A sheath of ice gives the Little Free Library at Ten Stones Community an impressionistic look.
Goat situation reveals cracks in animal welfare system

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

During the summer lots of goats died at a farm in Charlotte’s West Village. After residents intervened, the situation appeared to have been fixed about six months ago. But those involved with helping to save the remaining goats are not satisfied.

They say their efforts to get someone from the town or the state to intervene resulted in a runaround, and it took too much time to stop the baby goat deaths at the farm on Ferry Road.

The terrible situation was reported in VTDigger earlier this month, and Larry Thompson, who was instrumental in turning the situation around, appeared before the selectboard on Feb. 13 to call for the town to do what it can to expedite the process for getting neglected or mistreated animals.

She described all the phone calls and agencies she reached out to in the summer, and how after she found someone to investigate, it took over four days before they came.

“I sent videos. I sent pictures. And it was still four days later,” Thompson said. “I said, ‘How many animals are going to die in that process in those four days?’”

She asked the selectboard to help create something that has the authority to do this type of investigation and “not different agencies.”

Known as Village Farm, the property is at least 55 acres that Robert Mack and Ko Gyi leased from Mike Dunbar. Dunbar developed Charlotte Crossings north of town on Route 7.

The property he owns for the farm stretches from the back of Charlotte Crossings north to Ferry Road. The entrance to the farm is from Ferry Road and includes the acre of land where the Charlotte Health Center proposed to build a new facility before abandoning that plan.

According to Mack and Ko Gyi, they leased the land for the farm from Dunbar. Mack said in a text that he hasn’t been involved with the farm since last June.

Ko Gyi said he has about 44 goats remaining and that he is now partners with Dunbar. He thinks they lost almost 65 goats. He estimates that about 15 were killed by predators. The rest starved or were killed by disease.

In June, The Charlotte News reported on the new farm. At that time, in addition to the goats, there were ducks, turkeys and sheep. All of those other animals have been removed.

One of the first people to realize something was wrong at the farm was Katherine Knox, Larry Thompson’s mother. Knox owns Hands and Heart Farm in east Charlotte where she raises sheep.

Knox called the town and a bunch of state agencies and never found a person to look into the situation. About a week later, Thompson went through the same process, but she continued to push and eventually got someone from the state Agency of Agriculture to visit the farm. When the state visited, Thompson met Dunbar for the first time.

“He took the state’s coming very seriously and hired Lark to help him figure out what the goats needed,” Knox said.

Dunbar did not respond to multiple

Machavern, Devine vie for 2-year seat on selectboard

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

(This story has been corrected. An earlier version misstated Patrice Machavern’s position on the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service. She is the business operations manager.)

With Town Meeting Day fast approaching, the races for town offices are heating up — or maybe just warming up.

It’s unlikely that races for volunteer positions, that require a lot of dedication, extracurricular study and attendance at often long, drawn-out board meetings, will get much hotter than the weather is this week. But those involved with only one position contested.

There are two open seats on the Charlotte Selectboard, and one of Charlotte’s two seats on the Champlain Valley School District board is open.

Incumbent selectboard member Lewis Mudge is running uncontested for a three-year term on the board. An open two-year term on the selectboard does provide some lukewarmth to the voting with two candidates vying for that position — Kelly Devine and Patrice Machavern.

Lyne Jaunich’s school board term will end after the Australian ballot voting? 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 7, because she is not running for reelection. Meghan Metzler is Charlotte’s other representative to the school board, but her term doesn’t end until next year.

The lone bit of excitement in the school board contest is that, after the deadline for submitting a petition to be included on the ballot, no one had thrown their hat in the ring to run to replace Jaunich. But Mike Abbott has announced he is running. People will need to pencil in his name, and he will have to get the minimum 30 write-in votes, required of all such candidates.

The Charlotte Grange and the Charlotte Little League announced their candidates via Zoom on Thursday, Feb. 23, at 6:30 p.m. This is an opportunity for people to find out about the candidates and their points of view.

To submit questions prior to the event please email them to charlottegrange@gmail.com. Questions can also be posed during the event. The Zoom link is http://bit.ly/3R1lZrp.

Selectboard

Kelly Devine

As executive director of the Burlington Business Association which, as its name suggests, is a business advocacy organization in Burlington, in Charlotte, Devine is the vice chair of the planning commission, a position she will resign from if she is elected to the selectboard.

Devine believes her 15 years of experience working on some major projects in Burlington will serve her in good stead in helping with a lot of transitions coming to Charlotte.

Among those transitions are the fire and rescue service moving from a separate

THE CRAFT OF CUTTING MEAT

Philo Ridge Farm offers butchering workshops

Mike Kirk gives a hog butchering demonstration at Philo Ridge Farm.
One of the commonly known ways of determining if beef or pork is fit to be eaten is marbling. Marbling is a characteristic of the fat that appears within the muscles of red meat. Part of the flavor of fat that appears within the muscles of red meat is because they tend to have a better flavor. It is because they tend to have a better flavor.

