannabis license in Charlotte.

The state will ask for Charlotte’s opinion about a commercial cannabis application, Faulkner said. “It doesn’t give us any authority to do anything.”

But it gives the town the opportunity to be heard before a decision is made by the state. It’s just an advisory role, and the state could still issue a permit, Faulkner said.

Charlie Russell, chair of the development review board, said the selectboard should consider designing the application process so applicants only have to go before the development review board rather than having to go before the selectboard (functioning as the cannabis control commission).

Scooter MacMillan          
Editor

Juliann Phelps          
Contributor

The Charlotte News is to engage and inform people turn for news about the town, its values, goals and objectives.

Here at The Charlotte News, we’ve been busy making big plans, specifically, a brand-new, five-year strategic plan. We have a new mission and a new vision, and we’re pretty excited. We think you will be onboard, too.

We started work on this plan in the spring and wrapped it up just three weeks ago. And while we worked on that, we also published papers and email newsletters (on schedule), kept our website humming, gratefully received donations and sold ads.

In short, we both worked on the new plan and kept the presses rolling.

Who should you be interested? We hope you will share the optimism that we feel, and agree that your independent, nonprofit community paper is on a positive, up-and-trajectory, as we near our 65th year.

How did we get this done? We might not have if it weren’t for board member Bill Regan, who led the process. He kicked things off by interviewing board members, staff, advisors and Charlotte residents, to learn about what they viewed as the paper’s strengths and weaknesses, and where they saw opportunities and threats.

More meetings and debates ensued with the staff, the board and our advisors. The final five-year plan was adopted by the board at our Nov. 10 meeting. Our strategic plan provides a framework for our work for the next five years and includes new mission and vision statements, and a summary of our values, goals and objectives.

For example, the new mission of The Charlotte News is to engage and inform Charlotte and nearby communities by:

- Publishing rigorous, in-depth reporting on town affairs.
- Providing a home for stories from our neighbors and friends.
- Reporting on how other towns have addressed challenges similar to our own.

Our vision for the future:

- The Charlotte News is the first place people turn for news about the town, is informative and entertaining and is indispensable to community life.
- The Charlotte News is a well-governed, financially sustainable and efficiently managed organization.

- Charlotte is an even more attractive place to live and a better governed and stronger community.

Overall, it’s a lean, mean document of just two pages, available on our website at charlottennws.org/about.

Now the real work starts — using the framework provided by our strategic plan to set priorities for next year, to establish metrics to track our progress, and most important, to make sure that our strategic plan is a living document, referred to frequently for guidance and focus.

None of this happens without you. As a nonprofit newspaper (and website!) the future of The Charlotte News really is in your hands. Your year-end gift will help ensure that we have the funds we need to bring you the paper you deserve. It’s quick and easy. To make your tax-deductible gift on our website at charlottennws.org, scan this QR code, or if you’re more of a pen-and-paper person, send your check to PO. Box 251, Charlotte, VT 05445.

Whether you donate online or mail a check, all gifts of up to $3,000 will be matched by our NewsMatch grant. When you give $10, we receive $20; give $50 and we receive $100, and so on.

Thanks so much for considering The Charlotte News as part of your year-end giving . . . and thanks also to the dozens of readers who have already made their gift.
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CHRISTMAS
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Quinian School
Sunday will also offer another option for a historical Christmas celebration with festivities planned at the Quinian School 1-4 p.m. The former one-room schoolhouse is behind the Charlotte Library.

Charlotte Congregational Church
As always, the Charlotte Congregational Church has a full calendar of Christmas observances. This Sunday’s 10 a.m. worship service will have music from “Messiah” performed by professional musicians. There will be no holy communion, but the church will celebrate with the lighting of the Advent wreath candles of hope, peace, joy and love during the service, as it will at Sunday 10 a.m. services through Dec. 18.

Following the Sunday, Dec. 11, service there will be a blessing of the church’s new Peace Pole which will include a moment to observe the 10th anniversary of the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

The church’s annual Christmas Pageant will feature an imaginative enticement of the Christmas story at 10 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 18.

The sanctuary of the church will be The church’s annual Christmas Pageant for Elementary School.

moment to observe the 10th anniversary of joy and love during the service, as it will be performed by professional musicians. This Sunday’s 10 a.m. worship service will have lessons and carols and include readings, special music and a candlelight singing of "Silent Night.”

The church will have a shorter service at 10 a.m. on Christmas morning with carol singing, a short message and a few surprises.

The Charlotte News strives to stay clear of conflicts of interest, political positions or candidates for public office, and to provide the kind of in-depth reporting on town affairs that is contrary to the paper’s standards. While letters or opinion pieces may endorse political positions or candidates for public office, the paper will not publish any endorsement or political piece that is contrary to the paper’s standards.

The Charlotte News is a nonprofit news organization. You can make a donation today at charlottenewsvt.org. All donations are tax-deductible, and your generosity helps us remain independent. We do not accept payment for news stories. All stories are the result of the work of our journalists.

Support local nonprofit reporting.

Scan this QR code with your phone camera and donate today.
A wonder-filled surprise visit from Honduras

To the Editor:

On Friday night, Mario from Tela, Honduras, texted me: “I just flew into Boston and rented a car to come to Vermont.”

Mario is the owner of Juventud, our construction-materials supplier for our Hands to Honduras-Tela projects. We’ve worked with him for 15 years plus.

My question to Mario: “What’s up?”

To make a long story short: He has a hotel reservation in Montpelier and wants to come visit and bring his niece Valeria to meet my husband Al and me.

Valeria is a sophomore on scholarship majoring in civil engineering at Norwich University.

Mario said, “We’ll come Saturday morning at 10 a.m.”

We quickly prepared for their visit — to The Brick to buy yummy fresh scones, cut up local apples to make warm applesauce, fill a platter with Shelburne Farms cheese, maple cookies and strong hot coffee.

We expected two from Tela but it turned into five: Valeria, her mother Oritis, father Marcos, uncle Mario and aunt Blanca.

After three plus hours of Spanish-English chatter about Charlotte, Tela, the world, they wanted to tour the house, especially the basement as they don’t have basements in Tela.

We showed them the collection of clothes, medical supplies, etcetera, that we are packing to take to Tela for the Hands to Honduras-Tela February service trip. They also were curious about the garage as covered garages are not common in Tela. They love Vermont. Plans are already in place to return to fish and hike; Mario will bring his son. Valeria knows we will visit her at Norwich and bring her to Charlotte to meet more family and Hands to Honduras-Tela volunteers. She also knows she can call us any time.

When they left, we guided them to Church Street in Burlington. Then, next stop, Portland, Maine, where they made reservations for two nights. The goal – eat lobster; they have never had it before.

