All that Glitters
Another magical Charlotte sunset shared its gleaming on Sunday, Oct. 23.
Photo by Stephen Kiernan
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Claudia Marshall
Chair Fundraising Committee
Publisher and President

Your local, nonprofit newspaper is asking for your financial support today.

We need your participation to continue to expand the business of publishing the paper you rely on. After all, it’s the eve of the 65th anniversary of The Charlotte News, the state’s longest-running community newspaper. And we have big plans for the future!

If you read Front Porch Forum or attended a few selectboard meetings, you might think Charlotte is facing any number of problems that just don’t have a solution. Speeding in our villages! Lack of affordable housing! Ineffective town government! Low voter turnout! Dwindling volunteerism! And on and on.

But … Charlotte is not the only place where these issues have been faced … and addressed. An enterprising newspaper would do some research and find out how other small towns have tackled and solved these intractable problems. Now, this paper wouldn’t presume to present the answer to any of Charlotte’s issues. That’s just not our job. But we can do some digging to see what works in other towns.

For a specific example of this kind of reporting, see “Speeding: What have other towns done?” a story by Brett Yates in this edition of the paper. We hope that this story will inform both conversations among neighbors and also decision making at selectboard meetings … and lead to action.

But here’s the thing: This type of reporting takes time and money, both of which are in short supply at any small, nonprofit community newspaper. But we think Charlotte deserves some answers. Don’t you?

We are asking you to donate not only to finance the regular business of reporting on the news of Charlotte, but also to expand that reporting to be even more enterprising and useful.

Plus, for the third year running, The Charlotte News has been selected to receive a prestigious NewsMatch grant of $15,000. But there’s a catch. In order to get the grant, we must first raise $15,000 ourselves. And we can do it — with your help.

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Selectboard rejects bids on town garage

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Bids Charlotte received for building a town garage were lower and fewer than expected, so the town decided to punt.

Members of the selectboard voted to reject the only two bids received and kick them back to the companies that submitted them.

At the meeting on Monday, Oct. 24, the board members voted 4-0 to reject both bids. By the time the votes were taken after a closed executive session at the end of the regular meeting, it was after 10 p.m. Board member Louise McCarren, who had been attending remotely earlier, had left and was absent for the vote.

Before the two bids were opened at a previous selectboard meeting on Oct. 10, chair Jim Faulkner expressed surprise that there were so few. He had expected a good many more bids because of the number of construction companies he and town administrator Dean Bloch had talked to about the construction project.

After the bids were opened, the selectboard was even more surprised at how high they were. The two bids that were from Naylor and Breen Builders of Brandon for $3,795,222 and from Farrington Construction of Shelburne for $3,796,754 — both almost $800,000 more than budgeted.

Faulkner also remarked at the Oct. 10 meeting about how unusually close the bids were with just over $1,500 separating Farrington’s high bid from Naylor and Breen’s bid. The board appeared to be in consensus on rejecting the bids because both bids were so much more than what voters had approved.

The town budgeted $3 million to build a garage on Route 7 just south of Ferry Road and that was the amount of money more than 78 percent of ballots approved in a special election on Aug. 9.

The selectboard’s plan called for the town to apply for a bond or a bank note to borrow $1.5 million of the construction cost. The remainder would come from $500,000 that road commissioner Junior Lewis has saved from his budget over the years added to $1 million in town funds from the American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA.

After the vote to reject the bids, board members passed a motion for Faulkner and town administrator Dean Bloch to contact the bidders for “value engineering” of their bids.

That motion passed 3-0, with Faulkner abstaining, presumably because the motion concerned him.

The selectboard planned to have a specially called meeting about the cost of the garage this Wednesday, Nov. 2, but it was held after press time.

Tricks, treats and little feet

Charlotte Halloweened in grand style. See more photos on page 3.

Photo by Robert Nickelsberg

Speeding: What have other towns done?

Brett Yates
Contributor

There’s no proof that drivers in Charlotte have recently fallen into a habit of traveling at higher speeds than they used to.

In 2013 and 2017, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission placed automated traffic recorders in Charlotte, first on Hinesburg Road and Spear Street, and then on Ferry Road and Greensboro Road. Publicly available data collected at the same spots in 2021 showed little to no change in speeds.

Speeding often plays a role in car accidents, and according to figures from the Vermont Agency of Transportation (or VTrans), Charlotte has averaged 41.3 crashes annually over the last decade, with a high of 57 in 2016. Forty-one crashes occurred within town limits last year and 44 the year before that. In 2022, Charlotte is on
Despite the holiday, it’s budget season again

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

As much as we may talk about keeping the spirit of Christmas all year long, it seems like budget season always lasts longer. Yes, it’s that time of the year known as frigid eternal time of year.

At the selectboard meeting on Oct. 24, five Charlotte departments kicked off the perennial process of making a list of expenses and revenues that will be checked much more than twice.

Town assessor John Kerr came with tidings of a rise in his budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year because of the town-wide reappraisal that is coming next year. Kerr said the most serious budget is generally consistent from year to year, but during the reappraisal year he will need extra manpower “working on adjusting sketches and things like that, that we normally don’t do in a calendar year” that should cost about $10,000 more.

The department has the money for this increase in an accrual fund of about $70,000, which can be moved in the budget so the town won’t need to look for more money, he said.

Town clerk and treasurer Mary Mead suggested some adjustments to his budget and Kerr agreed to making those changes and re-submitting it.

Kate Kelly of the Lewis Creek Association came with requests for her organization to get the same $3,300 next year it had received this year. Of that amount, $600 is an unreserved donation from the town. The remaining $2,700 funds work the organization does to fight invasive species like frogfish in Town Farm Bay and its water quality sampling program.

Likewise, Bill Begg from the Charlotte Trail Committee presented a level budget for the same $1,500 it received this year. The trail committee uses that money to do small-scale work and maintenance on town trails, pay for tools, prints maps, provide dog waste bags at trailheads and send out a year-end donations letter.

“Our year-end donation letter last year brought in over $3,100, so it’s a good return on investment,” he said.

Regan thinks the trail committee has not asked for an increase in its budget for more than five years.

Jonathan Silverman, chair of the library board, said their budget request includes a slight increase for such things as energy, computer and tech support and custodial service.

Library director Margaret Wooduff said energy costs are anticipated to go up because the building is designated as a cooling center in summer and a warming center in winter, so maintaining a good temperature is important.

But the iteration of the library budget the brought to the selectboard meeting did not include wages for staff. Selectboard chair Jim Faulkner asked to move the library budget to a meeting on Nov. 14, so that part of the budget can be included in the discussion.

Jon Snow, president of Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services, presented a preliminary budget for his board, but a more formal budget discussion will come after a November meeting when all of the members will have an opportunity to vote on that organization’s budget request.

Snow predicted that the revenue and expense request will be 8.5 percent higher than its appropriated expenses of just over $900,000 for fiscal year 2023, which would mean the department’s appropriation increase of more than $75,000, so the total predicted for 2023-24 is almost $960,000.

Last year’s fire and rescue budget was controversial and the closest vote among the separate budget articles approved at Town Meeting Day last March, with 57 percent of the votes cast on the issue.

Snow said the budget increase is mostly driven by personnel and personnel-related costs, including taxes, benefits and healthcare coverage for staff.

Workers’ compensation has become more expensive for the fire and rescue service because it has become more difficult to hire and train men so that are more certified to work both on the emergency services and fire calls.

“Regrettably, the one bad part of that is that they all have to work together at the firehouse rate, which is much higher than the ambulance rate,” Snow said.

Letters to the Editor

Article 22 proponents naively say something ‘will never’ happen

To the Editor:
If outspoken proponents of Prop 5 /Article 22 are right, it will be the first constitutional amendment that will actually take away Vermont’s individual rights by removing the opportunity for the legislature to represent the will of the people and instead give all power to unelected medical organizations and judges.

State Rep. Dr. George Till, division chief of general OB/GYN at the University of Vermont Medical Center, wrote in an op-ed, “Perhaps the most common and disturbing piece of misinformation surrounding Article 22 is the idea that it will remove all restrictions on abortion and eliminate any therapeutic pregnancy termination up to the time of birth.”

Yet, in 2019, Till joined his allies in defeating every proposed amendment to Act 47 that might have imposed guidelines to prevent late-term abortions, including exceptions related to the viability of the fetus, amendments related to conscience and parental rights, a ban on partial-birth abortion, and providing medical help to abortion survivors. Effective pregnancy termination up to the time of birth is very much on the table in Article 22 because Till refused to take it off.

Dr. Lauren MacAfee, OB/GYN at the University of Vermont Medical Center, said in an interview on Vermont Public Radio, “The goal of Article 22 is to really endorse into our Constitution what current practice is happening now and to avoid some of the whims of the legislative sessions. At this time in Vermont, there are no abortions that are taking place in the third trimester. And that practice won’t change with Article 22 if it were to pass.”

MacAfee should know well that policies change and trends shift. For example, on Jan. 26, 2018, the University of Vermont Medical Center announced it would begin offering elective abortion procedures, ending a 45-year-old policy.

There are no prohibitions against third-trimester abortion in Article 22 nor mandates for future medical ethics boards. To suggest, as Till and MacAfee do, that something that is constitutionally protected “will never” happen is naive at best and dangerously misleading at worst.

As Article 22 proponents inadvertently proposed a vague state constitutional amendment while assuring voters of its intention.

Carol Kauffman
Addison
(Carl Kauffman is associated with the Vermont Family Alliance.)

Support for Liam Madden for U.S. House of Representatives

To the Editor:
Our system of governance was founded on compromise; a bridging between parties for the greater good. Yet, today, we often elect representatives from both sides of the aisle who are less likely to compromise than ever. As recent decades have demonstrated, until this bridge is rebuilt, it is unlikely that we’ll see long-term progress on many issues crucial to our society.

As voters, we need to recognize our contribution to this reality. Few issues are binary today; we need to stop treating them as such. We need to think more deeply about the repercussions of electing polarizing candidates who represent the “far” from either side. Uncompromising ideals are dangerous and limiting in a diverse and large democracy.

The difference between the successful progressive movement of the early 20th century and today’s movements is that the former bridged party lines while today’s divide. Progress towards the greater good requires embracing unifying common goals and values.

In this vein, consider voting for Liam Madden for U.S. House. While running as a Republican, he is self-funded and has declined party endorsement. He is an independent thinker with strong values who doesn’t firmly align with either party. Even if you find you don’t agree with him on every topic, rest assured that he will work to encourage both parties to see that the only path forward to progress requires compromise and systemic change.