One of the commonly known ways of determining if beef or pork is fit to be eaten is marbling. Marbling is a characteristic of the fat that appears within the muscles of red meat. Part of the flavor of fat that appears within the muscles of red meat is because they tend to have a better flavor. It is because they tend to have a better flavor.

Selectboard
continued from page 1

nonprofit organization to a town-managed department, adapting to town administrator Dean Bloch’s retirement at the end of October, a town plan being updated and land-use regulation changes.

It seemed to be a time to try to bring some of those skills to the table, listen to the voters and try to represent what Charlotte wants,” said Peter Swift, co-owner of Philo Ridge with his wife Diana McCargo. “The commercial pigs are much longer.”

One of the commonly known ways of determining if beef or pork is fit to be eaten is marbling. Marbling is a characteristic of the fat that appears within the muscles of red meat. Part of the flavor of fat that appears within the muscles of red meat is because they tend to have a better flavor. It is because they tend to have a better flavor.

Our forefathers raised them. They haven’t been repeatedly bred to emphasize parts of the hog that are popular or commercially successful. “They haven’t been modified for the commercial market,” said Peter Swift, co-owner of Philo Ridge with his wife Diana McCargo. “The commercial pigs are much longer.”

One of the commonly known ways of determining if beef or pork is fit to be eaten is marbling. Marbling is a characteristic of the fat that appears within the muscles of red meat. Part of the flavor of fat that appears within the muscles of red meat is because they tend to have a better flavor. It is because they tend to have a better flavor.

Although she no longer lives there, she would be a good fit for the Charlotte Little League board. During the two years as town auditor, 10 years on the finance committee, served on the board of the Charlotte Children’s Center, on the finance committee of Vermont’s Children’s Miracle Network, and considered increasing the building density that needed to be accomplished, tasks that need to be handled, research that needs to be done, manufacture time to make sure it happens.

In addition to all of this, for several years, Machavern managed a race team. Her youngest son races sportscars and she handled the finances, the logistics of travel and making sure the crew and drivers made it to the tracks and got fed.

Running for selectboard is something that she has contemplated for a few years. With Mat Krasnow not running for reelection, both of her sons grown and with a plate full of one of the farm’s newest products smoked and cured in-house maple bacon.

The evening ended with a meal from the farm’s kitchen, featuring Philo Ridge Farm products. Although this reporter hasn’t eaten pork in at least 20 years, I did fall off the wagon. As a friend is fond of saying, “Bacon has been the downfall of many a vegetarian.”

Hannah Clark and Mike Kirk work through the process of cutting a hog down into its primal parts.

express themselves as pigs,” he said. "We're interested in understanding and demonstrating their butchering craft," George Stinson, director of hospitality, demonstrated his butchering craft, predominantly moving among the participants with delectable samples from the kitchen of whatever cut was being harvested. Please don’t tell my grandson, but as the workshop neared its close, Stinson showed up with a plate full of one of the farm’s newest products smoked and cured in-house maple bacon.

One reason the farm likes heritage breeds is because they tend to have a better flavor. It is because they tend to have a better flavor.

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Charlotte Energy Committee launches Solarize Charlotte

Rebecca Foster and Mike Yantachka
Contributors

The Charlotte Energy Committee is excited to announce a plan to directly help folks take advantage of opportunities to go solar, join the clean energy revolution and lower their utility bills.

Long before financial opportunities were expanded by passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act in late 2022, the Charlotte Energy Committee was busy laying plans for a Solarize Charlotte program. Last February, chair Rebecca Foster reached out to her alma mater, Williams College, to find a summer intern who could work with her to develop the idea. Kit Ulland and part-time intern Maara Ensmann from Oberlin College, the alma mater of Charlotte Energy Committee member Deirdre Holmes, did background research and created a roadmap for the program.

The purpose of solarize campaigns is to reduce the cost of installing solar panels by partnering with local solar installers who offer discounts. Solarize initiatives build momentum through public outreach and education and help reduce the cost of installing solar by vetting companies. The solarize approach has been successfully undertaken in many Vermont towns and cities including Norwich, Windsor and Hartland.

The Charlotte Energy Committee takes its role in helping our community respond to the climate change crisis seriously. Reaching the renewable energy production goals as set in the Town Plan is essential. Charlotte needs to transition to 90 percent renewable energy by 2050, as referenced by Vermont’s statewide goals and our town plan. The town has already made great progress in this area, with 11 solar projects producing 5,758 MWh of energy. In order for Charlotte to reach the 90 percent renewable goal by 2050, around 30 homes per year must go solar.

A megawatt hour (MWh) equals 1,000 kilowatts of electricity generated per hour of sunshine and is used to measure electric output. A typical Charlotte household might use between 800 and 1200 kilowatt-hours per month.

Solarize Charlotte also helps provide savings for homeowners. Thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act, the federal tax credit was raised this year from 25 percent to 30 percent on installed solar arrays, and further incentives are offered by Green Mountain Power and Efficiency Vermont. Through Vermont’s net metering law, solar significantly lowers electricity bills for utility customers and improves grid reliability through distributed electric generation. As the Vermont economy moves away from increasingly expensive fossil fuels and toward electricity-based power, we don’t want Charlotters to be left behind.