Days like this make the world feel a little more comfortable. Linda Gault Gilbert

Hand’s to Honduras-Tela.

Linda Gault Gilbert and her husband Al had a surprise visit from Mario, Linda, Blanca, Al, Marcos, Valeria and Blanca from Honduras.

Important to support our neighbors during the holidays

To the Editor:

The recent news about more tragic mass shootings is made even more painful now that we are entering the holiday season, a time when people will be missing loved ones around the table because of senseless and preventable gun violence. Additionally, the murderers in Colorado Springs specifically targeted the LGBTQ+ community, reminding many of the pain of finding a place to belong and a chosen family where you can be who you are without rejection or persecution.

We are working on a range of firearm safety proposals and protections for trans youth in the upcoming biennium that begins Jan. 4, but it is also up to each and every one of us to support those grieving from a loss or experiencing the pain of losing access to family or safe, welcoming places. For now, I am holding the victims’ families and loved ones in my heart, and as I give thanks, I also recommit to action and change.

Speaking of being thankful, please also take a moment to help those in your life and your community who may be struggling to meet their needs through the holidays and winter months. I urge you to offer your time or resources to the Vermont Foodbank (vtfoodbank.org) to aid in their mission of distributing nutritious food to people in need. If you or someone you know is struggling with food insecurity, you can find a map to help you find food shelves in your area here: vtfoodbank.org/agency-locator.

Additionally, the Department for Children and Families has recently announced the release of $20 million in additional Low Income Energy Assistance Program funding this winter for households that heat with fuel oil, propane, kerosene, electricity and natural gas. You can access information regarding eligibility and specific details of this program at dfc.vermont.gov/benefits/crisis-fuel.

As the days get colder and the holidays get underway, we must do all we can to support our neighbors. Thank you for reading and ensuring no one is left behind or feeling unsafe.

Please be in touch. It’s a privilege to serve you.

Kesha Ram Hinsdale

Shelburne

(Kesha Ram Hinsdale is a member of the Vermont Senate, serving the Chittenden District.)
News from The News

We have much to be thankful for

John Quinney
Publisher and President

What a difference a year makes in the life of a community newspaper. Just 12 months ago, deep in year two of the pandemic, we learned that our editor was leaving.

After working with six editors in nine years, we knew that the position wasn’t a part-time gig, despite being billed as such. So, we asked you — our friends, neighbors, readers and donors — to provide the funds that we needed to hire the paper’s first, full-time editor.

You came through for us. Thanks to your remarkable generosity, and to a NewsMatch grant, we were able, earlier this year, to hire Scooter MacMillan as our full-time editor.

He joined the hardworking, talented team that makes this paper happen. You met them in the last edition of the paper.

For more information contact Bill Lowell
802-363-2447 • TheSharperBlade109@gmail.com

The Holidays are Coming

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EV trip proves to be EZ

Tom Scatchard
Contributor

We never knew there was a southern section of the Outer Banks, but last year Ebeth and I visited Beaufort, N.C., a beautiful town located a ferry ride away from Cape Lookout National Seashore. This year, we decided to take advantage of the November stick season by driving our Hyundai Ioniq 5 electric vehicle (EV) for the more than 2,000-mile, round-trip venture. Because of the fast charging and long range of this car, we were quite confident that we could achieve environmentally friendly travel for our first electric-vehicle road trip.

But we knew this would not be quite as simple as taking a credit card for gas and aiming the car south. By the way, Hyundai provides free charging at Electrify America’s very fast direct current sites for two years. How do you pass up non-internal combustion, free-fuel travel?

In preparation for our trip, I accessed the Electrify America website to plan out charging points about every 220 miles. The car has a range of over 300 miles, but at interstate speeds the range is reduced, so why push it.

It was very easy to find fast chargers along the I-95 corridor, but more of a challenge taking a route through Pennsylvania in order to dodge the big cities. We opted to stick with the main interstates for peace of mind. Charging points are coming online so quickly, I expect that by next year traveling smaller roads will not be an issue. Another interesting aside is that many of the Electrify America fast chargers are located in Walmart parking lots. Hmmm.

The long heading south was the last of the sunny, warm November days — an excellent day for a road trip. The only surprises of the trip came on day one when the Electrify America charging station in Newburgh, N.Y., which we were planning to be our first charge, wasn’t working.

Fortunately, we discovered this long before arriving by using the Electrify America phone app. This app is crucial for long-distance electric-vehicle travel. It shows every one of their chargers (which are the fastest ones currently available), and it’s how you communicate with the charger to begin a charging session. The Electrify America website on the computer is useful for seeing charging sites along potential routes, but it doesn’t always have the same up-to-date charger information as the phone app.

Because of our heads-up from the phone app to not expect a fill-up from Newburgh, we used the app to locate a fast charger closer to New York City. That worked out OK (the fast charging performed perfectly), but this is an lesson you have greater patience for local roads around the New Jersey Turnpike if I do, avoid trying to charge in urban areas.

Once we escaped New York, we made our way to our planned overnight stay in Maryland (near fast chargers in a Walmart parking lot). After recharging our Hyundai’s battery, we discovered a Jamaican-style restaurant with unbelievably delicious jam, jam jam, and we were happy.

The next day we headed off with a full charge, which we boosted at Walmart #2295 near Richmond, Va., then headed further south to Sheetz #204 in Rocky Mount, N.C., for a final charge before heading to the less electrified coast.

We charged about 30 minutes each time (because that’s how long the free charging allowed), which averaged about 160 miles per charge, depending on factors such as temperature (colder is slower), whether it was a 350 kW or 150 kW charger (350 kW is faster), and the number of other cars at the site (more cars slows the electricity output).

Everything went just about as easily as filling up with gas, with the unexpected advantages of finding an over-the-top gift for a holiday tacky party and the best submarine sandwich we had ever tasted. The glories of road tripping!

How nice it was to be wearing shorts and T-shirts when the Vermont forecasts were talking about 30-degree temps and snow. Some of the days were windy enough that long pants and heavy shirts were appropriate, but other days we comfortably wore lighter clothes when we took ferries out to islands where we found benches covered with shells, wild horses that were unafraid of humans and many varieties of flying and diving birds.

Beaufort, N.C. (pronounced Bu-fort as opposed to Beaufort, S.C., where the same spelling is pronounced Bu-fort) is a very cool historic seaport with many interesting boats passing through, lots of tempting shops and a variety of terrific restaurants. The area is a take-off point for ferries to the Cape Lookout National Seashore and Shackleford Banks, both of which are undisturbed barrier islands and part of the Outer Banks. A very beautiful and low-key area.