Ian Buchanan
East Montpelier

Mission Statement
The Charlotte News is:
• to publish rigorous, in-depth, fair reporting on town
• to source stories of interest from our neighbors and friends

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

Editorial independence
This newspaper publishes editorial opinions that are not published in The Charlotte News. While we are funded out of revenue and donations, our editorial judgments are made in accordance with our mission and are independent of all sources of financial support.

Consent
Consent with our mission: The Charlotte News publishes to the citizens of the town and others, and abridges submitted by readers. All such materials are subject to publication at the editor’s discretion.

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Letters
Letters to the Editor are subject to review and approval by the editor in accordance with the following standards and requirements:
• Letters must be in print, not electronic.
• Letters in the form of letters to the editor must be accompanied by the name and address of the author, and are not endorsed by either the editor or the staff of the paper. Opinions pieces and letters to the editor will be clearly labeled as such.
• The Charlotte News strives to stay away from extremes in political matters. In any case, however, letters, excluding letters to the editor, will be accepted.
• While letters or opinion pieces may endorse political positions or candidates for public office, the paper always remains objective and impartial in such matters.
• All submissions are strictly nonexclusive for publication, meaning material that has been published or submitted elsewhere or that is currently under consideration by another publication is not acceptable.
• The Charlotte News reserves the right to edit letters for clarity, factual accuracy, tone, length and consistency with our style guide.

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Support local nonprofit reporting.

Support local nonprofit reporting.
It’s Halloween on Greenbush Road!

The fruits of Saturday’s pumpkin carving at the library made a boo-tiful display for the frightful festivities.

Almost all the children, adults and homes were costumed...

Friends since Charlotte Central School, Will Bown and Charlie Kenyon were trick-or-treating with Haddie Rose Bown, who came as their father, and Sarah Kenyon, who came as a lobster, just like Mom.

Elyzabeth Donnelly brought an elephant (Carter Donnelly) to the Charlotte Fire and Rescue Station.

Mira Braidwood had the perfect costume for the display outside the Old Brick Store.

Thing 1 and Thing 2 trick-or-treated at the fire station.

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pace for a better year than usual, with only 15 crashes recorded as of Oct. 18. Recent meetings of the Charlotte Selectboard, however, suggest that unsafe driving has never been a more pressing concern locally. On Sept. 26, speeding-related complaints by residents stretched the five-minute “public comment” portion to a half an hour.

Neighboring towns tell similar stories. Throughout Chittenden County, municipal officials, pressed by concerned citizens, have sought in different ways to address the dangers posed by aggressive motorists. Sometimes, it can be hard for them to tell how much progress they’ve made.

“I’ve been in public service for quite a long time,” said Shelburne Town Manager Lee Krohn. “In my experience — and I don’t make light of it — people complain about speeding everywhere. Everywhere. Sometimes it’s real; sometimes it’s perception.”

“She has erected several speed feedback signs, whose dynamic digital displays let drivers know how fast they’re going in the hope that they’ll want to slow down.”

“I’ve been there popping up more and more frequently in towns throughout Vermont, especially along entries into the hearts of villages or downtowns,” he observed. “People are on the lookout for them in certain locations, but you don’t want to overuse any particular device.”

Studies by safety experts have established to varying degrees that feedback signs can be effective, but observers have their own impressions.

“We have one on Mechanicville Road in the village,” said Feindenberg. “I don’t think they’ve helped our residents, but they do have an impression built up.”

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We have one on Mechanicville Road in the village,” said Feindenberg. “I don’t think they’ve helped our residents, but they do have an impression built up.”

“Some feedback signs can transmit data that might indicate empirically whether frequent speeding has persisted after their installation, but most don’t contain a memory bank.”

“I think it feels worse now because traffic was a lot quieter during the height of COVID,” he conjectured. “The question is not what is the best crime to catch, but how do we encourage drivers to slow down.”

In Shelburne, feedback signs aren’t the only electronic devices flashing at drivers. In and around the downtown, upgraded crosswalks come with signage featuring what the town calls RRFB button-activated Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons. A local Boy Scout prompted the installation of the ones went into effect on Oct. 22.

“When you’re working toward your Eagle rank, you have to do some kind of community project,” said this particular Eagle Scout chose to pursue a grant to help the town get these,” Krohn said. “So, he got a grant, we paid the rest and had the state contractor install them because they’re right on a state highway, and they need to be of a certain design and strength.”

Shelburne has contemplated other traffic-calming measures to make its village center less hospitable to fast-moving cars.

“Downtown Burlington has sort of gone to a certain extreme,” Krohn said, “say that the selectboard wasn’t interested in having tickets issued, but the manner of the interactions was not very professional at that time.”

The Shelburne Police Department subsequently took over the town’s contract, which “worked very well for many years,” until it got too expensive. Vermont State Police took over.

Within Charlotte, few fewer traffic stops occur on town roads than on Route 7, where the town police are an important presence.

“In total, Vermont State Police pulled over 13 municipal fines for traffic violations in Charlotte. Of the most recently published report in August, this year has seen just six.

“We go to the local schools. I’ve gone to the Rotary Club. I’ve put articles in the paper. In the spring we talk about bicycle safety and helmet use, and we’re being vigilant for bicycle riders,” he said. “Officer Stacey teaches classes to motor vehicle offenders.”

“Continued from page 1

SPEEDING

Lee Kurohn. “In my experience — and I have sought in different ways to address officials, prodded by concerned citizens, an hour.”

“Complaints by residents stretched the five-minute “public comment” portion to a half an hour.

“Another consideration is the time of day, and then we developed a data-driven process,” he said. “We devoted our time in those locations and developed a data-driven process, and we started making some headway.”

“Developted a reputation that you didn’t speed through Vergennes because you were going to get stopped,” Merkel summarized.

The Vergennes Police Department has seven officers, who work 10-hour shifts. By Merkel’s estimate, an average officer on an average day spends four to six hours on traffic enforcement.

Merkel also cited public awareness and education as “a big part” of the Vergennes Police Department’s efforts to improve safety on the roads.

“We go to the local schools. I’ve gone to the Rotary Club. I’ve put articles in the paper. In the spring we talk about bicycle safety and helmet use, and we’re being vigilant for bicycle riders,” he said. “Officer Stacey teaches classes to motor vehicle offenders.”

Over the course of more than 13 years, Merkel gradually saw fewer complaints of speeding, he said, as well as fewer incidents of drunk driving.

Merkel retired on Oct. 31, citing a climate of “continued and unwarranted disrespect” in a letter to city officials. In 2020, accusations of racially biased patrolling and overpolicing by some towns’ officers compared to a recent high of 64,093 in 2017 to 10,332 in 2021.

Jonathan Weber, who manages the Community Transportation at the Vermont-based advocacy nonprofit Local Motion, argues that traffic enforcement requires “a lot of resources to do at scale” and offers “very limited effectiveness” even so. He contended that “changes in land use and in the design of the road are the only ways to sustainably address speeding.”

Drivers adjust their speed and their behavior based on cues they are given by the roadway. Those cues include things like the width of the roadway and how much of a clear zone there is around the roadway. If the two are too close to the road, people will tend to slow down and be more aware. Even bends in the road can cause people to drive more slowly;” he said.

“Also, the presence of people walking and biking and activity slows down drivers. That sort of starts to get into the land-use topic,” Weber said. “You’re not going to have people around in a rural area, generally, if there are no destinations. And if the destinations are so far from the town that it’s unrealistic to walk or bike, the people at those destinations are all going to drive to get there. So that doesn’t really help you fix your problem.”

On Oct. 24, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission presented an East Charlotte Traffic Calming Study before the selectboard, recommending curbs, medians and even public art to create a "Winter Lights at Shelburne Museum", November 25, 2022 through January 1, 2023

Photo by Brett Yates
“The best speed management practices are a combination of appropriate engineering, educational and enforcement techniques, as all of these components working together are more effective than any of them can be alone.”

Ian Degutis, Traffic engineer, Vermont Agency of Transportation

SPEEDING
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

sense of place” that would have the effect of lowering vehicle speeds. With additions of this kind, either of Charlotte’s villages, in theory, could start a journey toward becoming a dense, walkable, bikeable place. But that sort that Local Motion promotes statewide, but ultimately, it would take more than traffic-calming measures.

“That requires buildings, and you know, Charlotte doesn’t have a lot of them,” Bich told the audience.

Local Motion organized a survey of walking and biking habits in Charlotte last year. The organization has found local allies, including on the Charlotte Energy Committee, which has begun to envision a small park-and-ride at the new train garage that would facilitate a Green Mountain Transit bus stop, thereby reducing individual commuter trips on Route 7 by speeders and non-speeders alike.

Townpeople have debated various plans and ideas of this nature for years. In 2012, at Town Meeting Day, voters authorized an expenditure up to $77,000 to construct a sidewalk on Ferry Road in West Charlotte. A few weeks later, residents submitted a petition with enough signatures to force a second vote, and this time, the sidewalks lost.

Last year, the Charlotte Planning Commission began a process to update the town’s land-use regulations, and voters will now consider an initial set of amendments on their November ballot. But in the absence of a widespread transformation of either village, smaller roadway adjustments are possible, according to Weber.

“One example is just simply not having a center line, that yellow center line, on the roadway. That has been shown to reduce speeds, sometimes by as much as 7 mph,” he said. “It requires drivers to think a little bit more about their position on the road, and that encourages slower speeds.”

“Another benefit, too, is that these lines provide a point of reference for the cyclist,” Besselt said. “For example, I use the white line as a marker to ride on or to ride to the right of when cars are behind me.”

According to Sai Sarepalli, a transportation planning engineer at the Chittenden Regional Planning Commission, Vermonters sometimes hope to control speeds on country roads simply by lowering the limit, but a wide, empty road will invite speed no matter what the signposts say. By his account, surveys have shown that drivers usually forget the posted limit “five to 10 seconds” after seeing it.

“The road dictates the speed, and just arbitrarily reducing the speed limit, in most cases that I’ve noticed, it does not reduce the operating speeds of motorists,” he said. “They’ll drive at a speed where they feel comfortable.”

“The town of Huntington, with a population of 1,938, has few businesses and little pedestrian activity, but plenty of drivers pass through on their way to Camel’s Hump State Park. A few years ago, municipal officials sought to control speeds in the lower village by installing a speed hump—a gentler version of a speed bump—at its southbound entry, along with feedback signs and painted speed limits on the blacktop.

“Last year, and last, Charlotte deployed seasonal speed bumps of its own near the town beach and at Thompson’s Point, but the Charlotte Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services has advocated against their more extensive use. Charlotte Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services cited data from Oregon and Illinois to warn of slowed emergency response times. "The delay could be anywhere between three and 10 seconds. While that does not sound like much, consider that a fire doubles in size every minute it goes unchecked," said Chief Justin Bliss, who also noted "a potential for increased maintenance costs" for fire trucks and a possible "increase in patient discomfort and potential risk to providers in the back of an ambulance." In Huntington, the speed hump on Main Road has been an apparent success. The town checked to be sure.