The two solar providers that the Charlotte Energy Committee chose for Solarize Charlotte — DC Energy Innovations and Green Mountain Solar — are both professional, responsive, friendly, and agreed to a 2 percent discount for 10 homes, 4 percent for 20 homes, and 6 percent for 30 homes. Having two providers allows residents to “shop” for the best fit for their situation, doesn’t place a massive burden on a single provider and avoids the town picking a favorite. The Charlotte Energy Committee also communicated with local banks and the Vermont State Employees Credit Union about financing options.

Solarize campaigns require on-the-ground outreach and education, hosting an informational kickoff meeting and providing consistent support to residents throughout the process, all of which involve time beyond what Charlotte Energy Committee volunteers can provide. After the selectboard’s approval on Feb. 13, the Charlotte Energy Committee is now seeking to hire a short-term, part-time consultant within its own budget.

The community consultant will:

- Help advance the project.
- Tweak, produce and distribute campaign outreach materials throughout the community online, in print and in person.
- Organize and host a campaign kickoff event on Earth Day (April 22) with Charlotte Energy Committee members, solar providers and the Vermont State Employees Credit Union.
- Follow up with interested households and facilitate communication between Charlotters, the solar providers and the Vermont State Employees Credit Union.
- Make sure that projects move along expeditiously.
- Write a final report assessing strengths and weaknesses of the program and making suggestions for subsequent years.

The project is expected to last for six to eight months. The successful candidate for the position will work with and under the direction of energy committee members for a total of 80 hours at a rate of $22 an hour.

GOATS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

attempts to contact him, but in a post on social media he said he was disappointed to see a flurry of activity that disappeared after so much time has passed.

However, he wrote, “I understand why people are upset. I was distrutted, too.”

The system for feeding the goats had broken down. Thompson said there was confusion about who was going to feed when, and sometimes the goats went unfed.

The state police investigated the case but decided not to file charges. Instead, they set up a feeding schedule and recruited people to help in making sure the goats got fed and watered regularly.

Knox said the baby goats are fed milk replacer that is mixed with water, and before they got involved, the replacer was being mixed with an eighth of the recommended amount, so even if the goats had been fed consistently, they still could have starved.

Ko Gyi confirmed this, saying the baby goats were not getting enough protein to survive. Although he had tended goats in Myanmar before he immigrated to the United States, he said this was his first experience as a farmer.

According to VTDigger, although the Agency of Agriculture’s report found some of the goats may have had diarrhea and an intestinal tract infection, they found no dead goats. But according to Thompson, the farm’s “practices were acceptable.”

Thompson said the state didn’t find any dead goats because they notified the partners about their impending visit, so any dead goats were removed.

When town officials were contacted about the situation they referred them to the town’s animal control officer, but Charlotte does not have an animal control officer. It just has a canine control officer.

When people called Isaiah Moore, the current canine control officer, he referred them to the state. Moore said, when he took over the position in the fall of 2021, he was told that, just like the title of the position indicates, his authority only extends to dogs.

Town administrator Dean Block said, in 2017, at the request of the animal control officer then, the title was changed to change control officer to reflect the reality of the town’s ordinance and the local situation.

That ordinance only refers to dealing with nuisance dogs.

So, the state police are supposed to handle allegations about livestock in Charlotte.

People were also referred to the Human Society of Chittenden County whose CEO Joyce Cameron said her organization does not have the authority to do huge investigations about livestock or pets being mistreated.

Thompson said the state’s lack of interest in the situation, doesn’t place a massive burden on the state police in the system the problems at Village Farms expose.

The problems at the farm are a perfect example of the things the group wants the state to do. Even though the number of them grew, the state has not stopped the thing from going on. The full truth will come out sometime. People have already taken notice.

On Feb. 13, the goats at Village Farm in Charlotte looked healthy and playful.

Cameron said she has been working with a group that includes the heads of human societies and animal welfare agencies in Vermont for a year and half on Act 147 that they hope will deal with the cracks in the system the problems at Village Farms expose.

The problems at the farm are a perfect example of the things the group wants legislation to be passed to solve: “Who is in charge? What is the oversight? Are there any regulations?” she said. The situation exposes “the absolute, abject failure of a system around animal welfare.”

Legislation is needed because animal welfare statutes are a “patchwork” in Vermont.

There are hundreds of statutes that deal with animal welfare laws, and they are all over the place, Cameron said. Most of those statutes are in the Agency of Agriculture, but some are in the Department of Public Safety, some are even in the Department for Children and Families.

“It only makes sense to unify those,” she said.

Even though it will cost Vermont some money, the group’s work is helping the state create one agency, a new division of animal welfare.