Back to the electronics. The place we were staying had an outlet in the garage where we were able to plug in the 120-volt slow charger that came with the car, which brought the car to 100 percent charge over several days.

I can’t estimate the dollar value of the electricity we used, but I’m quite certain the VRBO host will not even notice the cost on the November electric bill.

Not to get too geeky, but in the garage there was also a 240-volt dryer outlet. I had made a connector to allow us to plug our 240-volt charging device from Vermont into the dryer outlet in case we needed faster charging. In certain circumstances, the five times faster 240-volt on-site charging could be an option, but it’s nice to know that the 120-volt can handle the job as long as there aren’t a lot of long drives while staying at the destination.

A wild pony on Shackleford Banks, N.C.

For information on how to plan our electric vehicle road trip, we used the PlugShare computer and phone app, but they’re not nearly as fast as the very fast Electrify America direct current stations.) Enough with the tech stuff. We headed back to Vermont (and the cold) after eight warm days in North Carolina. There’s nothing to report from the trek back north, except for waiting 10 minutes one time for a charger to open up.

I can truthfully say that travel with an electric car is very doable now and will be even easier in the future. The electric vehicle differences are: possibly one additional stop in a 450-mile day (not a bad thing for older folks like Ebeth and me), a bit more planning needed to scope out fast-charging spots and hotels having chargers (or being near fast chargers); less cost, even if not free, because electricity is certainly cheaper than gas; feeling a bit of pioneering spirit by doing something new (which will be the way of the future); and, duh, the biggest difference — less environmental damage using a cleaner mode of travel.

Granted, the method of generating the electricity that’s consumed impacts the environment, but research says electricity and electric cars are one of our best hopes for slowing down climate change.

(Tom Scatchard, a diligent volunteer for The Charlotte News, will be happy to chat with people who have electric car travel questions or thoughts at scatchardtom@gmail.com.)
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Mark Dillenbeck
Charlotte Tree Warden

In the fall of 2020, the Vermont Legislature passed Act 171, which established new laws regarding the authority of town tree wardens. The new legislation upholds the traditional responsibility of the tree warden to protect trees on public property and along roadways, and it also gives towns wider latitude to decide what trees, or what areas, are subject to protection. These new statutes have important implications for the trees in our public rights of way.

The old laws, dating from the 1920s, specified that the removal of “shade trees” on public land or within the public right of way was prohibited without authorization by the town tree warden. What, however, is a “shade tree”? This was left open to interpretation, and different towns took different approaches.

Here in Charlotte, my predecessor, Larry Hamilton, considered all trees to be shade trees since all trees provide shade. This was a common interpretation employed by other towns and municipalities. The implication of this was that a landowner needed to have permission from the tree warden to remove any tree within the public right of way, which varies in width, but is generally 25 feet from the road center line.

The 2020 legislation clarifies the meaning of a “shade tree” by defining it as “a shade or ornamental tree located in whole or in part within the limits of a public way or public place,” provided that the tree was planted by the municipality or is designated as a shade tree in a municipal shade-tree preservation plan. The “public way” is the rights of way held by a municipality and a “public place” is any public property, excluding forested areas such as town forests or parks. Properties owned or controlled by the State Agency of Transportation, like the Route 7 corridor, are also excluded.

Lacking a shade-tree preservation plan, therefore, the only trees protected from removal under current laws are trees that were planted by the town. Act 171 anticipates that many towns will expand the limited default authority of the tree warden to cover other trees in public ways and places. This can be accomplished by designating certain trees as “shade trees” in a shade-tree preservation plan.

I have convened a task force to collaboratively develop such a plan for Charlotte. We are working on draft elements of the plan and are seeking public input to help with the process. To that end, we are hosting a public hearing on Dec. 14 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Charlotte Town Hall. There will be a Zoom option for people who want to participate remotely.

The purpose of the hearing will be to explain additional details about a possible plan, outline options and invite public input. Our goal is to have a shade-tree preservation plan to present to the selectboard for consideration this coming spring.

Options for allowed tree removals in the right of way include:

- Default/current: Only town-planted trees are protected. Landowners can remove any non-town-planted tree in the right of way without permission.
- Diameter limits: Trees above a certain diameter size would require permission to remove. Diameter limits discussed range from 3-12 inches.
- Designated trees/designated areas: Specifically designated trees and areas would be protected.
- Basal area: This is a measure of tree density. Landowners would be required to maintain a minimal density of trees within the right of way.

When a town shade-tree preservation plan is ultimately approved by the selectboard, it will include guidelines for allowed removals of hazard and invasive trees and shrubs, road cuts and road sight lines, as well as for thinning for tree health.

In addition to the planned public hearing, Charlotters may provide feedback directly to me or members of the Shade Tree Task Force, which includes Frank Tenney (selectboard), Junior Lewis (road commissioner), Alesa Lewis (deputy tree warden), Sue Smith (deputy tree warden), Robin Colebam (tree tribe), Vince Crockenberg (tree tribe), Brett Towle (tree tribe) and VJ Comai (tree tribe and Burlington city arborist). Our goal is to create a plan that contributes to the beauty of our town and that fosters the environmental benefits of trees. To that end, we appreciate any public input.
Stony Loam Farm is more than just an agricultural endeavor. Owner Dave Quickel’s mission statement includes building community and providing education about local, sustainable agriculture. Since 2002, Quickel has been doing all of that on his organic farm.

Quickel’s original business plan had been to run Stony Loam Farm purely as a CSA (community-supported agriculture), but he was soon producing more food than his members could handle. The CSA now constitutes a quarter of his business while three quarters of his produce is sold to Shelburne Market, Healthy Living, City Market, City Market South, Archie’s and Stone Soup.

This year, the farm’s biggest crops were head lettuce, salad mix and tomatoes which comprised roughly half of the wholesale business. “I tell people who join my staff mid-summer that they’ll be picking cherry tomatoes all day, every day,” Quickel said. “We probably pick 700,000 individual cherry tomatoes.”

It’s been two decades, but Quickel still loves what he does. “I still enjoy the flow of the farm and the chaos of it,” he said. “I’m at my best when it’s most chaotic.”

The chaos ends around Thanksgiving after the crops are done, and Quickel’s staff has headed off to school or other full-time jobs. The CSA is the heart and soul of the farm for me.”

Quickel recognizes that this is true for most small businesses. He hopes to continue hiring area youngsters.

Some even bring him presents like salsa that they’ve made with his tomatoes. “I think it’s about a connection to the land and a property and pick whatever they need. It’s easier money,” he said, “but it’s not as much fun. The CSA is the heart and soul of the farm for me.”