"I’m able to pull data off of the speed signs," said Huntington town administrator Barbara Elliott. "She said they pulled the data the first year, but haven’t since. That first year, it seemed to show the speed hump reduced speeds.

But, even here, the simultaneous introduction of multiple traffic-calming measures would confound a data-based analysis of any single tool’s stand-alone efficacy.

"It’s so hard to get a controlled environment to say X impacted the speeds, because there are so many other variables," said Chris Dubin, a transportation planner at the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission.

According to Dubin, the town that commission the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission for traffic safety studies rarely call them back to examine the results of their subsequent actions. “I mean, we would probably love to, but often times it’s just onto the next thing, unfortunately.”

But Dubin’s colleague, Sarepalli, emphasized that researchers at the Federal Highway Administration have already “proven” the location-contingent effectiveness of all the standard engineering tools for traffic calming. And few towns will spend money on measures that “are not cheap,” as he put it, without an engineer’s input on implementation.

Engineering countermeasures, such as changing roadway width, setting appropriate speed limits or installation of speed bumps, are context-sensitive, so it’s generally a site-specific assessment to determine what is appropriate and feasible in a particular location,” said Ian Degutis, a traffic engineer at the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation urges towns to adopt a diverse strategy of techniques to address speeding.

“The best speed management practices,” Degutis said, “are a combination of appropriate engineering, educational and enforcement techniques, as all of these components working together are more effective than any of them can be alone.”

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GIVE NOW
The ferry from Charlotte to Essex, N.Y., reduced the number of its lake crossings a bit earlier this year. Normally, the Charlotte-Essex Ferry cuts its departures from every 30 minutes to every hour and reduces its hours of operation from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., around the first of November, said Heather Stewart with Lake Champlain Transportation.

This year the company made the switch Oct. 17.

The ferry is now just running Mondays-Fridays with no weekend crossings.

Heather Stewart with Lake Champlain Transportation said the switch was made earlier because of staffing issues.

Unlike other businesses which can continue to operate with fewer staff, the ferry must run with a full crew, Stewart said. Like so many other businesses, Lake Champlain Transportation has been having trouble finding enough employees since the pandemic.

The ferry was completely shut down during the winter during the pandemic, but she said the company doesn’t plan to stop ferry service this winter until ice becomes an issue on Lake Champlain.

Ferry transits reduced for staffing issues

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Early morning wreck

No one was hurt when a box truck flipped near the intersection of Route 7 and Ferry Road just after midnight on Friday, Oct. 21. Route 7 was closed completely for a short time, but the southbound lane was closed for about two hours.

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Lend a hand to an agency that needs volunteers

United Way’s Volunteer Connection site is set up to help connect agencies and volunteers. Agencies are working hard to navigate volunteering during this time, but opportunities are increasing. Visit Volunteer Connection at unitedwayvnv.galaxydigital.com to learn more about these and other opportunities:

• Burlington Dismas House provides transitional housing for newly released prisoners. They will be providing a wonderful Thanksgiving meal for residents and guests at their Bud1 Street (Justin Adair at 802-655-0300 or justin@dismasvt.org) and East Allen Street (Hailey Leisten at 802-658-0381 or hailey@dismasvt.org). They’re looking for volunteers to help make this a memorable event. Volunteers are encouraged to enjoy the meal with the residents.
• Mercy Connections is doing their community lunch on Thursdays and is looking for volunteers to help prep delivered food and serve. Shifts are roughly from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Upcoming dates are: Nov. 3, Nov. 10, a special Harvest/Thanksgiving meal on Nov. 17, Dec. 1, Dec. 8, and a holiday meal on Dec. 15. Contact Maeve Keating at mkeating@mercyconnections.org.
• Spectrum Youth and Family Services is looking for volunteers to serve as mentors for youth ages 12-22. If you are a responsible adult in Chittenden or Grand Isle County and have reliable transportation, here’s the chance to spend some quality time with a young person who is waiting to be connected to a healthy, compassionate mentor. Mentoring pairs can enjoy biking, a University of Vermont sports game, a show at the Flynn or many other mutually enjoyable activities. Contact Rebecca Majoya at 802-864-7423, ext. 216 or email rmajoya@spectumvt.org.
• Peer Teaching and Learning is expanding and enhancing its board of directors and board committees with volunteers from communities in Vermont. They are looking for various skill sets and diverse age, geographic location, learning styles, gender, race, and ethnicity. The board meets via Zoom seven times a year with an annual in person meeting. Peer Teaching and Learning provides advanced learning opportunities for underserved populations, primarily adults with disabilities. Board members are encouraged to visit any of the 11 Vermont campuses to experience the unique opportunity being provided. Contact Stephen Tavella at 802-424-7717 or email executivedirector@peerteachingandlearning.org.

Training geared for women running in local elections

Emerge Vermont, the state’s premier organization for recruiting and training Democratic women to run for office, announced today that it will offer a new regional training program for women interested in running for local office. Emerge Vermont Local is a half-day training that will provide skills and tools to enable Democratic women to run successful campaigns for school boards, selectboards, city councils and village trustee boards on Town Meeting Day.

“We are excited to launch this new training program for women who want to serve in local office. Fewer than a third of selectboard members in Vermont are women. This training will help improve women’s representation in local government,” said Elaine Haney, executive director of Emerge Vermont.

The training will be offered in St. Albans on Nov. 19, Greensboro on Dec. 10 and Brandon on Jan. 14 and will focus specifically on campaigning locally. Participants will develop practical knowledge in areas such as voter contact, messaging, fundraising, campaign strategy and more.

Emerge Vermont Local is different from the organization’s more comprehensive candidate training program. “Local elections typically involve fewer registered voters and smaller geographic areas than legislative campaigns. They generally occur on Town Meeting Day each spring, and so the campaign season is also relatively short and requires less fundraising,” Haney said. “The Emerge Vermont Local program will offer campaign training suited to the comparatively smaller local election cycle.”

“Emerge is the gold standard in campaign training in Vermont. I’m thrilled to see them expanding their program to support candidates for municipal office,” said Jim Dandeneau, executive director of the Vermont Democratic Party.

The cost of participation is $35 per person. Those interested can learn more at vt.emergeamerica.org/events/emerge-vermont-local.

LEAVENSWORTH ROAD | HINESBURG, VT

Imagine living in an idyllic country setting, where you can enjoy views of goats or horses, maybe even llamas grazing on lush green pastures. With a picturesque view of Camel’s Hump, this 25.3-acre lot is within sights to Hinesburg Village and has unobstructed views from the north to the south. The current proposed house site allows for plenty of room to build your dream home. If equestrian is something of interest, these fertile acres were once crops and other agricultural needs in the past. Hinesburg is a rural community with an easy commute to Burlington, the University of Vermont, and Lake Champlain’s outdoor activities. Enjoy short drives over the gap to Mad River and Sugarbush in the winter and easy access via Charlotte to Lake Champlain in the summer. Camel’s Hump State Park is practically in your backyard. $325,000 | MLS#4933739

Reach out today for more information!

Nancy Warren
Jay Strausser
Nancy.Warren@FourSeasonsSIR.com | 802.734.5024
Jay.Strausser@FourSeasonsSIR.com | 802.578.2094

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Call us: 802-425-4949 or email us at: news@TheCharlotteNews.org
Food shelf collecting nonperishable food for Thanksgiving

Maj Eisinger
Charlotte Food Shelf

As days grow colder and the hours of darkness increase, the Charlotte Food Shelf prepares to provide warmth and nourishment in the holiday months. As we watch small birds and mammals store food for the months ahead, so do food shelf volunteers seek nonperishable items for the fast-approaching Thanksgiving Day basket meal.

In a lovely longstanding tradition, Charlotte Central School students and teachers fill boxes of nonperishable food items that are donated to the food shelf. Food shelf volunteers then add milk, butter, eggs and bread to the baskets. Turkeys, so generously donated to the food shelf, are delivered with apple and cranberry chutneys—strutting their stuff with chrysanthemums, annual calendula and dahlias—providing a flavorful feast. Registered families can pick up their basket and turkey Saturday, Nov. 19, from 10 a.m.—noon. The warmth of our community helped make the Charlotte Hand-Me-Downs Fall Clothing Drive very successful. Twenty-five families donated clothes and winter gear. Each child served by the food shelf received a complete set of winter gear. Additional bags of clothing and outerwear were passed along to the Charlotte Central School counselor for further distribution. All remaining outerwear was donated to a coat drive for refugees living in Vermont. Thank you to the families who donated and to the Grange volunteers who helped to sort and pack clothing.

For future planning, please note that this effort happens twice a year. Donations are accepted at the Charlotte Grange in April and September. More detailed updates and drop-off dates are posted seasonally in the Front Porch Forum and on the Charlotte Grange website at charlottegrange.org.

We are grateful to Kathleen Nolan, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Nancy Wood, Raymond and Eileen Curtis, Alexandra Lehmann and Nancy Pricer for monetary donations. Head over Fields has provided a lovely bounty of vegetables; Stewart’s Breads continues to supply scrumptious breads; and the Repair Café collected many food items as well as a generous monetary donation for the food shelf. We appreciate these donations, as well as the huge basket of potatoes grown and harvested by youth from the Charlotte Congregational Church.

We give thanks in advance to Charlotte Congregational Church members and parishioners of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, who again plan to put up Giving Trees in both churches the weekend after Thanksgiving Day. This tradition, which is more than 15 years old, provides wish gifts for children for the holidays.

In this time of giving thanks, many continue to reach out to others. For those wishing to donate nonperishable items, the following would be gratefully received: crackers; juice; mixes for muffins, cakes, pie crust, brownies or bread; canned pie fillings; and snacks such as granola bars.

As winter promises to bring both beauty and cold, please note that the Charlotte Food Shelf has utility assistance available to residents of Charlotte and North Ferrisburgh. 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 our website at charlotteucc.org/copy-of-charlotte-food-shelf-1.

The Food Shelf is open for Food Distribution from 4–6 p.m. on Wednesdays, Nov. 9, Nov. 30, Dec. 14 and Dec. 28. Holiday basket pickup dates are Saturdays, Nov. 19 and Dec. 17, 10 a.m. until noon.

The Charlotte Food Bank is in back of the Congregational Church in Charlotte at 403 Church Hill Rd. Coralville delivery continues and masking is encouraged during the ongoing pandemic. For emergency food, please call John at 802-425-3130. If you cannot come to the food shelf due to COVID symptoms or seek further information, 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.