Photo by Scooter MacMillan

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Please contact the energy committee with questions and interest through the “contact us” tab on the website, charlotteenergy.org. (Rebecca Foster is chair of the Charlotte Energy Committee and Mike Yantachka is a member.)
Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

I am excited to run for the two-year term on the Charlotte Selectboard. My husband and I have been residents of Charlotte for over 36 years. This is where we chose to start our family and raise our children. I believe in helping make Charlotte a better place, where the voices of our residents are represented in local government.

I am currently in my 10th year at Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services, Inc. My role as business operations manager requires me to work on many areas, including budgeting, development of partnerships and control over processes including financial operations, human resources, developing corporate policies and procedures, and compliance oversight. I also serve in an officer capacity on the board of directors as corporate secretary.

I have served in a variety of volunteer roles but most notably on the Charlotte Central School Board for 10 years. During my tenure on the school board, I represented Charlotte on the state arbitrator, superintendent and principal leadership search committees, and contract negotiations.

Prior to relocating to Vermont, I was a financial analyst for a multinational company during a time when reforecasting and downzonning were commonplace in the tech industry.

My commitment to our community and my history of teamwork makes me the strongest candidate to represent you on the Charlotte Selectboard. I am disciplined and believe in data-driven decision making. I would be grateful for the opportunity to give back to our community and apply my skill set to serve on the selectboard, where I will work tirelessly on your behalf to make Charlotte the best town in Vermont for all of us to live.

Patrice Machavern
Charlotte

Machavern has history of decisions based on facts

To the Editor:

I recommend strongly that Patrice Machavern be elected to the selectboard. During our several terms together on the Charlotte Central School board, it became apparent to me that, to that point in my life, I had rarely worked with a person (in any capacity) who combined Machavern’s meticulous attention to detail, proficiency with whom I believe will enable her to clearly articulate how she arrived at a decision based upon all of the information at hand. We were a long ways from all votes (well — no one’s perfect) but there could never be any doubt about a) what information she based her decisions on, and b) her ability to defend them. At times, actually, it was a little intimidating.

People seem to have one of two approaches to selecting a candidate to vote for: to find one who they think will agree with most of the time or find one who will thoroughly examine all of the facts, public opinion, history and ramifications — implicit and implied, presently and for the future — of a decision and then articulate their thoughts most clearly and vote according to conscience — sometimes resulting in disagreement and sometimes resulting in disagreement but always, in process, transparent and understandable.

Letters of recommendation tend to ramble on with esoteric insights and various personal anecdotes. This one will not. I cannot tell you how Machavern will vote on a subject — and neither can anyone else — until she evaluates all of the information at hand. In a more political sense, after reflection, I couldn’t tell you whether Patrice Machavern is a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent or a Moonie. All that I can tell you is that all of her decisions are very transparent and her decisions based upon the process and characteristics described above.

Clyde E. Baldwin
Charlotte

Support for Machavern for Charlotte Selectboard

To the Editor:

I am writing in support of Patrice Machavern’s candidacy for selectboard for the two-year term. I’ve known Machavern for 30+ years, having worked with her in a variety of activities including community events and school committees, etc. I’m grateful for her extensive community service efforts for so many years. Machavern’s contributions have touched almost all key town organizations, both public and private.

While attending many school board meetings during the years Machavern served as a member and later chair, I observed her effectively navigate many complicated issues and interactions.

Machavern brings compassion and commitment to every task she takes on. She can distill complex information into understandable, relevant observations, making her an excellent and effective communicator. Machavern’s background in accounting and town financing makes her familiar with current town financial and budget issues, will make her an important asset to the selectboard’s work. Her talents and insights will support both her colleagues on the selectboard as well as all Charlotte residents. I hope you’ll join me in voting for Patrice Machavern.

Denise Fitzgerald Danyow
Charlotte

Why Charlotte Selectboard Supports Patrice Machavern

I served on the Charlotte Selectboard from 2014 to 2020 and can say without a doubt Patrice Machavern has skills needed by the town. Charlotte unlike many other towns, neighbors, chooses not to have a town manager and to leave the management to the selectboard. Whether this is a good idea or not is a discussion for another time.

I worked with Machavern first as the selectboard liaison to the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service and then as president of that organization after leaving the selectboard. Machavern is always prepared for meetings, has significant human resources training (something the town lacks), outstanding organizational skills, a thorough understanding of tax and financial topics, and the most important quality, integrity.

She is a long-standing town resident with invaluable historical knowledge. When one considers the management responsibilities of the selectboard, Patrice Machavern is the obvious choice.

Tritz Tegatz
Brighton, Utah

Publicly funded health care is a good idea for all Vermonters

To the Editor:

The Vermont Senate is discussing a bill S.39 — that would make state legislators eligible for the state employees benefit plan. I would also provide legislators with childcare reimbursement and pay for out-of-pocket expenses that is not currently compensated.

The bill’s goal is to make serving in the legislature more attractive to Vermonters with young children, those with low incomes, and/or those without a source of health coverage. That makes sense. We would all benefit from having the most diverse legislative possible. And it’s true that legislators work hard and put in long hours during the four months they serve in the legislature and that they work in an unapacified capacity for the rest of the year. Their salaries are relatively low. We expect them to help with childcare, and they must count on getting health coverage through other sources that is not available to them.