Quickel believes Stony Loam Farm operates best with four full-time employees but this year that didn’t happen. “I probably employed 20 people this summer,” he said. “I had some for a day or two, some for a week or two, and some for a good long period of time but not for 40 or 50 hours a week.”

This fall, when members of his crew left for college, Quickel was tempted to use the H-2A temporary agricultural workers process to hire workers with agricultural visas. The week he started looking at the paperwork, two former crew members stopped by to ask if he needed help, and he was happy to welcome them back.

When COVID hit and the Shelburne Farmers’ Market closed, Quickel suddenly had Saturday mornings to himself and discovered that he enjoyed the downtime. He misses the social interaction but is happy to have more time to focus on farm chores.

Besides, Quickel gets plenty of social interaction during the two pick-up nights for his CSA. He has known many of his customers for years and is always happy to greet new ones. He has enjoyed watching many of their children grow up.

Quickel isn’t convinced that CSAs are a particularly lucrative business model, but he doesn’t want to give up his connection to his customers. “Dropping boxes on a loading dock is easier money,” he said, “but it’s not as much fun. The CSA is the heart and soul of the farm for me.”

Quickel said that the day he paid his property taxes he ran into four CSA members in the 15 minutes he spent at town hall. He loves it when people tell him about meals they’ve made with his produce or send him photos of the flowers they’ve cut on their dining room tables.
Community sustained by many generous donations

Maj Eisinger
Contributor

As the days grow cold, our community is sustained by the warmth and generosity of its members and the traditions that are woven into the fabric of our shared lives.

Many community members shared their bounty and helped provide Thanksgiving dinners for 18 families. The Charlotte Food Shelf thanks all the teachers, students and parents from Charlotte Central School who provided nonperishable food for the baskets.

The food shelf also thanks Betsy Lloyd at Charlotte Central School, who has been able to connect families in need to food shelf resources.

The food shelf is grateful to Champlain Valley Union High students Linni Goldsmith, Claire Lyons, Dicey Manning, Libby Manning and Grace Murray, who worked alongside Jim and Peggy Sharpe to fill the baskets with healthy nonperishable and perishable food.

The food shelf thanks the Charlotte-Shelburne-Hinesburg Rotary for donating turkeys, which completed the basket feasts. Thanks also to Gerard Werte, Julia Gilbert and Nathan Cleveland, Meredith and Peter Moses, Kathleen Nolan, Rice Lumber, Evan and Catherine Metropolous, Waitsfield Champlain Valley Telecom, Ruth Uphold and Mary Provencher and Charlotte Organic Coop for their generous financial support.

The food shelf is also grateful for wonderful organic produce donated by the Head over Fields Farm and delicious rolls from Stewart’s Bread twice monthly.

Looking forward to the December holidays, the food shelf thanks Carrie Fenn who delivered gingerbread house and cookie kits, and church members who help sustain the decades-long tradition of the giving trees. These trees are hung with decorations on which kids’ wishes are written. Those who wish to donate a specific gift to a child may use these to guide their purchases.

Kelly Stockwell at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and Susan and Jim Hyde at Charlotte Congregational Church spearheaded this important effort at their respective churches. Any community member who did not get a child’s wish from the giving trees at the churches and wishes to donate can still do so. Consider purchasing a gift card or sending a check to the food shelf that can be used to purchase warm children’s clothing.

During this busy month, the food shelf thanks the many shoppers who shop for the children. CVU student Nick Blasius is appreciated in his new role as shopper, as is outgoing CVU shopper, Wolfe Davis, for his many years of service.

The food shelf will be the grateful recipient of the “Give Back” program in December. The Backyard Bistro will partner with Zero Gravity to benefit the Food Shelf each Thursday in December. Diners can enjoy an entree and Zero Gravity beer knowing that a portion of the proceeds will benefit the food shelf.

Dates to remember:
• Deadline to return the Children’s Giving Tree Wishes to your respective church is Sunday, Dec. 11.
• Holiday basket and children’s gift pick up for registered families is Saturday, Dec. 17, 10 a.m. to noon.
• The food shelf is open for food distribution 4-6 p.m. on Wednesdays, Dec. 14 and 21.

As winter promises to bring both beauty and cold, the food shelf has utility assistance available to residents of Charlotte and North Ferrisburg. If you or someone you know is facing utility shut-off or another unexpected hardship, help is available. Simply call 802-425-3252 or fill out a request form. Request forms are available during Food Shelf open hours or on the website at charlotteucc.org/copy-of-charlotte-food-shelf-1.

The Charlotte Food Shelf is located at 403 Church Hill Road in back of the Charlotte Congregational Church. Masking is encouraged during the ongoing pandemic. For emergency food, please call John at 802-425-3130. If you cannot come to the food shelf due to COVID symptoms or seek further information about the food shelf, please call 802-425-3252.

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

Education

CVSD educational support wins again

Outstanding educators

Hannah Carey (left photo) and Heidi Huestis (right) were recognized in November at the University of Vermont’s 42nd Outstanding Educator event. Carey is a math teacher at CVU and Huestis is the librarian at Charlotte Central School. They were nominated by their peers and building administrators.

Champlain Valley School District leads the way

Of the 22 Vermont educators who completed the Smelling Center for Government’s Vermont School Leadership Project, a 27-month program, seven were from the Champlain Valley School District. They are, from left, Caitlin Bianchi, math coordinator, Williston Schools; Arthur Chiaraselli, Fairbanks director, Champlain Valley Union High School; Jensu Buskey, CVSD district literacy leader; Angella Fillion, principal, Allen Brook School; Jennifer Roth, principal, Charlotte Central School; Courtney Krahm, assistant principal, Charlotte Central School; and Sarah Drum, CVSD director of learning and innovation.

Food Shelf News

Sixth grade students from CVU and Charlotte Central School gave their time to make Christmas baskets for 18 families. The month was a tremendous opportunity to work together as a team. The students brought the baskets with ornaments or hand-made decorations, books, games and more.

Champlain Valley School District leads the way

On Nov. 16, Gloria Mantagaris, a paraeducator at Shelburne Community School, was named the Vermont NEA’s Education Support Professional of the Year. This is the second year in a row that an educational support professional from the Champlain Valley School District won this award. Last year, bus driver Jimmy Johnson took home the award. As this year’s winner, Mantagaris will receive $1,000, an all-expenses-paid trip to the national conference in March and will represent the CVSD educational support professionals.

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After a 12-year run of state championships, the Champlain Valley Union High girls cross country team had a one-year hiatus last year. But the Redhawks started another streak this year, taking the state championship again at the end of October.

The boys cross country team came in second in the state meet, just missing the top spot by four points to St. Johnsbury, whose boys took the top spot at the state meet for a second straight year.