All the food shelf volunteers would like to wish all our community members a blessed and bountiful Thanksgiving!
When senior starting quarterback Max Cheer continues success has to go to Ollie Cheer.

CVU 42, BFA-St. Albans 14

out the second half ready to rock and roll.”

kicks into gear with the kids and they come adjustments,” Fleming said. “And something happened on the ball field and make staff and we’re table to look and see what’s

second half rout, Fleming gave kudos to this appeared to be in control.

possession. From then on, the Redhawks appeared to be in control.

Besides crediting his players for the second half rout, Fleming gave kudos to his coaching staff.

“I have a very intelligent coaching staff and we’re able to look and see what’s happened on the ball field and make adjustments,” Fleming said. “And something kicks into gear with the kids and they come out the second half ready to rock and roll.”

CVU 42, BFA-St. Albans 14

Much of the credit for the Redhawks’ continuing success has to go to Ollie Cheer.

When senior starting quarterback Max Cheer went down towards the end of the regular season with a leg injury that put him out through the postseason, the junior stepped into the position with little drop off at the quarterback position.

Cheer’s production at quarterback is probably due to his familiarity in the role. Fleming is noteworthy for giving lots of players lots of time on the field and not just when the outcome is no longer in doubt.

Against Bellows Falls Academy-St. Albans, Cheer finished with 54 yards rushing which included a 47-yard touchdown. He was 15 of 24 in passing with five touchdown tosses.

“Ollie sees and interprets the field so quickly,” Fleming said. “He had a hand in all six touchdowns.”

Alex Provost had eight catches for 126 yards and a touchdown catch. Summer had three catches for 55 yards to go with 32 yards running the ball. He scored a touchdown on both.

Billy Bates and Dylan Freer both had touchdown catches.

Sumner, Chase Leonard and Lucin Griffin all had interceptions.

This game was Senior Day and the coach was pleased that he was able to play all of his seniors.

“They were able to get quality reps in the third quarter, not just in the last five minutes of the game,” Fleming said.

Girls field hockey

CVU 4, Mount Mansfield 0

Another Champlain Valley team headed to the semifinals is the girls field hockey team.

After a 4-0 dismantling of the Cougars on Friday, Oct. 28, the Redhawks were set for the penultimate game of the field hockey season against Bellows Falls Union High. That game was set to be played on Tuesday afternoon, which was played after press time for this newspaper.

If the Redhawks won Tuesday’s game, the team is headed to the state championships this Saturday, Nov. 5, at the University of Vermont to face the winner of the semifinal match between South Burlington and Essex.

The time for the championship game was still to be determined at press time.

In the Mount Mansfield game, at the half the outcome did not appear to be in doubt with the Redhawks already up 4-0.

Claire Marcoe scored three of CVU’s goals. Two came on assists from Carly Stroh, Sophia Madden and Tess Everett.

Fall ball champions

One of Marcoe’s goals she scored herself without an assist.

CVU’s goalies Grace Ferguson and Rianne Nagelhout combined for two saves.

CVU 8, Middlebury 0

The Redhawks scored an even more dominating win over Middlebury 8-0 on Tuesday, Oct. 25.

Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Redhawk junior Calvin Steele makes one would-be tackler fall down as he runs with the ball.

One of Marcoe’s goals she scored herself without an assist.

CVU 3, Middlebury 0

The Redhawks dominated the South Burlington 3-0 win over Middlebury.

CVU scored twice in the second quarter, and once on a penalty to win.

From left, Lucas Tresser, Zach Pratt, Will Boyce, Riley McDoade, Augie Lang, Henry McLean, Jack Dore, Owen Daley and Jack Miner are members of the team that won the Charlotte, Hinesburg, Shelburne and Williston Babe Ruth league season-ending tournament on Oct. 16. Not pictured: Jack Stoner.

Education

Charlotte Central exploring ways to learning targets

Naozri Strautis (Garden and Teeter School)" k6h-JamieTwoCoats0822.indd   1

At one time or another, most people have used a phone’s GPS system for directions. A specific destination is entered, the phone will offer some possible routes and the journey begins.

In a similar fashion, the Champlain Valley School District has established specific destinations for all middle school students. These destinations are referred to as learning targets. These learning targets have been created and vetted by teachers in order to provide some shared skills for all students.

Over the course of the year, teachers and students work together to try and reach these specific destinations through the use of their content of their class. For instance, a humanities class may focus on the evidence learning target (I can find credible evidence that supports my purpose) while studying the role of government in society. The learning target is the destination, and then the study of government is the vehicle which would be used to practice this skill (finding evidence).

In a science class the students might be working on the developing models learning target (I can develop a model to clearly show how all components work together to explain a phenomenon) while studying photosynthesis and respiration.

Once the destination has been set, the teacher acts like the GPS system. Teachers figure out where all students are starting from and then help guide each student to the destination (or even beyond). Drivers have all encountered GPS routes getting messy, getting lost, encountering traffic jams or the car breaking down — this is where a teacher’s knowledge of students comes into play and where differentiation occurs. The teacher works to guide all students to these destinations — taking as many routes as necessary.

The more clearly the Champlain Valley School District can articulate these destinations for students, the better chance they have to reach them. The Champlain Valley School District learning targets can be viewed under the curriculum heading at cvsvdt.org.

Whole school morning meeting

Several years ago, Charlotte Central School moved away from celebrating Halloween during the school day to maintain a calm focus, centered on learning and social activities that are accessible and inclusive for all students.

On Friday, Nov. 4, the third whole school morning meeting will be held. This will be hosted by the sixth grade and will feature an invitation from the Student Leadership Council to encourage all Charlotte Central School students to share their hopes for the coming year. The hope is to encourage student voices and create opportunities for student-led innovation.

Charlotte Central exploring ways to learning targets

Naozri Strautis (Garden and Teeter School)

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While many people might shudder at the stress of working in emergency medicine, Dr. Matthew Siket thrives in it. “I think it’s the best job in the world,” he said. “I meet people when they’re having a pretty bad day, and I enjoy being a calm and reassuring presence.”

Siket joined the staff of the University of Vermont Medical Center in 2018. While working in Rhode Island, Siket was the co-director of multiple stroke centers and spent a good deal of his non-clinical time with specialists in the field of neurology, designing systems of care. This led to the launch of a tele-stroke network.

After he arrived at the University of Vermont, Siket continued his advocacy for tele-health services. He applied for funding through the Health Resources and Services Administration for a new program called AUGMENT Tele-EM. He is the principal investigator in that program which is in the second year of a four-year grant.

Continuing his quest to improve the way patients receive care in the emergency department, Siket began to look into a concept called emergency medicine comprehensive observation. When a patient is brought into the hospital, the focus is on stabilization and then diagnosis and disposition. The choices for reaching a disposition have traditionally been discharge or admission, but Siket notes that a third option is observation.

A number of hospitals have emergency department observation units, but Siket describes observation as a status rather than geography. Although the best-case scenario is having a separate unit, he believes that emergency department observation can still be done in a way that monitors the patient but also frees up a bed for someone else without a separate facility. Recently, Siket was appointed to the state-wide Clinical Utilization and Review Board.

“I’m still learning the ropes,” he said, “but the group discusses issues pertaining to reimbursement for state Medicaid beneficiaries for certain health services. It was appealing to me because emergency physicians are focused on equitable care rather than revenue procedures. We are like a safety net for the system.”

Siket is happy to be part of a group that focuses on vulnerable populations and sees it as a learning opportunity. He is partaking of another learning opportunity by taking classes toward a master’s in health care innovations online through the University of Pennsylvania.

Siket has teaching responsibilities at the University of Vermont, including bedside training, didactic sessions and mentor. He serves as associate program director of the emergency medicine residency program which was started in 2019. He is also hoping to translate some of what he has learned into the syllabus for an undergraduate course he would like to teach at the honors college focusing on health care systems and innovation.

Several years ago, Siket’s wife Meghan came to Vermont for an employment law conference and stayed at an Airbnb on Greenbush Road. On her return, the Roose’s Point native told her Maine-born husband that she wanted to move to Vermont, a topic they had broached on one of their first dates when they both lived in New York City.

Both found jobs in their fields and were able to make the move with Meghan as associate general counsel at the University of Vermont. Having already experienced the beauty of Charlotte, this is where they looked for a home.

Although he is a hiker and hockey player, Siket said now their children’s hobbies — Avery, 13, and Arne, 10 — are now his hobbies. He’s been an assistant coach for baseball, hockey and soccer.

“We’ve been very fortunate in our move here,” Siket said. “I feel like I have a voice and that’s what has me interested in Vermont in the American College of Emergency Physicians. The pandemic-led attrition and burnout in the medical field didn’t inflect Siket: “This is the greatest job in the world. Emergency doctors interface with every other specialty. It’s a fun intersection to be in.”
If Matt and Lauren Daley’s dream comes true, eventually Charlotters won’t have to go over the river and through the woods, traveling to other towns to get a Christmas tree.

This year, those who don’t get one of the trees that Matt has hauled from Randolph may still have to go … ahem, a fir piece … to get their Christmas conifer.

The Daleys will begin selling trees on their Split Rock Tree Farm on the Friday after Thanksgiving. They’ll be open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through Sunday.

Any that aren’t sold will be available on subsequent Saturdays and Sundays. Matt Daley said the supply of Christmas trees was limited this year, so he wasn’t able to truck in as many as he would have liked.

The Daleys’ hope is that in two years people will be able to cut their own Christmas trees at Split Rock Tree Farm. They have planted 6,000 primarily balsams and, if the weather and everything else critical to Christmas tree growth cooperates, plan to be selling their own homegrown trees the Christmas after next.

Meantime, this year the Daleys are holding a soft opening to introduce people to the idea of shopping locally for their yule tannenbaums. They’ll have hot chocolate and candy canes and will be selling wreaths.

Matt Daley said they are looking for other local businesses who would like to set up inside their barn and sell ornaments, jewelry, coffee or other gift ideas.

Matt Daley is a captain with the Vermont State Police in charge of the five Northern Barracks.

He went to Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, N.Y., where he played football and hockey. After graduating he was on the college coaching staff but soon realized that making $12,000 a year wasn’t going to cut it.

Matt was considering going into the military when his father mentioned that the state police were hiring.

One weekend, some years back, he was visiting his sister who was teaching at a prep school in Massachusetts when he met her friend, Lauren. Things clicked.

When Lauren Daley got a job as a school counselor in Waterbury, they were living in Essex. Charlotte seemed like a good choice for travel to both of their jobs.

They were visiting a friend in Massachusetts who had a Christmas tree farm. Once again things clicked. It seemed like a good family business, so they kept that on their list of possibilities.