So, I have no objection to providing legislators with publicly funded comprehensive health insurance coverage for themselves and their families. But I can’t for the life of me understand why those benefits wouldn’t extend to all Vermonters. I say so having watched the Senate Government Operations Committee hearing this week in which several legislators testified as to why health coverage should be offered to them, free of charge, and why this bill should move forward, including Vermonters offered apply to most Vermonters, not just legislators. People having to stay in jobs they don’t like or decline jobs they don’t want based on whether the jobs did or did not offer health care coverage.

They outlined many of the reasons why legislators decided to serve only because they were able to secure health care in some other way, like a spouse who has good health insurance through their job, or from the employer for whom they worked when the legislature was not in session. In these cases, there are many Vermonters deal with on a continuing basis. In fact, 44 percent of all Vermonters with private insurance under the age of 65 are under-insured — a major illness would lead to financial bankruptcy. Many people in this position avoid care, leading to worsening health and even premature death.

The final irony of S.39 is that it is being swiftly moved along in the legislative process, unlike legislation that would apply to all Vermonters. Are legislators — 11, 156 — that would implement publicly funded health care for all Vermonters starting with primary care, is being completely ignored by health care leadership.

And this bill has 59 legislative sponsors. Backers of this bill were told “we don’t have time to take it up,” among a whole host of other excuses.

Yet it appears they have time to work on legislation to extend publicly funded health care to themselves. And of S.39, passes, the legislation would all be eligible for cost-free health care by January 2024.

Too bad the same cannot be said for the rest of Vermont.

Deb Richter
Montpelier

(Deb Richter is a practicing family physician and addiction medicine specialist.)

Machavern a diligent worker in variety of roles for 30 years

To the Editor:

I am writing this letter to express my strong support for Patrice Machavern for the two-year term on our Charlotte Selectboard. I have known and worked with Machavern for 30 years in a variety of capacities. She has always been ready and willing to assist whatever things our town. She worked diligently on the Charlotte Children’s Center board with me as the board strove to improve the program and complete the expansion project.

As a member of the PTO board she served for years, volunteering for countless fundraisers, book fairs and annual school bake sales, always ready to step up for anything. Always finding the time to go the extra mile to get things done.

She also served on the Charlotte Central School board when I chaired the PTO, and she was always willing to support the PTO efforts to confront tough issues, not just the budget, but also bullying and a healthcare model at Charlotte Central School that needed to be brought into compliance with state standards.

Her tenure on the school board was 10 years. In all the school board meetings I attended, never once was she not totally prepared and completely engaged in generating productive organizational skills and will follow up on any question in a timely manner, ready to put on her best effort to do the necessary research it may require.

Most recently, I had the opportunity to see her first-hand during her term on the Board of Civil Authority. In addition, she has volunteered at the polls and helped with the tedious job of counting ballots for years. She has been the treasurer of a variety of organizations and for the last 10 years has served as the business operations manager for the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service. This knowledge base and experience is a strong asset for the selectboard as this organization transitions to a town entity.

She has acute analytical skills, excellent tech skills and her attention to detail is impeccable, however, she always has a clear view of the big picture. All of these things would be extremely helpful in the budget process.

Her expertise, dedication and willingness to take on the little things and the big thing and her ability to always find the time it takes to get the work done makes her the right choice to be voted on to our selectboard.

Peggy Sharp
Charlotte

Machavern will bring fresh perspective to selectboard

To the Editor:

I am writing in support of Patrice Machavern as a candidate for a two-year term on the Charlotte Selectboard.

Machavern is devoted to Charlotte and for years has served the town in multiple ways including the Charlotte Central School board and as business manager and board member with Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service where I worked with her.

My observations of Machavern are the following:

She is an independent thinker and at the same time works constructively in a group.

She has a strong practical business and working background.

She was always well prepared by researching the best options at decision making.

She is an articulate plain speaker.

She has depth of experience and is certified in human resources training.

Machavern is goal oriented and will approach governance with what is best for Charlotte at heart.

She will challenge conventional thinking and will help guide our town very capably. She will bring a fresh perspective.

For the benefit of our town please vote for Patrice Machavern!}

Tom Cosinuke
Charlotte

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Building project on your mind? Planning and zoning can help!

Larry Lewack
Contributor

Are you thinking about building an addition, toolshed or adding an accessory apartment to your Charlotte home this year? This relatively quiet mid-winter is a great time to plan your project, as it takes time to line up contractors and get permits and financing in place. Perhaps you are dreaming of adding to your living space, building a new house, adding acreage or subdividing your land for sale.

But which of these projects need a permit? Many do, some don’t and some projects may not even be allowed. How to know the difference? And, where do you start?

Charlotte’s professional planning and zoning staff (aka “the permit whisperers”) stand ready to help. We can answer your questions about what projects need permits, how Charlotte’s Land Use Regulations affect what you can build and where, and assist in the process of getting the permit(s) you may need.