Senior Matthew Servin of Charlotte took first place in the individuals on the boys’ side.

The team results at the state meet were outstanding for CVU with sophomore Alice Kredell of Shelburne finishing first with a time of 19:49.0.

Counting Kredell’s first, five of the top 10 finishers were members of the Redhawks’ girls team — fourth, Estella Laird, 20:48.1; eighth, Amelie Scharf, 20:53.8; and tenth, Lydia Donahue, 21:18.9.

Besides Servin — Jack Crum, fifth, 17:14.8; and Dan Knight, eighth, 17:21.1 — finished in the top 10 for the CVU boys, who finished second as a team at the state meet. After success at the state level, the CVU cross country teams continued to compete and excel out of state.

In November at the New England Championships in Rhode Island, the girls placed second, losing to Glastonbury High School of Connecticut. The Redhawks were competing against 30 teams.

The top six teams from each of the five New England states qualified for this meet, so the girls’ finish is impressive. As a team, they just missed first place by 19 points, a very narrow margin in cross country meets of this size.

Kredell finished 44th. For the year, she had three first place finishes, two seconds and a third at in-state cross country competitions and led the team to a state championship.

In state meets during the season, Servin took four firsts in cross country.

The boys team finished ninth at the New England Championships with Servin also placing ninth as an individual, which is impressive running against more than 250 runners, coach Nicole Gorman said.

In state meets the winning team has the fewest points.

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In state meets during the season, Servin took four firsts in cross country.

Gorman is in her second year as coach. She took over from Scott Bliss, who had coached for at least 20 years and was at the helm during the girls’ run of 12 state titles.

Gorman said Bliss was an amazing coach and an amazing mentor.

He was an amazing coach, an amazing mentor and “just a really, really impressive, supportive person.”

Although the girls fell short of the state championship last year, it’s not like they lost; they took second, missing first by five points.

The boys had a tough, injury-filled year in 2021, Gorman said. “We have a young team. We have a very talented team,” Gorman said. “We’re looking forward to next year.”

For the boys, Servin came in sixth with a time of 15:57.3. The top five individual runners were invited to the nationals in Oregon. The fifth runner, Patrick Gandini of New Hampshire, finished with a time of 15:56.7, so Servin missed an invitation to travel across the country to compete in cross country at the national level by .6 of a second.

Left: Sophomore Alice Kredell of Shelburne finished the season with three first-place finishes, two seconds and a third at in-state cross country competitions and led the team to a state championship.

Right: Senior Matthew Servin of Charlotte had four first-place finishes at in-state cross country competitions this year and led the Redhawks to second in the state championship.

Photos by Paul Lamontagne/vt.sportsimages.com

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A group of musicians ended a song about how their good-looking date is going to appear, everything’s going to sound like a rhapsody and it’s all going to be different — when the songwriter paints his masterpiece.

After the performance of Bob Dylan’s “When I Paint My Masterpiece” at a Sunday reception for an art exhibit at the Charlotte Library, singer Duker Bower noted how the lyrics were something many of those in attendance could relate to.

The exhibition was of portraits created at an unnamed gathering of artists on Thursday afternoons at Tonya Bates’ studio on Mt. Philo Road. Bates’ studio doesn’t have a name. The exhibit at the library also doesn’t have a name. Somehow being serenaded by a song from a troubadour who once appeared in a western movie as a character named Alias seems fitting.

These gatherings have been going on for about 20 years, said Bower, who, coincidentally, originated the artist gatherings at his Inn At Charlotte. The gathering location has changed several times over the years. When Bower became tired of scheduling a different model each week for the artists’ inspiration, it moved to Vergennes and then it moved to Shelburne.

When Bates became the host, it initially was at her home on Thompson’s Point, but when she moved to Mt. Philo Road, the gathering completed the circle, moving with her and back to near where it started.

“We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started,” said T.S. Eliot. And it was a crowd. The event was very well attended.

Instead of Andy Warhol’s 15 minutes of world fame, the subjects of the portraits at the library will get a month and a half of Charlotte fame, until the exhibit comes down at the end of December.

The reception at the library was interesting because many of the people whose images hung on the walls were in the crowd. Clothed.

That seems fitting as well. Every week there is a model from the community, who sits for four hours while the artists explore ways to recreate their image as a painting or drawing. In the early days there was some sculpting, Bower said, but that died out.

Bates said earlier there had been some nude models, but that has died out as well. One reason, she said, is that nude paintings don’t sell well. In Vermont, landscape paintings are popular. That also seems fitting.

Another reason for not having unclothed models is that Bates is tired of nudes. When she was a student, she painted so many nude models at The Art Students League in New York that she’s had enough of it.

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The group keeps an email list of artists and of models. Each week Bates sends an email to artists to see who’s interested. The group is limited to 12 and it costs $15.

It is not a money-making venture. The goal is just to have enough money to pay the models. If money starts to accumulate in the envelope where they keep their funds, they reduce the cost a couple of bucks for a few weeks. The models enjoy it. They get paid $80 for four hours of being still on a Thursday afternoon. The models come from both ends of the age range; it appeals to older people and high school students who like getting paid for doing nothing except looking interesting.
Winter programs announced

The Charlotte Recreation basketball program provides a venue for athletes to learn and master basketball skills in a fun and positive environment. Winning is not the primary objective, but rather, development of sportsmanship, teamwork, respect for others and discipline.

Basketball
The Charlotte recreation basketball season starts next week and ends Feb. 11. Practice will be on weekdays 6-7:30 p.m. or Saturdays 8 a.m.-noon. Times will be posted as coaches determine their availability.

Mini Hoops (kindergarten-second grade) — Teams will practice once a week.

Junior Hoops (first-second grade) — Teams will practice twice a week.

Third-fifth grade — Teams will practice twice a week with games on Saturdays. All teams are dependent on roster size and volunteer coaches. Coaches are needed.

Registration is $80. The deadline for registering is this Friday, Dec. 2.

Jump Rope Club
Join the fun and jump around on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at jump rope club. Kids will learn the jump rope techniques while having fun bright and early.

Session 2: Jan. 3-27
Grades: Kindergarten-fourth
Location: Charlotte Central School
Cost: $25

Martial arts
Most children and teens will receive some benefit from Villari’s martial arts after training for just a few short months, but the real benefit comes from long-term training. It helps with confidence, focus, health, work ethic and attitude.

Session 3: Wednesdays, Nov. 16-Dec. 21
Session 4: Wednesdays, Jan. 4–Feb. 1
Kindergarten-eighth grade
Time: 1:50-2:50 p.m.
Location: Charlotte Central School
Fee: $85

Safe Sitter courses
Safe Sitter courses prepare teens to be safe when they’re home alone, watching siblings or babysitting. The course offers four main content areas: safety skills, child care skills, first aid & rescue skills and life & business skills.