Initially, the Daleys lived on Greenbush Road north of Ferry Road, but down the road they found property that would make a good Christmas tree farm. They built a home there on 11 acres that had been subdivided from the old Bora farm in 2016.

Shortly after, they started planting Christmas trees, about 1,200 a year.

The Daleys “are kind of big on getting the kids out of the house and doing stuff and learning something” and Christmas tree farming seems like a good way to do that.

The kids — Owen, 12, Griffin, 10, and Greta, 8 — are students at Charlotte Central School. The boys have already learned how to run the mower.

“We pay them to mow and keep the weeds down,” Matt Daley said.

Split Rock Tree Farm is at 4224 Greenbush Road just south of Pelkey’s Blueberries.

If you come by the weekend after Thanksgiving, the Daleys think yule enjoy it.
Sacred Hunter

Meeting your self, and maybe your father, at deer camp

My father was born the eighth child in a family of 10 children that subsisted from week to week on a coal miner’s solitary income. He would climb 200 feet down into a mine shaft to help his one-legged father extract enough chunks of coal to bag, walk into town and sell in purchase food for the evening’s dinner. He told me he swore that his children would never suffer for lack of anything. He would climb 200 feet down into a mine shaft to help his one-legged father extract enough chunks of coal to bag, walk into town and sell in purchase food for the evening’s dinner. He told me he swore that his children would never suffer for lack of anything.

He sat in the doorway of his Small & Sons diner, began working at a used car dealer, learned that the was a consummate salesman back then was a lot of money). He quickly learned that he was a consummate salesman and began working at a used car dealer, then purchased a small diner on the college campus.

He told me he swore that his children would never suffer for lack of anything. He quickly learned that he was a consummate salesman and began working at a used car dealer, then purchased a small diner on the college campus. From there the entrepreneurial spirit was lit. He started working deals to purchase anything that appeared to hold a medium of the possibility of making money. He loved making deals. By the mid-60s he had amassed a small empire of hotels, nursing homes and partnerships in Swiss banks—even a racehorse that was bred to a Kentucky Derby winner. He had a private plane and pilot, a big ugly green limousine, and one of the first “car phones” in the back of his Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight. Sounds materially impressive for a coal miner’s son, right? It would prove to be an ironic twist later in life that the value of all these “things” was nothing compared to what he gave us as a gentleman.

He had married the love of his life, the Homecoming Queen, my mother, who was a well-heeled matron worthy of raising children. Four of us. He was jet-setting around the country and relied heavily on our mother to rear this young lad who failed miserably at team sports (even when his father owned the team), was in desperate need of a connection to find even the slightest vestige of traditional virility. It was when I was 13 years old that he went to a hunters’ education class and gave me a Marlin model .22 caliber bolt action rifle for Christmas. I studied that hunters’ course like it was to be my master’s thesis. I was going to be a master of my own destiny! I would learn everything I could about safety, proper equipment and habits, systems, conservation and yes, even hunting.

I practiced in the back woods of our house in Pennsylvania, stalking rabbits and squirrels—once I had received my first license.

When I had exhibited enough interest in learning to master something, I was 15. I tried football and gotten creamed by the big dudes that they grow around Pittsburgh suburbs. I tried baseball but could not find the courage to take a swing at a ball when I was up. basketball? Are you kidding? My seventh-grade class had kids with full beards that stood over 6 feet tall. It was hopeless. I was a loner. But I had found my path—the outdoors.

That year my father did something extraordinary. He planned a deer hunting trip into central Pennsylvania, where he had grown up.

I sat up late that night, polishing my new Marlin 30–30 and watching volutuous snowflakes falling from the darkened sky and waiting for our departure. We had planned on a 2 a.m. start with a four-hour drive. I awakened my father around midnight, telling him that the snow was coming down hard and that we had better get going now before the roads became impassable.

He steered the Oldsmobile Vista Cruiser north to Interstate 80 and slid onto the slippery snowbound surface, hacking through snowdrifts as if they were feather pillows. That was the first time that I saw my father as my hero. We plowed east through the night, listening to an old country radio station from Wheeling, West Virginia. My father drove with the window down so he could grab the wiper blades every few minutes and bang them against the frozen windshield to rid them of the heavy flakes. He would sing along to Hank Williams, Merle Haggard and Charlie Pride—names that I didn’t know.

Six hours after we left, we pulled off the interstate and took a few back roads that I was sure would lead us closer to a tow truck. But within half an hour we plowed our way into a driveway with drifts over my waist and slammed the bow of the Vista Cruiser into a snowdrift over 20 feet from the door of an old poorly lit log cabin. We knocked on the door of the cabin and as it opened, pale yellow light from kerosene lanterns filled the doorway. The smell of cigarette smoke, bacon, coffee and whiskey filled the night air around me. This was no place for kids. This place was a bastion of manhood — the old kind. And I was welcomed in as a man.

Now I know that by today’s standards that scene would be quickly labeled inappropriate for a young man. But society hadn’t developed into the calculating, politically correct version we have accepted today. And that is what I needed at the time. It was certainly better than getting hazed in the locker room of the high school.

The next day we stood in the woods together listening for deer. The trees were bowing down to the earth begging for mercy from the heavy snow on their boughs. Rabbits peeked out of their burrows to find a world that had been miraculously altered overnight. The sun shone brightly, creating pillars of light through the branches, and errant flakes drifted down from the sky with rainbow-like halos surrounding them. And I had my father to myself for the first time.

We would get together every season after that until I went away to boarding school. Eventually, I convinced my family to move to Stove because I’d had a vision of a white-mountainous nirvana. We continued to hunt together each season until the family decided to move closer to New York City where my father’s burgeoning investment business was demanding more and more of his time.

Decades later, my father having lost every penny of his fortune, I found myself living in Vermont and he in Connecticut. I was able to lease a small and very dilapidated deer camp in Huntington. My buddies and I fixed it up with hemlock paneling, an indoor bathroom even a hot water shower — and decorated it with random furniture found along the roadways. It was perfect. I invited my aging father to my camp with a few of my closest friends who comprise my inner circle. We laughed, we lied, we played cards, we swore, we drank a bit and generally asserted our God-given right to mishave a little.

My father sat in a huge blue EZ Boy chair with his feet propped up in front of the woodstove and we reminisced about how we finally found our connection all those years ago.

In the last three years of my father’s life, his health declined and he was no longer able to make the trip north. I drove to Connecticut to visit him in his senior home just a mile away from my youngest sister at the end of June and realized that it likely would be my last chance to say goodbye. He told me that his only regret was that he didn’t leave a fortune to his kids.

I held his withering hand and told him that he had given me a gift far greater than money. He had given me a love of nature and a connection to him that only I will understand.

To all of us he was a gentleman, a wise and adventurous soul, a remarkably compassionate and kind person who possessed a spirit that always saw the best in everyone.

But to me, he possessed the character of the kind of man that I wish to be. I held his tender hand and whispered to him, “I will meet you at deer camp. You remember how to get there right?”

He squeezed my hand and mouthed “yes.”

In his eyes I saw the pale-yellow light of the doorway.

A deer camp may be filled with more than the smell of cigarette smoke, bacon, coffee and whiskey.

In this eyes I saw the pale-yellow light of the doorway.
Gardening

Putting the garden to bed at end of growing season

Deborah J. Benoit
University of Vermont Extension

Just because the growing season is over doesn’t mean work in the garden has come to an end. Almost, but not quite. There are still a number of chores that, if done now, will make you smile come spring.

If you haven’t already done so, bring any household or outdoor tools that you plan to overwinter. Pull dead and dying annuals from the garden, including vegetables and any tender perennials you aren’t going to overwinter indoors. Consider leaving flowers with seedheads in place until spring and seed for the fall.

Weed for the last time this year. This is especially important if any of those unwelcome weeds have sprouted around the garden to create a greater weed invasion next year.

Empty pots, clean and store them, particularly terracotta pots, which may break due to stress from freezing.

Prune any damaged or diseased plant material, but wait until the urge to prune spring and early summer flowering shrubs such as lilacs, forsythias and rhododendrons. If you do, you’ll be cutting off next year’s flower buds.

If you don’t already have a compost pile, start one. Compost is a healthy addition to garden soil and easy to dispose of prunings, grass clippings and end-of-season annuals.

Avoid adding weeds, especially those that have gone to seed, to your compost. See The Dirt on Compost (go.ars.usda.gov) for more information on starting a compost pile.

In fall, damaged or diseased plant material may be pruned from shrubs (with the exception of lilacs, forsythias and other spring and early summer flowering shrubs) to avoid removing next year’s flowers.

Consider seedling before taking winter gardening vacation

Nadie VanZandt
University of Vermont Extension

Before taking a rest from gardening for the season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season, have you thought of direct sowing seeds to grow a minimal-care garden next season.

• Like spring bulbs, many seeds require a natural freezing and thawing before awakening in the spring. Seeds that dropped from several annuals, biennials and perennial plants are good candidates for fall planting.

• With just a little extra work, direct sowing in the fall is a simple and inexpensive way to grow a colorful garden with plants that will bloom earlier than seedlings raised in the spring.

• Your first step is to select the right plants for your region and your U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) plant hardiness zone. Just enter your zip code at planthardiness.ars.usda.gov to find your zone. To ensure the plants you choose are not listed as invasives in your area, please visit自治区s.org.

• Generally, seeds that require cold stratification are well suited for fall sowing in USDA hardness zones 3-5, which are the zones in Vermont. You may have already noticed “volunteers” from garden plants that dropped their seeds last autumn, proof that these seeds survived the long New England winter.

• Self-seeding perennials that benefit from cold winters include foxglove (Poppy), bee balm (Monarda), black-eyed susan (Rudbeckia hirta), columbine (Aquilegia), coneflower (Echinacea), delphinium, milkweed/butterfly plant (Asclepias) and lady’s mantle (Alchemilla), among others.

• Similarly, seeds of biennials and annuals like Digitalis, sweet William (Dianthus) and hollyhocks (Alcea rosea) are also good choices to make in the fall. Don’t overlook the seeds of many annuals known to self-seed.

• These include annual poppies like breadseed (Papaver rhoeas), cornflowers (Centaurea cyanus), calendulas, and cosmos, as well as seeds from hardy annuals.

• In your vegetable patch, you can also try seeds of cold-hardy vegetables such as beets, kale, lettuce, spinach, carrots, leeks and others that can withstand frost. Herbs, including thyme, will do well when seeded in the fall.

• You will need to prepare your planting bed the way you would in the spring. Select a sunny and well-drained area and remove any weeds and debris.lightly loosen the surface of the soil, taking care not to disturb the soil organisms and avoid releasing weed seeds to the surface. Amend the soil with a thin layer of compost.

• Some seeds require light to germinate while others need darkness, so it’s important to follow the instructions on your seed packets.