First up, an introduction to the players:

• Keith Oborne is the zoning administrator. Oborne’s roles include administering and interpreting the town’s land-use regulations, reviewing and issuing zoning permits, zoning enforcement and compliance. Oborne is the first point of contact for all development in Charlotte.

• Larry Lewack is the town planner. He assists applicants who are proposing subdivisions, site plans and boundary adjustments, for non-residential projects for consideration by the town’s development review board and staffs the development review board meetings. He also assists the planning commission in preparing updates to the land-use regulations and the town plan.

• Rebecca Kaplan is the planning and zoning assistant. She also works with applicants for projects requiring review by the development review board and staffs development review board meetings. A licensed architect, Kaplan has a background in project development.

• Development review board. Members of Charlotte’s recently developed development review board review all projects requiring subdivision, site plan or conditional use approval, boundary adjustments, variances and appeals of the zoning administrator’s decisions. Development review board members include: chair Charles Russell, vice-chair JD Herlihy, Gerald Bouchard, Alexa Lew and Christina Asquith. The board meets twice per month on the second and fourth Wednesdays, at town hall.

If you’re new in town or new to the process, here’s a coming attractions list: 90 percent of projects that need a permit can be approved within two weeks of submitting a complete application. But, please don’t make assumptions and start building without first securing the permits you may need. Projects built without needed permits are subject to enforcement action, including potential fines of up to $200 per day. Here is a link to a document that provides a good introduction: tinyurl.com/3jijayyk.

In 2006, Charlotte received delegation authority from the state of Vermont to approve potable water and wastewater permits. Thus, all applications are processed in-house, not at the state level. The permits are received and managed by zoning administrator Oborne, with consultation support from Landscape Engineering and Design. We are the only town in the state that has this authority.

Please note: If your project involves one (or more) of the following elements, it will need development review board approval, with additional fees and an extended timeframe (which can take up to two-six months from the original application):

• Subdivision of land for new building lots(s), or to modify a previously approved subdivision and/or building lot
• Site plan review, for commercial building projects and shoreline modifications
• All building projects (including demolitions) on Thompson’s Point
• Adjusting lot lines between parcels, for land swaps and sales (boundary adjustment)
• A change in use (e.g., from a single family home to a bed & breakfast inn, or to another commercial use)
• Variances from dimensional standards (for setbacks, height limits, etc.)
• Appeals of zoning permits or permit denials
• Application forms and fees for these projects vary, depending on the specifics of your project. A link to all permit application forms and permit fees is in the FAQs document linked above.

We realize it can be challenging to understand and navigate Charlotte’s complex land-use regulations. That’s why your planning and zoning staff provides free upfront assistance in the form of a preliminary consultation. We encourage you to call or email us with your questions and to schedule an appointment if you have project ideas, but don’t know where to start. Contact Oborne for a meeting to discuss your plans and review what permits are needed. He can be reached at 802-425-3533 ext. 207, or via email: zoningadmin@townofcharlotte.com.

If you’re not building anything this year, but want to know more about a land-use project that’s been proposed in town, information on all projects pending development review board review is posted on the town website. Project materials can be found at: http://bit.ly/DBR_applications_pages. All projects listed there have had, or will have, public hearings published in advance. Adjoining property owners receive written notification before the hearing and have the right to speak and be heard. All recent development review board permit decisions are at: http://bit.ly/DBR_decisions.

We encourage you to line up contractors and get permits and financing in place. Perhaps you are dreaming of adding to your living space, building a new house, adding acreage or subdividing your land for sale. We did whatever was needed — stuffing envelopes, editing copy, planning and hosting parties, making food, meeting with donors and prospects, and so on.

And for the last 18 months, in addition to the above, Susanne picked up our mail, made bank deposits, updated donor records and mailed thank-you letters, essential tasks that she carried out with good cheer and careful attention.

Earlier in her life, Susanne worked on the board of the Charlotte Festival, worked with Shelburne Museum and the Stern Center and as a mentor at Charlotte Central School. Susanne lives in the West Village with her husband, Chris. From everyone at the paper, Susanne, thank you for your many contributions to The Charlotte News.

Larry Lewack is Charlotte’s town planner.
Helping his community in two very different ways

Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

In the late 1990s, René Kaczka-Vallière applied for a job at Boston Common Frog Pond ice rink where he used to skate. Initially, he worked as a skate guard, but his duties expanded to include handing out rental skates and sharpening them. Soon, he was asked to add one more job to his portfolio and after studying the rink’s other Zamboni driver, Kaczka-Vallière took the whole himself.

A native Vermonter, Kaczka-Vallière’s family moved to Massachusetts when he was 13 but he returned to Vermont when he was 25. He thought his Zamboni-driving days were over, but in 2019 when his daughter played for the Champlain Valley Union High ice hockey team, he asked if they needed any help.

It had been almost two decades since he last cleaned an ice surface and the rink was significantly larger than his previous place of employment, but Kaczka-Vallière happily jumped back on the Zamboni. He noted that work at Cairns Arena, where the Redawks play, is more complicated than the Boston Common rink, but he enjoys figuring out how far he should lower the blade and how much water to put down.