Lessons are filled with fun activities and role-playing exercises. Teens will practice choking rescue and diapering. Register for one date that works best for your child. Register with the town offering the program. Sixth-eighth grades. Cost: $60.

488 GUNEA RD, CHARLOTTE, VT
Nestled on 29 acres of sprawling countryside, this Charlotte estate with separate carriage barn offers the perfect blend of luxury and New England charm. No detail has been overlooked in this stunning property.

39-41 KING ST, BURLINGTON, VT
This 4-unit apartment is a great investment opportunity in an ideal Burlington location. The two-story building includes a studio, a two-bedroom apartment, and two three-bedroom apartments.

LEAVENSWORTH RD, HINESBURG, VT
Imagine living in an idyllic country setting, where you can enjoy views of livestock grazing on lush green pastures. With a picturesque view of Camel's Hump, this 25.3-acre lot is conveniently located.

AIRPORT RD, WARREN, VT
Three lovely and private acres minutes away from Sugarbush and Mad River Glen! Whether you are looking for a place to raise your family or a ski chalet, you will find this plot suits all your building needs.

SEND US YOUR SPORTS PHOTOS

480 HINESBURG RD | SO. BURLINGTON | FourSeasonsSIR.com | WarrenStrausser.com

Find and follow us on social media for new listings and updates!

@WarrenStrausserGroup
School holiday market
Saturday, Dec. 10, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

The Charlotte Central School holiday market welcomes community shoppers to visit over 50 exhibitors, a children’s craft table, a silent auction and several on-site food options. Vendor fees go to the Parent Teacher Organization to support a variety of student enrichment programs including STEM, theater, athletics, as well as their community emergency care fund. Entry into the market is free and open to the public. Direct questions to ccholidaymarket@gmail.com.

Immigrant-owned markets
Wednesday, Dec. 7, 7-8:30 p.m.

Vermont Humanities presents Charlotte Barrett of Historic New England discussing the Burlington and Winooski food markets with immigrant and refugee owners. Barrett will talk about the strong social support and connection these markets provide to the owners and others in their communities. Free talk is at the Brownell Library in Essex Junction in person. Call 802-678-6955 for info about online streaming.

Cold-hardy grape conference
Saturday, Dec. 10, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Lecture, tasting, panel discussion and field visits to vineyards. This conference is the perfect opportunity for learning about cold-hardy grapes, their potential and place in the Vermont market.

Community Carol Sing
Thursday, Dec. 8, 5:30-10 p.m.

The Recital Hall building on the Redstone campus in Burlington. Free event. Call 802-656-3040 with questions.

Immigrant-owned markets
Saturday, Dec. 10, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

The annual Good Trade Market at Hula Lakeside in Burlington, shoppers can enjoy a variety of artists and craftspeople, meet the creators. Tickets and more info at goodtrademakersmarket.com.

Good trade market
Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 3-4, noon-6 p.m.

At HULA Lakeside in Burlington, shoppers see 100 of the best makers from around the country. Purchase food and drinks, meet the creators. Tickets and more info at goodtrademakersmarket.com.

Community Carol Sing
Sunday, Dec. 4, 4 and 5 p.m.

Dress warmly for this singalong of traditional holiday favorites. All participants will have the opportunity to sing with a choir. Donations support the VT Choral Union. Call 802-637-7818 for info and tickets, see vtchoralunion.org/events.

Student recital
Wednesday, Dec. 7, 7:30 p.m.

Students in the University of Vermont music department give a performance at the Recital Hall building on the Redstone campus in Burlington. Free event. Call 802-656-3040 with questions.

Tonight Lights Ice Bar
Thursday, Dec. 8, 5:30-10 p.m.

This special evening happens during Tonight Lights at Shelburne Museum. Ticket holders may visit two outdoor ice bars, stocked with drinks and snacks, for visitors 21+. Ticket purchase includes all of the Winter Lights displays, plus two each of food and drink tokens to enjoy throughout your meander around the museum. For more info or to buy tickets, see tinyurl.com/4jhs6yur.

Leonard Cohen documentary
Thursday, Dec. 8, 7-9 p.m.

Halleljulah: Leonard Cohen, a Journey, a Song is the featured movie at the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. This event is part of the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival. For a complete schedule of films, plus trailers and tickets, see tinyurl.com/2h2z2xkb.

Gingerbread construction
Friday, Dec. 9, 4-6:30 p.m.

At the Richmond Free Library, ages 8-12 are invited to make gingerbread houses, complete with all the decorative details. Limited spaces for free event; register by calling 802-434-3036.

Solstice music
Friday, Dec. 9, 7 p.m.

The American roots band Low Lily joins forces with mandolinist Matt Flinner and double bassist Steve Roy, to celebrate the winter solstice with the warmth of energetic instrumentals. The musicians also sing in three- and four-part harmonies. Concert is at the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. Tickets and more info at tinyurl.com/Sayfynw.

Broadway in Vergennes
Friday, Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m.

The Vergennes Opera House brings the scale of Broadway to the stage, with a professional and amateur cast. The program features tunes from Guys and Dolls, Ragtime and Hairspray, Doors to cash bar at 6:30. For tickets and more info, see tinyurl.com/y6exf33d.

The Addams Family
Friday, Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. & Sat., Dec. 10, 2 & 6:30 p.m.

The Very Merry Theatre presents free performances of a goofy, spooky adaptation of The Addams Family, the hit Broadway musical about a ghoulish American family with an affinity for
SCHIP announces grants to 11 local nonprofits
SCHIP (Shelburne, Charlotte, Hinesburg Interfaith Project) has announced its annual autumn 2022 grant awards of $37,500. The 11 local non-profits receiving grants are Age Well, Champlain Housing Trust, Feeding Catalonia, Hinesburg Community Resource Center, Joseph’s House, Kidpower, Prevent Child Abuse, Resource, Shelburne Rescue, St. Catherine’s Catholic Church and the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
SCHIP raised these funds through the sale of donated, gently used clothing, household items, accessories, art, and collectibles at its resale shop in the distinctive yellow building on Route 7, next to the Shelburne town offices. Since the 9-year-old grant program began in 2013, more than $328,500 has been distributed.
SCHIP accepts grant applications twice a year. The deadlines are April 15 and Oct. 15 each year. The maximum grant is $3,000. Application forms are available on the “Grants” link at thechbrtn.org.
Participating faith communities are All Souls Interfaith Gathering, Shelburne; Charlotte Congregational Church; Hinesburg United Church; Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church, Charlotte; Shelburne United Methodist Church; St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, Shelburne; St. Jude’s Catholic Church, Hinesburg; and Trinity Episcopal Church, Shelburne.
Junior League of Champlain Valley seeks to raise $10,000
To continue its community projects, the Junior League of Champlain Valley has issued a #GivingTuesday Community Challenge and is seeking to raise $10,000.
To learn more and to make a donation, visit tinyurl.com/yx2hb47a.