• You may or may not need a layer of mulch depending on the specific light requirement.

• The seeds need to experience the correct sequence of winter cold followed by spring thaw. It’s a good idea to plant them after a killing frost to make sure that they do not have a chance to germinate until the time is right in the spring.

• Direct sowing at this time of year has many other advantages. Come springtime, you won’t need to harden off your seedlings; and they won’t need to recover from the stress of transplanting.

• Overwintering in the garden, your seeds will produce stronger, healthier and well-acclimated seedlings.

• Consider direct sowing this fall before taking a well-deserved rest this winter. You will appreciate your foresight when gazing at your healthy seedlings next spring.

(Nadie VanZandt is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener from Panton.)

Charlotte Property Transfers September 2022

September 1 Michelle Shirfin Revocable Trust to Brian & Dana Whitcomb
44 West St, Harrisville $69,000

September 6 Jared Badger to Nicole Therese Balderrama Trustee Nicole Balderrama Trust, 1.19 acres 263 Lynnrock Av with/over $452,000

September 7 Canell LLC to Michael Dempsey, 1.15 acres 120 Ely Lane, N/c with/over $530,000

September 22 Richard & Sarah Warren to Peter & Jessica Hoehl, 0 acres 189 Lane’s Lane Camp $460,000

This information was supplied by John Goodrich Real Estate.

Champlain Valley School District (Charlotte, Hinesburg, Shelburne, St. George & Williston)
Child Find Notice

Champlain Valley School District is required by federal law to locate, identify and evaluate all children with disabilities. The process of locating, identifying and evaluating children with disabilities is known as child find.

Champlain Valley School District schools conduct Kindergarten screening each spring, but parents may call to make an appointment to discuss their concerns at any time. As the school district of residence, CVSD has the responsibility to identify and provide services to any child with special needs who may require special education and related services in order to access and benefit from public education.

If you have, or know of any CVSD resident who has a child with a disability under the age of 21 or a child who attends a private school located in Charlotte, Hinesburg, Shelburne, St. George or Williston, Vermont, we would like to hear from you. Sometimes parents are unaware that special education services are available to their children.

Please contact the School Principal (Charlotte Central School – 425-2771, Hinesburg Community School – 482-2106, Shelburne Community School – 985-3331, Williston Central/Alton Brooks Schools – 878-2762) or the Director of Student Support Services, Anna Coupertworth at 383-1234 or acoupertworth@cvsvt.org.
Gardening

Pondering the pumpkin

Once pollinated, pumpkins grow rapidly. They’re ready for harvest when the skin is tough to puncture with a fingernail, and the seeds are ripe. Most pumpkins turn orange as they ripen, but there are varieties with blue, tan and white coloring.

The difference between pumpkins and other winter squashes is culinary rather than taxonomic. Pumpkins are drier, coarser and stronger-flavored compared to squashes. They’re used in pies rather than served as a baked vegetable. They typically have a harder, more jagged stem, too.

The average pumpkin meets its demise in October or November for Halloween or Thanksgiving, as a jack-o-lantern or for dessert. The tradition of carving vegetables for Halloween was brought to America by Irish and Scottish immigrants, who previously used potatoes or turnips, but found pumpkins easier to carve. Halloween has its origins in an ancient Celtic event as well as All Saints Day, established by medieval popes.

The U.S. produces about 1.3 billion pounds of pumpkins annually. Much of that comes from Illinois for canning. In the Northeast, pumpkins are an important source of fall revenue for many diversified vegetable farms.

Pumpkins are fun, delicious and nutritious, too. Their orange color comes from beta-carotene, an antioxidant that converts to vitamin A in the body. One cup of pumpkin contains just 50 calories but has three grams of fiber and a lot of potassium. Pumpkin seeds are packed with protein, fiber, many minerals and healthy unsaturated fats.

(Vern Grubinger, who is based in the University of Vermont Extension office in Brattleboro, is the extension vegetable and berry specialist.)

PHILO RIDGE FARM

A beautiful, productive, diversified farm at the forefront of innovation and conversation around food

Philosophy

At Philo Ridge Farm, we believe that sustainable and diversified agriculture can be the source of vibrant, healthy communities. Our mission is to grow healthy, delicious food that is as good for the earth as it is for us.

Our Farm

A visit to Philo Ridge Farm is a treat for the senses. Nestled in the Green Mountain foothills, our 244 acres are home to a wide variety of crops, from traditional vegetables like tomatoes and squash to more unusual varieties such as kohlrabi and samphire.

Our approach to farming is as diverse as our crops. We utilize organic and regenerative farming practices, growing using as much traditional Yankee ingenuity as we can find. We find that the best way to grow food is to grow it where it should be grown - on the farm, by the farmer.

Our Farming

Our farmers (and we’re all farmers at Philo Ridge Farm!) make their living growing food. We believe that food grows best when it is cared for by people who love it, and when it is grown on the land that it belongs on. We believe that the most delicious, healthy food comes when everyone is involved in the process. From the farmer to the chef, from the farmstand to the table, everyone has a key role to play.

Thank you for supporting this farm. Your purchase is an investment in the health of our community and the earth.

Vern Grubinger

University of Vermont Extension

The pumpkin is an odd vegetable. The more popular pumpkins get, the less people eat them.

Everyone wants to carve a jack-o-lantern, but few people make pumpkin pie anymore. In other words, the pumpkin was once a popular food but now it’s just another pretty face.

When Europeans arrived in the New World, pumpkins and other squashes were widely cultivated by Native Americans, who boiled, baked and dried them for nourishment. Pumpkins are one of the oldest domesticated food plants. Seeds many thousands of years old have been found in the highlands of Mexico.

Pumpkins come in all sizes and shapes. They’re in the cucurbit plant family that includes squashes and cucumbers, but there are different species of pumpkins. Cucurbita moschata includes pumpkins used for canning, which tend to be oblong with tan skin. The jack-o-lantern and miniature pumpkins are Cucurbita pepo. Cucurbita maxima are the beasts of the pumpkin patch, giant pumpkins.

Henry David Thoreau wrote about growing a pumpkin weighing 123 pounds in 1857. By 1893 the record was 365 pounds at the Chicago World’s Fair. The 1,000-pound mark was reached in 1996 in New York. Last year, a pumpkin in Italy weighed 2,703 pounds.

Pumpkins of any size start from a female flower. These open for a few hours in the morning, ready for insects to deliver pollen from a male flower. Managed honeybees and native, ground-based bumble bees and squash bees are common pumpkin pollinators.

To get a good crop, pumpkin plants require a lot of care, such as these grown by Keith Armstrong at the Armstrong Farm in Bennington.

Photos by Vern Grubinger

Farms, pumpkin patches and other venues offer a delightful array of pumpkin sizes, colors and shapes for sale during the fall season.

Pondering the pumpkin

To get a good crop, pumpkin plants require a lot of care, such as these grown by Keith Armstrong at the Armstrong Farm in Bennington.

Photos by Vern Grubinger

Farms, pumpkin patches and other venues offer a delightful array of pumpkin sizes, colors and shapes for sale during the fall season.
A Grief Observed—a companion for the grieving

Katherine Arthaud
Contributor

No one ever told me that grief felt so much like fear," writes C.S. Lewis, in A Grief Observed. "I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid." A Grief Observed was published in 1961 under the pseudonym N.W. Clark because Lewis didn’t want people to connect it to him. It was published two years later, after his death, under his own name.

It’s a slim volume—only 60 pages—
and can literally be read in a sitting, which is how I did it. It’s true. Though certainly not a work likely to be deemed a page-turner, I couldn’t put it down. And I didn’t.

I’m not sure it would have been quite so compelling had I not recently been hit with a loss myself—just not of one loved one, but two. On Aug. 15, 2022, my father died, and two weeks later to the day, my quite a bit younger mother followed in his footsteps.

Losing a parent is a big deal. I have heard that said, and now I know. Losing two so close together would have been unbearable had you spoken to me of such a thing six months ago. But so, it is. And grief is strange.

Like childbirth, people tell you all about it to the point that you think you’re pretty well prepared—but then it happens to you, and then it brings a resemblance passing among the descriptions, it’s vaster and more real and stranger and more difficult than you could ever have imagined.

I remember back when I was about 12 years old my family was visiting Paris, and one morning, in our usual hotel room, my mother gave me something—some kind of I.D. card. I don’t remember what exactly—and said, and so, as she put it in my hand, “This will be good to have when I am not around.” I can’t imagine what the object was that she gave me that day. But what I remember is being struck by the wildly unimaginable and insane sense that there might be a time in my life and the life of the cosmos that my mother would not “be around.” Fortunately, she did stick around, and I was not rendered motherless until about a half-century later—long enough for me to grow up myself and have kids of my own. Yet her death is still a shock to my system and hard to get my head around. I do not think I have really begun metabolizing it.

That being said, I found Lewis’ book to be immensely comforting, but not in the way you might think. It’s not at all platitudinous, not simple, not easy. On the contrary, it is honest, at times agonized and almost agonizing, questioning and brave—a transcription of his dialogues after the death of his wife, Helen Joy Davidman (referred to as “H.”) probably for the same reason the book was not originally published under Lewis’ real name.

Treking through the pebbly, sometimes lush, boulder-strewn landscape of Lewis’ thoughts, feelings, hopes and observations following his great loss, one would assume (I think) I certainly did) that Lewis and H. (like my parents) had been together a long, long time. He is so acutely shattered, so utterly undone and spiritually emotionally discombobulated at almost every level by her absence. Come to find out, they had quite a short marriage: only three years. Lewis and Davidman (H.) met when Lewis was in his 60s and she two decades younger. They got married to resolve an immigration problem: Davidman, an American poet, wished to remain in the United Kingdom with her son, and marrying her friend Clive (also Lewis, a British writer and Anglican lay theologian, would enable her to do so. The two were not strangers; they had known each other for a while, frequently corresponding about theology and literature. Lewis agreed to marry her “as a pure act of friendship and expediency,” he told a friend.

The two were married in a civil ceremony in 1956, but did not consider themselves officially wed, as the ceremony had not taken place in a church. Furthermore, Davidman was 26 at the time, and back in the day the Church of England didn’t recognize divorces. The couple had no expectation of ever having a wedding that would be sanctioned by the church. Even after their civil ceremony, they lived in separate houses. But things changed when Davidman was diagnosed with cancer and given the news that she had little time left to live. In the wake of this devastation, it dawned on the couple that what they had between them was more than friendship; it was indeed true love. They decided they wanted a real church wedding and managed to wrench a deathbed dispensation from an Anglican priest. They were married in a hospital bed in 1957. After a brief remission following the wedding (which must have felt like a miracle to the newlyweds), Davidman’s cancer returned, and she died in July of 1960.