Cairns is currently short-staffed, so in addition to his day job, Kaczka-Vallière is spending six hours a day, three days a week at the rink. His daughter only played for one season. Due to a shoulder injury, Kaczka-Vallière hasn’t played hockey since 2007, but he enjoys the work. “I haven’t felt the need to get back to

hockey,” he said. “Driving the Zamboni

gives me that hockey energy.”

In addition to his Zamboni chores, Kaczka-Vallière has a full-time job as a social worker. His interest in the field was initially piqued by the social justice community work he did while the Episcopal Church he attended during high school.

He got his bachelor’s degree in social work from Wheelock College, but after the attacks of September 11, he went to Coventry College in England and obtained a Masters in Peace and Reconciliation.

Kaczka-Vallière started his professional career as a case manager for the Agency on Aging, helping seniors access services and live independently.

“Freedom and independence are important in Vermont,” he said. “We made it possible for people to stay in their homes as long as possible.”

Next, Kaczka-Vallière moved to the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living where he worked on a grant which helped get people out of nursing homes and back into their communities.

From there he moved to Adult Protective Services, which is also under the auspices of Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. His job involved investigating allegations of abuse of vulnerable Vermonters — older people or those with disabilities. The job dealt mostly with perpetrators, putting them on a registry if they were found to have committed offenses.

Hoping to delve deeper into the issues, Kaczka-Vallière began to work with a grant which allows victims of abuse to be involved in a restorative process with the person who did the harm. “It allows the person who was hurt to be heard and maybe have the harm repaired,” he said.

Kaczka-Vallière said that people can be abused by their own family members, with financial abuse particularly prevalent.

The grant helps facilitate the payment of restitution. He noted that these situations are not always clear cut but that perpetrators have also been hurt at some point in their lives.

“You want the needs of the person who did the harm to also be met,” he said, “but you want the behavior to stop.”

If the perpetrator is a professional caregiver, the restitution process allows them to clear their name, so the offense doesn’t show up on their background check. “It’s a much water to put down.

path forward to alternative accountability,” Kaczka-Vallière said, noting that each situation is different.

The gratification Kaczka-Vallière gets from his two jobs is very different. “As a social worker, you don’t often see the rewards of the work because it’s a very long-term process,” he said, “but Zamboni driving, you see the new ice right away. There is a transformation that you see right in front of you.”

Kaczka-Vallière noted that people often don’t like change, but it’s a part of life. He sees ice resurfacing as a comforting change, somewhat akin to cleaning one’s house.

“It’s a huge sheet of shiny ice,” he said. “You almost don’t want to touch it.”

Stronger Together

Lots of options for food donations to Little Free Pantry

Linda Hamilton
Contributor

In two recent issues of The Charlotte News, May Esinger and I wrote articles about the problem of food insecurity on behalf of Charlotte Food Shelf and Charlotte Grange respectively, because we believe that addressing this problem in our community which goes mostly unnoticed.

Why is that? It is hard to imagine that here in Charlotte, where so many live so comfortably, there also live people who don’t? It is too easy to assume that the churches and the food shelf take care of those who need food, and without regular care, it does not function.

Without a steady flow of food donations, there is not enough for those who come looking for help. The Congregational Church does accept checks marked in support of the Little Free Pantry, but its success is absolutely dependent on community members adding to the pantry on a regular basis, whether that is every week, every month, every other month, or whenever fits your schedule. Many people contributing regularly is what makes the system work.

“Not sure what to put in the Little Free Pantry? Any non-perishable food, especially things high in protein like tuna, meat sticks and peanut butter, nuts (any type) by the date, and securely sealed. (In winter, no cans or bottles since they might freeze and break.) Toilets paper and common toilet tissue, including feminine hygiene products, are also appreciated. Think about what kids might like to eat, what stressed adults might like to eat, how simple or complicated the preparation is, including for someone who might be living temporarily without a full kitchen or any kitchen at all. Avoid obviously unhealthy junk food but don’t forget that everybody likes a sweet treat once in a while. Vary what you bring or specialize in one thing you bring each time, like hot or cold cereal, protein bars, nuts, nut butters, dried fruit, fruit leathers, coffee, tea, boxed soups, broths, soy milk, rice, quinoa, lentils, split peas, beans, dehydrated fixings for a hearty soup or main dish, croutons, crackers, popcorn, boxed pudding mixes, maybe cookies or chocolate.

Eventually, if a cooler can be added, more possibilities will open up. For now be thoughtful and creative, perhaps involve the whole family and become a regular provider of food to the Little Free Pantry for neighbors in need.

(Photograph for this article provided by Linda Hamilton)

NIGHT EAGLE WILDERNESS ADVENTURES

A unique summer camp for boys, ages 10-14, located in Vermont’s Green Mountains

tipi living • nature crafts • canoeing • hiking • wilderness skills • swimming • atlats & hawks • cooperative work & play • backpacking • & lots more!