Climate change discussion
Wednesday, Dec. 14, 7 p.m.
The Vermont Symphony Orchestra presents its holiday concert at the Flynn Theater. The show includes hundreds of young musicians in three different orchestras performing a holiday-themed repertoire. For tickets and info, see tinyurl.com/532aykn.

OrchestraPalooza
Sunday, Dec. 11, 1-4 p.m.
The Vermont Symphony Orchestra presents its holiday concert at the Flynn Theater. The show includes hundreds of young musicians in three different orchestras performing a holiday-themed repertoire. For tickets and info, see tinyurl.com/532aykn.

Yule log tutorial
Monday, Dec. 12, 5:30-7 p.m.
Join chef Audrey Bernstein in a livestream as she shows viewers the steps involved in making a festive Yule log, or buche de Noel as it’s called in France, Free City Market class at tinyurl.com/45s2Dhzt.

Modernist architecture
Wednesday, Dec. 14, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Burlington’s Architecture & Design Film Series continues with Part II of two films about Albert Frey, a 20th century Swiss architect known for combining industrial designs with his love of the natural world at Burlington’s Corzent Auditorium. Part II will be screened 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2023. Both the movies may also be live-streamed on the scheduled day via a link at adfilmseries.org.

 Conspiracy theories deconstructed
Wednesday, Dec. 14, 7, 7-9 p.m.
Cultural critic Mark Dery delves into the history, causes and current proliferation of conspiracy theories and their threat to democracy. Register for this free online Vermont Humanities event at tinyurl.com/2c5748se.

Meteor shower viewing
Wednesday, Dec. 14, 7-9:30 p.m.
The Vermont Institute of Natural Science in Quechee sponsors a viewing of the Geminid meteor shower. Good for families with children 5 and older. Time is spent both inside the StarLab and outside. To reserve a spot call 802-359-5000, ext. 245, or visit vermont.org/event/eyeing-the-stars-2.

Looking for instructors
Friday, Dec. 16 deadline
ACCESS CU offers numerous affordable classes to the public and is based at Champlain Valley Union High. Program leaders are actively looking for class instructors for the winter/spring semester, which runs from Feb. 2- June 12. Fill out a new instructor form at cvuh.sce.eleco. Cell 802-482-7154 with questions.

 Illuminate Vermont
Friday and Saturday, Dec. 16 & 17, 4-8 p.m.
South Burlington’s Market Street area between Dorset Street and Route 116 comes alive for the holiday season. Stroll the open-air market to see treasures made by Vermont artisans, dance to the live music, enjoy the lights, artisan food and warm beverages. Free. More info at 802-846-4208 or heeers@southburlington.com.

Perseid meteor shower
Saturday, Dec. 17, 10-11:30 p.m.
The Pie Guy demonstrates how to make a steamed persimmon pudding with lemon sauce for your holiday table. This free City Market class requires registration for streaming. More info and registration is at tinyurl.com/5Wy5yj.

 Vermont’s Nutcracker
Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 17 & 18
Burlington Volleyball Theater and School presents a family favorite event at Burlington’s Volleyball Theater, the story of Clara and the Nutcracker Prince set to a score by Tchaikovsky. See flynvt.org for rowntines and tickets.

Horse-drawn rides
Saturday, Dec. 17- Saturday, Dec. 31
Sheburne Farms offers its popular horse-drawn rides, by wagon or by sleigh (if there is enough snow), at a variety of times during the second half of December. The rides are weather-dependent and sell out fast. For more info and to make reservations, see tinyurl.com/9B3ijx.

Call to young artists
Contest deadline: Thursday, Jan. 5, 2023
The Vermont Wildlife Education Fund organizes a wildlife art contest for students in grades 7-12. Prizes awarded and winners exhibited in February 2023. Find more info and an application at wildlifeeducationfund.org.
Knutters, crocheters sought for library mitten tree

Are you a knitter, crocheter or just like to shop? The Mitten Tree is up at the Charlotte Library and waiting to be decorated with handmade or new cold-weather gear. The library is also a designated food shelf drop-off point. All items collected will be going to a local non-profit organization.

The library is working to build its bird community. See who you can find on our new feeders on the way into the library and maybe you can spy a squirrel on a tractor. Looking for more bird-watching opportunities? Consider joining the National Audubon Society’s Christmas Bird Count: audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count. If you need some tips to get started, check out the bird-watcher book list at charlotte.kohavt.org/MyAccount/MyList/153.

Cookie Cutter Week Begins Dec. 1: Baking up a batch of cookies for a friend? Check out the library’s baking selection for ideas: charlotte.kohavt.org/MyAccount/MyList/349.

The Friends of the Charlotte Library are holding the third annual Get Cozy Raffle to celebrate the anniversary of the Human Rights Week on December 10, 1948. In recognition of this, the library is hosting a “free expression” wall in the program room and invites the community to share what human rights mean to them. Stop by to share your ideas by word or illustration.

On-going programs for all ages

Library news

New Construction & Renovations.
Quality Work. Cheerfully Done!
Peter Fenn 802-734-0353

Library contact information
Margaret Woodruff, director
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian
Suzanna Kahn, tech librarian
Phone: 802-425-3864
Fax: 802-425-3865
Email: info@charlottelibrary.org
The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets the first Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.
Senior Center News

Senior center abbreviating hours for the holidays

Recently retired or new to the area? Looking to make new connections and friendships? Visit the Charlotte Senior Center, tour the building and learn about the classes and volunteer opportunities. The senior center offers programming for adults age 50 and older from Charlotte and surrounding communities. Stop by and check it out. Interested in receiving a weekly reminder about what is happening at the senior center? Sign up for the email newsletters at charlotteseniorcentervt.org. The “Week Ahead” email is sent out on Friday mornings with activities, lunch menus and special programming for the upcoming week.

Community events

Blood drive
Thursday, Dec. 8, 2-7 p.m.
Please consider donating blood during the holiday season at the American Red Cross blood drive at the senior center. Call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit redcrossblood.org and enter: CHARLOTTE to schedule an appointment.

Art exhibit
Wind Castles — and Beyond
Photography by Rachel Doran
Photographer Rachel Doran has been exhibiting for about 25 years. This exhibit includes many photographs of Vermont landscapes, as well as glimpses of New York State and Ontario, Canada. It is designed to show the beauty around the region, as well as hints of what is happening because of climate change.