“Her mind was little and quick and muscular as a loafer,” writes Lewis. “It scented the first sniff of cant or slush; then sprung and knocked you over before you knew what was happening.”

“I see,” I’ve described H. as being like a sword. That’s true as far as it goes. But utterly inadequate by itself. And misleading I ought to have balanced it. I ought to have said, “But also like a garden. Like a nest of gossips, wall-wishers, hedge with hedge, more secret, more full of fragrant and fertile life, the further you entered.”

Though this book does give glimpses of H. as a person, the reader never really gets a vivid, detailed idea of who she was in her life. Considered a child prodigy, she got a master’s degree in English literature at Columbia University at age 20. Beyond that she was greatly beloved and irreleplaceable to Lewis himself. Her death and her bereavement after her passing are the muse and generator of the narrative—which is most about Lewis’ state of mind during his journey, suddenly solo, through grief, lived bare.

Lewis’ ruminations are fresh, unexpected and oddly delightful (if there can be anything delightful about grief) right on the mark. Or so I found them to be. His meanderings and ponderings range true. His confusion rang true. His fear rang true. (No one I had spoken to had said anything of the fear! Nothing here I found to be gratuitous or easy. The writing, thinking and yearning go deep and resonant. Unsettling, uncomfortable, even shuddering and almost desperate at times, it becomes somehow the perfect companion for those who have lost someone very important, very dear.

Warning: This book isn’t linear. Rather, No. 2: Grief isn’t linear. Rather, it is, as Lewis puts it, “like a long valley, a winding valley where any bend may reveal a totally new landscape.”

At times, Lewis’ words are deeply personal: “I cannot talk to the children about her,” he writes. “The moment I try, there appears on their faces neither fear, nor love, nor pity, but the most fatal of all non-conductors, embarrassment. They look as if I were committing an indiscretion. They are longing for me to stop. … I can’t blame them. It’s the way boys are.”

There is never a moment when Lewis is not frank, not candid. “The notes,” he writes, “have been about myself, and about H., and about God. In that order.”

Though Lewis was a Christian (he converted in 1931), there is a lot of griping here with what it means to have a belief in and a relationship with God. But that makes sense, doesn’t it, when she has lost an anchor, lost a sun, lost someone so pivotal and hugely important in one’s life? The loss, the absence, is so big it has a way of jolting (and not in a small way) one’s personal theology and one’s whole experience of life and being. It’s like an earthquake. The world is cracked, and rocked, and quaking, and so is the cosmos. Nothing is quite as it was, even though … well, it kind of looks the same.

On God, Lewis writes, “Not that I am (think in much danger of ceasing to believe in God. The real danger is of coming to believe such dreadful things about Him. The conclusion I draw is not ‘So there’s no God after all,’ but ‘So this is what God’s really like.’”

“I am, I for instance, just siding back to God because I know that if there’s any road to H., it runs through Him!”

On Christ: “I need Christ, not something that resembles Him. I want H., not something that is like her. A really good photograph might become in the end a snare, a horror and an obstacle.”

An old friend of mine who had already been through great hardship in her young life once remarked, “I don’t trust anyone who hasn’t suffered.” I’ve never forgotten her words and they come to mind now as I reflect on this short but deeply impactful book. For me, Lewis is trustworthy because he (i) has clearly suffered — and, in fact, is suffering as he writes this journal; and (2) really does lay down his life, and his pain bare for all the world to see, without concern for consistency, nicety, or even resolution. And yet, in the end, this work could not be better, in the way it offers us who are also grieving something solid, loving, real and relatable.

Madeleine L’Engle (author of A Wrinkle in Time) commented, “Lewis gives us permission to admit our own doubts, our own angers and anguish, and to know that they are part of the soul’s growth.”

I don’t know how this book would land on a leader who has not experienced a great loss. But having just experienced one (two), I found it (as have many over the 61 years it has been in print) to be just what the doctor ordered. Thank you to my sister Sharyn for recommending it.

On Books

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The Town of Charlotte
MEETINGS
Visit charlottevt.org for more information.
Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge Oversight Committees Meeting
Thursday, November 3, 5:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Planning Commission: Regular mtg.
Thursday, November 3, 7 - 9 p.m.
Recreational Commission Meeting
Monday, November 7, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Development Review Board Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Wednesday, November 9, 7 - 9 p.m.
Selectboard Meeting
Monday, November 14, 6:30 p.m.
Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge Committee
Tuesday, November 15, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Amélie
Friday-Sunday, Nov. 11-13
Champlain Valley Union High School in Hinesburg presents its fall musical, Amélie. It's the story of a quiet woman with a rich imagination who performs covert acts of kindness for others, with mixed results. For more tickets and showtimes, see tinyurl.com/2p5h8se5. Tickets also available at the door; check ticket link to see if sold out.

The Vermont Youth Orchestra presents a free concert at the University of Vermont Recital Hall. On the program is music by Thad Jones, revered jazz trumpet of Vermont. It's free and all players welcome at the Elley-Long Music Center, St. Michael's College. For more info, see poartry.org.

String Quartet at the Mahaney Arts Center. The Charlotte News • November 3, 2022 • 17

Calendar of Events

Calendar by Mary Landon. Please send event listings to calendars@chronicletimes.org. Information on events at universities of Vermont Recital Hall. On the program is music by Thad Jones, revered jazz trumpet of Vermont. It’s free and all players welcome at the Elley-Long Music Center, St. Michael’s College. For more info, see poartry.org.

Vineyard festival Saturday, Nov. 12, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Local producers and vendors offer food samples and services for each day’s preparation. Held at Shelburne Vineyard, with raffles each hour. Get in free with a non-perishable food item or cash donation benefiting Feeding Chittenden. Details at tinyurl.com/2p8qihnt.

Racism and the Underground Railroad Teaching About Slavery, Whiteness, and Privilege Educators of grades 2-12. Participants are invited to join; membership in the Orchestra is not required. All players welcome at the Elley-Long Music Center, St. Michael's College. More info and registration at tinyurl.com/lnT7xtyk.

Castilian quartet
Friday, Nov. 11, 7:30 p.m. Middlebury College hosts the Castilian String Quartet at the Mahaney Arts Center. The free performance is conducted by Janaeck, Sibielis and Beethoven. More info at castilianstringquartet.com.

Arioso Chamber Ensemble Friday, Nov. 4, 7-7:30 p.m. Works for alto, viola and piano will join in a program created by JC Wanye, a Charlotte poet and visual artist. She offers Open Studio Thursdays as a drop-in, virtual artistic space for all creatives and their mediums. Work on a current project, share, ask questions, meet new friends and explore your creativity in a non-critique way. All ages welcome and no prior experience required. For more info, see poartry.org.

Music of Thad Jones Thursday, Nov. 3, 7:30-8:30 p.m. The University of Vermont Jazz Ensemble presents a free concert at the Richmond Free Library. Donation suggested at the door. More info at 802-279-6082 or ariosoamusic@gmail.com. Performances repeat Saturday, Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m., at Christ Episcopal Church, Montpelier.

Arrive dressed for a Roaring Twenties affair. The Ohavi Zedek synagogue in Burlington Sunday, Nov. 13, 11:45 a.m.-3:45 p.m. The Ohavi Zedek synagogue in Burlington will also host a Long Music Center, St. Michael’s College. For more info, see poartry.org.

Pride hike Saturday, Nov. 12, 1-3 p.m. Pride hike to check out with a library card. More info at castalianstringquartet.com.

The Vermont Youth Orchestra presents a program of music and discovery for its youngest members, the Elley-junior student’s curiosity when they visit Rokeby. More info and tickets are at rokeby.org/visit/programs.

Quilt Guild to practice the raw edge applique workshop Saturday, Nov. 5, 9-11 a.m. Join Vermont’s leading guild to practice the raw edge applique technique. Workshop held at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church in Williston or info and sign up at congo.org/November-2022.html.

Little City Gala Saturday, Nov. 5, 8-11 p.m. Annual Charlotte Gala, a Twentyes celebration at the Vergennes Opera House. This fundraiser for the Vergennes Union Elementary School has food, drinks, raffles, dancing and prizes for best-dressed attendees. Tickets and more info at tinyurl.com/2qmd7su.

Veterans Town Hall Sunday, Nov. 6, 1 p.m. Veterans are invited to speak about what it means to them. All perspectives are valued; all are invited to attend and listen. This free, non-political event is held at the Charlotte Library for St. Michael’s College. If you would like to speak, you are encouraged to register in advance at the Charlotte Library.

True stories told live Tuesday, Nov. 8, 7-9:30 p.m. A Moth Story Slam happens at Main Street Landing in Williston. A true, personal story told in a minute is the challenge. For more info or tickets, visit themoth.org/events/fellows-williston.

Play with the orchestra Wednesday, Nov. 9, 6-30 p.m. Middle and high school students who play wind or brass instruments may join in a session of performing music with members of the Vermont Youth Orchestra. It’s free to join; membership in the Orchestra is not required. All players welcome at the Elley-Long Music Center, St. Michael's College. More info and registration at tinyurl.com/lnT7xtyk.

Vivian VoZler (young Amélie) and Addison Hopes (Fluffy, her pet fish) rehearse a scene in OUV’s production of Amélie. Courtesy photo
Library News

Pick up a free copy of comic about Vermont’s history and future

The Center for Cartoon Studies was offered a challenge by the Office of Vermont’s Secretary of State and Vermont Humanities: Create a graphic guide about the past, present and promise of democracy and civics in our brave little state. The comic book “Freedom and Unity” is the answer to that challenge. Pick up your free copy at the library.

Ongoing programs for all ages

Kids Crafts: See what fun activity youth services librarian Cheryl Sloan has concocted for younger library fans. Pick up the monthly craft kit in the library entryway. Take & Make Kits: Try your hand at a craft kit in the library. Available at the library circulation desk.

Book chat at the library

Meet at the library 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 check with the library for dates.

Short story selections

First & third Thursdays, 1 p.m.
Join Library director Margaret Woodruff via Zoom to share and discuss short stories old and new. The reading list will include a variety of authors, and one or two stories will be featured each session. Copies of the stories are available at the library circulation desk or via email.

Book chat

Fridays, 9:30 a.m.
Register in advance for Zoom link: bit.ly/3BwDoD. Meet on Zoom to discuss new books, old books and books you might have missed. Friday is a recap of the Wednesday porch session. Check with the library for dates.

Children and family programs

After-school maker challenge: Scribblebots
Thursday, Nov. 3, 3-15-4:30 p.m.
Design, build and test a drawing robot. For fourth grade and up. Register at bit.ly/3Dj2Kx.