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 at charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Programs

Shape-note singing
Sunday, Dec. 4, 2-3 p.m.
Traditional a cappella, four-part harmony sung for the joy of singing, not as a practice for performance. Search “sacred harp” on YouTube for examples, then come and sing. Introduction to shape notes and scales is recommended and offered 30 minutes before each first Sunday singing. Contact Kerry Cullinan (kclynxvt@gmail.com) to schedule. There is no cost.

Holiday glass ornament decorating
Sunday, Dec. 4, 1-2 p.m.
Join Lynn Cummings and learn to decorate one-of-a-kind transparent glass or glass-like ornaments in this short, fun workshop. Inks, two transparent balls and other necessary supplies will be provided. If you wish to make more than two ornaments, please bring a few transparent glass or plastic balls. Ribbons will be provided, but feel free to bring additional small ribbons (1/8 to half-inch ribbons about 18 inches long). Registration and pre-payment required. Space is limited, so register soon. Cost is $25 and includes supplies.

Play reading
Thursday, Dec. 15, 1-3:30 p.m.
This is table reading fun — no experience is needed. The group meets monthly and is for people who enjoy reading plays aloud or listening to others. This is a good-sized group but always welcomes newcomers. There are many women to play the roles but the group is currently short on men. Scripts are provided and parts assigned. If you have questions or would just like to stop by and listen to the group, reach out at snfoley@icloud.com.

Coffee & canvas — wintertopics
Friday, Dec. 16, 10:30 a.m.-noon
Unlike traditional paint & sips, this “coffee & canvas” will allow for exploring and creating a unique painting. No prior painting experience needed. All materials included. The cost is $25. Registration and payment required to hold your space. Register by Wednesday, Dec. 14.

Volunteer opportunities

A key component of the Senior Center’s continuing success is the involvement of many volunteers, without whose work the center could not operate as it does. Hosts greet and direct participants; cooking crews dish up delicious weekly lunches, wash dishes, bake and make treats. Volunteers maintain our garden areas; present special lectures and programs; and staff the plant sale, social events and Red Cross blood drives. Interested in learning more about the volunteer opportunities at the senior center? Contact Kerrie Pughe at kpughe@ charlotteseniorcentervt.org or 802-425-6345.

Meals

Menus are posted on the website at charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Men’s breakfast
Thursday, Dec. 8, 7-9:30 a.m.
On the second Thursday of the month, the men gather for breakfast and conversation. December’s guest speaker is John Cohn, an expert in artificial intelligence and distinguishing fantasy from reality. Register by noon Tuesday, Dec. 6, by emailing contact Tim McCullough at cubnut5@aol.com. Suggested breakfast donation of $6.

Monday lunches

Served weekly. Lunch is served 11:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m., or until the food runs out. No registration required. Suggested lunch donation $5.

Weekly Age Well Grab & Go meals
Pick up on Thursdays 10-11 a.m. at the Charlotte Senior Center. Menus 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 at kpughe@charlotteseniorcentervt.org, A $5 donation is suggested.

Senior center contact info:
Lori York, director, lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org
Kerrie Pughe, coordinator, kpughe@charlotteseniorcentervt.org

Ruth Whitaker of Shelburne stands with a quilt created by members of Quilts of Valor, whose mission is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with quilts.

The Charlotte Senior Center recognized the traditional Thanksgiving values of sharing time and food with family and friends by holding a pie and coffee drop-in on Thursday morning. About a dozen people showed up; some who had never visited the center before. There will also be a drop-in on Christmas morning.

Follow the Senior Center on Facebook or Instagram at charlotteseniorcentervt.

Photo by Lori York
Write Ingredients

Expect more good food and conversation than sea urchin omelet or monkfish livers at senior center

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

Consider the plight of volunteer cooks at the Charlotte Senior Center. The deadline for the Dec. 1 newspaper is Nov. 25. Yes, the day while people are still recovering from a culinary extravaganza. But time waits for no man, nor can newspaper presses pause for volunteer cooks.

Thinking about other special meals — a recent New Yorker (Nov. 2) offers “Ingredient Substitution Guide for Thanksgiving Recipes.” These hilarious substitutions need not be confined to Thanksgiving repasts. See newyorker.com/humor/daily-shouts/ingredient-substitution-guide-for-thanksgiving-recipes.

In “Foodimentary: Celebrating 365 Food Holidays with Classic Recipes,” we find that national food holidays run the gamut: National Turkey Neck Soup Day (March 30) to National Chocolate Cookie Day (Aug. 4).

Certainly, December being National Fruitcake Month offers dubious delight. Calvin Trillin pointed out, “Nobody in the United States has ever bought a fruitcake for himself.”

Johnny Carson realized, “There’s only one fruitcake in the world, and people keep sending it to each other.”

Fruitcake worries aside, consider these two culinary adventures. In “We Are What We Ate: 24 Memories of Food,” Julia Alvarez notes that her husband likes to tell about when, before they were married, she invited him over for dinner: “I served him salad with bottled dressing with a side plate of fried onions and tofu squired with chili sauce. … I’m always aggrieved that he forgets the dinner rolls, which I bought at Grand Union bakery.”

In contrast, there’s Jim Harrison’s eating extravaganza, “A Really Big Lunch” (The New Yorker, Aug. 29, 2004). Before Harrison and 11 comrades embarked on their 37-course (and 13 wines) meal, meticulously drawn from 17 cookbooks published between 1654 and 1823, the chef had one word of advice: “Courage.”

After five different soups, came hors d’oeuvres, with oysters and cream of Camembert on toast — the only item Harrison didn’t eat. After calf’s brains, omelet with sea urchins, filet of sole with champagne sauce and monkfish livers, he did “pause to consider whether all these hors d’oeuvres might dampen my appetite for the main courses.”

After suckling pig stew, hare terrine with plums and poached eel, Harrison wondered if he should fax the menu to his cardiologist before proceeding with the third service.

Rest assured: Diners at the Charlotte Senior Center won’t encounter sea urchin omelet or monkfish livers. They will find good conversation while enjoying good homestyle food.

For a look at the menus for Monday munches and Thursday Grab & Go meals, see the website at charlotteseniorcenter.org/lunch/meals.

It’s December, and time for “Winter Wonderland,” covered by more than 200 artists since it was written in the 1930s. Here’s the original: youtube.com/watch?v=L2msLwz5V-U.

Photo by Lori York
From left, Janet Morrison (Charlotte), Sue Foley (South Burlington), Carol Geske (Charlotte) and Andy Hodkin (Shelburne) working on a Monday lunch in November.