KidPower confident kids workshop
Saturday, Nov. 5, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Join Laura Slater for a kid and parent workshop, learn Kidpower skills that kids can use right away to have more fun & fewer problems with people. Register at tinyurl.com/KP-CPL-11-5-22.

Preschool story time
Tuesday, 10 a.m.
Join us at the Charlotte Library for preschool stories, crafts and activities. No registration required. Age 2 and over.

Kindergarten and first grade story time
Tuesday, 3 p.m.
Call the Charlotte Library to register for this event.

Preschool Free Play
Wednesday, 10 a.m.
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. Join for play-based learning in the library program room. Ages 3 and 4.

Adult programs

Stilwater Meditation
Saturday, Nov. 5, 12 and 19, 9 a.m.
Gathering together for eight weeks this fall as the light changes, we will explore poetry and meditation as sacred community. Respect for all beings and faiths is a foundational quality of our time together. Beginning and experienced meditators are welcome. Come to one, many or all meetings. Free. Stilwater Meditation is an offering of Rain Elizabeth Healing Arts.

Staying healthy this winter: COVID and more
Wednesday and more
Wednesday, Nov. 9, 6-7 p.m.
Join Jim Hyde, professor emeritus for public health at Tufts University, to discuss what to expect this winter regarding COVID and the flu via Zoom. Learn about the most effective strategies you can use to protect yourself and our community. Hyde taught epidemiology and biostatistics at Tufts for more than 35 years. He helped establish and directed the Tufts masters degree program in health communication, taught and directed several research studies. Prior to joining the Tufts faculty, he was the director of the Division of Preventive Medicine at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Register at bit.ly/3ISuaiJ.

Hoopla 101: accessing digital audiobooks, ebooks and videos
Thursday, Nov. 10, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Learn how to read, listen and watch on your device with your library card. Please have the device you’d like to use (smartphone, tablet or laptop), library card number and any passwords needed to download an app to your device. Laptops are also available at the library. No registration required.

One-on-one tech help
Thursday, Nov. 10, 1-2:30 p.m.
Sign up for a 30-minute, one-on-one session at the Charlotte Senior Center to discuss computer, smartphone, tablet or laptop issues. Free. Infrastructure Technologies team member Susanna Kahn, tech librarian will troubleshoot with you and provide suggestions for next steps. Make sure to bring your device and any necessary login information. When registering, please provide a specific topic/item that you need help with and include the device you will be bringing to the session (e.g. Windows laptop, Mac laptop, Kindle, iPhone, iPad, Android phone, etc). Registration required at 802-425-6345.

From China to Charlotte: How a small town opened its heart to Guy Cheng
Wednesday, Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m.
“...to smell the grass and the trees, to see the colors and the light.” — These were John Steinbeck’s goals as he set out, at the age of 58, to rediscover the country he had been writing about for so many years.

Men’s book discussion: Travels with Charley by John Steinbeck
Wednesday, Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m.
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Library contact information
Margaret Woodruff, director
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian
Susanna Kahn, tech librarian
802-425-3864 or info@charlottepubliclibrary.org

Learn how to read, listen and watch on your device with your library card. Please have the device you’d like to use (smartphone, tablet or laptop), library card number and any passwords needed to download an app to your device. Laptops are also available at the library. No registration required.

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Build connections, get exercise, play, eat at senior center

With daylight savings time soon ending, the days already seem shorter as it becomes darker earlier. What better way to start preparing for the days of winter than to begin building new connections and friendships at the Charlotte Senior Center. Consider trying out an exercise class, joining an art workshop, playing board and card games, or stopping by for one of the weekly lunches. Anyone 50 years or older is welcome to join in!

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.

Artist reception
Friday, Nov. 4, 3:30 p.m.
The Friday morning arts group’s exhibit includes multiple artists with a variety of mediums. Meet the artists, view the exhibit and enjoy some light refreshments. The Friday morning arts group will be exhibiting through the end of November. This group meets on Friday mornings for coffee, conversation — and inspiration.

Veterans Day lunch
Friday, Nov. 11
In honor of Veterans Day, volunteer cooks will prepare a hearty lunch of shepherd’s pie, salad and dessert. There will be the opportunity after lunch to connect with other veterans. Feel free to bring memorabilia to show and memories to share.
The meal will be served 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or when the food runs out. No reservation required. Open to all with a suggested donation of $5. Veterans eat for free. Thank you for your service.

Presentations
Discussion with Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
Thursday, Nov. 10, 1 p.m.
Please join advanced emergency medical technician and firefighter Ginger Parent for an open discussion. Topics include the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service’s role in the community, home safety, winter driving, using 911 and possible future community classes. Register by Tuesday, Nov. 8, by calling 802-425-6345.

Charlotte Grange
Thursday, Nov. 17, 1 p.m.
Join Charlotte Grange members as they share the importance of having a vibrant Grange in the community and what the Charlotte Grange’s vision is moving forward.

Programs
Coffee & Canvas
Friday, Nov. 18, 10:30 a.m.-noon.
Like traditional Paint & Sip classes, this Coffee & Canvas will allow for exploring your own vision and creating a unique painting. Do you have a painting that you would like to create for a gift? Or have you always wanted to paint a specific subject? There will be a book filled with inspirational pictures, but feel free to bring photos from home. No prior painting experience needed. All materials included. The cost is $25. Registration and payment required to hold your space by Wednesday, Nov. 16.

Shape-note singing
Sunday, Nov. 6, 1-3 p.m.
Traditional a capella, 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 with us. Introduction to shape notes and scales is recommended and offered 30 minutes before each first Sunday singing. Contact Kerry Cullinan at kclynxvt@gmail.com to schedule. There is no cost.

Tech help
Thursday, Nov. 10
Email enigma? Kindle conundrum? App apprehension? Computer questions? Or maybe you want to learn how to use your library card to read or listen to books on a device. Sign up for a 30-minute, one-on-one session at the senior center with the Charlotte Library’s technology librarian, for some tech support. She will troubleshoot with you and will provide suggestions for next steps. Registration required. There is no cost.

Watercolor for fall
Tuesday, Nov. 8 & 15, 9 a.m.-noon
In this two-weekend workshop Lynn Cummings will explore fall-themed subjects while trying out a new technique or two. Join this fun, supportive group and enjoy creating some paintings. All levels are welcome. The supply list will be emailed upon registration. Registration and payment is required by Nov. 1. The cost is $83.

Exercise classes
Meditation
Fridays, 8-9 a.m.
Meditation is an easy-to-learn practice that reduces anxiety, stress, pain and depression. Charlie Nardozzi will lead the class in techniques to quiet the body and mind by doing simple breathing exercises and a seated, eyes-closed guided meditation. All are welcome, no experience necessary. The cost is $10 a class. No registration required.

Bone Builders
Tuesdays & Fridays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
RSVP Bone Builders, a program of United Way of Northeast Vermont, is a no-cost, weight-training program designed to prevent and even reverse the negative effects of osteoporosis in older adults. Bone Builders consists of a warmup, balance exercises, arm and leg exercises, and a cool down with stretching. No cost or pre-registration required, but there will be paperwork to complete for the RSVP Bone Builders program.
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.

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

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. October 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. $5 suggested meal donation. *Please note, participants will need to complete an Age Well Congregate meal registration form for Age Well’s 2023 fiscal year. There will be copies available at the senior center and on the Age Well website at agewellvt.org.

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

802-425-6345
charlotteseniorcentervt.org
Follow the senior center on Facebook or Instagram at charlotteseniorcentervt.

Coffee & Canvas will allow for exploring your own vision and creating a unique painting. Do you have a painting that you would like to create for a gift? Or have you always wanted to paint a specific subject? There will be a book filled with inspirational pictures, but feel free to bring photos from home. No prior painting experience needed. All materials included. The cost is $25. Registration and payment required to hold your space by Wednesday, Nov. 16.

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Write Ingredients

Pumpkin suits the American palate

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

October is gone, but fear not: Pumpkin persists.
And the good news is that at the Charlotte Senior Center, it’s real pumpkin. No sprinkles of that bogus pumpkin spice running rampant this time of year. No jet-puffed pumpkin spice marshmallows or pumpkin spice Twinkies, tortilla chips, popcorn, Oreo cookies at our place. No pumpkin spice Cheerios, waffles, hummus, hot cocoa, cold brew with pumpkin spice creamer or harvest pumpkin pie cream liqueur. No pumpkin spice M&Ms, bologna, toilet paper or condoms.

You can see all the above items on the Internet in all their realistic packaging. Then you can go to Snopes.com to learn which three are fake. Only three fakes. The rest are real.

Although the Escoffier Cook Book contains 37 recipes for cooking quail as well as recipes for English, French, German and Scotch bread puddings, I was not surprised to discover that “pumpkin” does not exist in its 2,997-item index.

When studying at the Universite d’Aix-Marseille, I lived with a French family who were curious about Thanksgiving. My mother sent the ingredients for pumpkin pie, and I made two pies. There was only one son still living at home, but on the day I baked pies, five brothers dropped by. They all had the same response: “Interesting.”

I took some pie to the man whose wonderful avocation was to run Saturday classes for foreign students to learn about French cooking. When I confessed nobody liked the pie, he explained that the spices were just “too different,” not something familiar to the French tongue.

The results of a native dish produced by a student from Scotland living in our home weren’t any more successful: With great enthusiasm, she cooked oatmeal for everybody.

Monday Munch
Nov. 7 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.,
or until the food is gone
Butternut squash, cheese tortellini soup
(with or without sausage) and pumpkin roll.

Thursday, Nov. 10
Men’s Breakfast, 7-9:30 a.m.
Bill Fraser-Harris will offer a travelogue of his trip across the country with his wife and dogs.

Grab & Go Meal pickup:
10-11 a.m.
Roast pork with sauce, mashed red potatoes, butternut squash and apple crisp. Registration required by the prior Monday. 802-425-6345 or kpughe@charlotteseniorcentervt.org. Meals provided by Age Well.

Friday Nov. 11
Veterans Day Lunch:
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Shepherd’s pie, salad, and dessert.
Suggested donation: $5. We thank veterans for their service, and they eat for free. We invite them to bring memorabilia and anecdotes to share.

Monday Munch
Nov. 14, 11:30 a.m.-
12:30 p.m.
Sausage with tortellini soup, salad, homemade dessert.

Grant & Go Meal
Thursday Nov. 17, pick up:
10-11 a.m.
Roast turkey and gravy, mashed potatoes, stuffing, sliced carrots, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie with cream. Registration required by the prior Monday.

Here’s Peggy Lee with the Benny Goodman orchestra to remind us of the fact that even when it’s raining or pouring, the Charlotte Senior Center is always on the sunny side of the street: tinyurl.com/4fpzlx6y.