1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 week sessions
802-855-8661 | NightEagleWilderness.com

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courtesy photo
**Tuesdays & Thursdays**
3:30-4:30 p.m.  
4:30-5:30 p.m. (Wed.)
(Mon.)
Grades 3-5:
3:30-4:30 p.m. (Wed.)
12 (no lessons May 29)
Session 2: May 22-June
Session 1: May 1-17
Grades 1-2:

**Martial arts**

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

Wednesdays  
Session 6: March 22-April 19
Session 7: May 5-May 31
Time: 1:40-2:50 p.m.
Cost: $85

**Youth lacrosse**

Players in third through eighth grades will participate in the US Lacrosse league and will need to register online. Please visit our website for more information.

The registration form must be completed and submitted with payment to the town hall by March 6.

**Champlain Valley Little League baseball/softball**

Registration is open for the 2023 spring Little League baseball/softball season. The famed Shelburne Little League has officially changed the organization’s name to the Champlain Valley Little League to better reflect the more than 400 children registered from Charlotte, Hinesburg and Shelburne The camp staff is selected and trained from Charlotte Central School. All levels and ages are welcome to join, register online.

**Golf camp**

Cedar Knoll golf course pro Mike Slayton has a non-technical teaching philosophy but stresses the fundamentals of grip, stance, posture, balance and tempo. Although understanding that variations in swing techniques can all work, golf ball flight comes down to five basic laws. These laws include club head path, angle of attack, centeredness of contact, face angle and speed. The golf swing is a series of movements that must be executed in the proper sequence for optimal results.

Camp dates: Tuesday-Friday  
Week 1: June 20-23  
Week 2: July 18-21  
Time: 9 a.m.-noon  
Ages: 6-13  
Cost: $20

**International Soccer Camp**

The international soccer camp will be held the week of July 17 at Charlotte Central School. The camp staff is selected and trained in the United Kingdom exclusively to work in these camps. They have a genuine interest in helping each player’s development and providing memorable positive experiences.

**Adult programs**

Pick-up basketball
Join the basketball fanatics on Monday and Wednesday nights at Charlotte Central School.

**Charlotte Recreation**

Nicole Conley  
Recreation Director

Safe Sitter babysitters course
Safe Sitter prepares teens to be safe when they’re home alone, watching siblings or babysitting. The course offers four key content areas: safety skills, child care skills, and first aid and rescue skills, and life and business skills. Lessons are filled with fun activities and role-playing exercises. Teens will practice checking rescue and diapering. Register with the town office offering the program.

Time: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Williston-Saturday, March 11
Charlotte-Saturday, May 20
Cost: $60

After-school sprout soccer
It’s time to lace up those cleats and enjoy a fun afternoon of soccer. This program will take place after school at Charlotte Central School.

Please note: This program is based on volunteers and might be canceled due to lack of coaches. Start date: Week of May 1
Time: 3-4 p.m.
Cost: $40

Boater safety course
Boating safety education is required for any motor boat operator, 12 years of age or older, born after Jan. 1, 1974. The boat operator, eight hours nighttime or onshore boating, will enable you to get the certification that you need. Participants must be present at all classes to be eligible for certification.

Ages: 12+
Dates: May 2, 3; 9, 10
Time: 6-8:30 p.m.
Where: Re Store (Williston)
Fee: $30

After-school junior golf program
Cedar Knoll Golf Course pro Mike Slayton has a non-technical teaching philosophy but stresses the fundamentals of grip, stance, posture, balance and tempo. Although understanding that variations in swing techniques can all work, golf ball flight comes down to five basic laws. These laws include club head path, angle of attack, centeredness of contact, face angle and speed.

Wednesdays (3:30-5 p.m.)  
Session 1: May 16-May 25  
Session 2: May 30-June 9  
Time: 3-5:30 p.m.

Location: Charlotte Beach  
Pick-up basketball
Adult programs

Charlotte is proud to be a part of this three-town track and field program, which includes Charlotte, Hinesburg and Williston, at Champlain Valley Union High. Children learn the basics of running, jumping, throwing and relays with this program. There will be opportunities to compete in various events with other local track and field programs, along with a state meet.

Tuesdays and Wednesdays  
June 14-July 19
Ages: 7-14
Time: 6:15-7:45 p.m.
Cost: $50

Promoting physical activity and exercise for adults

**Around Town**

Condolesences
Jean File Melby
On Feb. 5, 2023, Jean File Melby of Charlotte passed away at the age of 92 at the McClure Miller Respite House after living independently at home. Jean Melby was born on Aug. 7, 1930, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to Sydney and Helen File. With her family, she moved to Milwaukee, Wis., then to South Chicago, and then finally to Mepham, Long Island, N.Y., where she finished high school and met her future husband, Dr. Edward C. Melby Jr.

Jean attended Rutgers University for three years and finished her degree at Ithaca College (‘53) in physical education.

She spent summers working at the Silver Bay Association on Lake George where she was known for her performance dance and choreography.

In Ithaca, she married and began her career teaching physical education. Upon Ed’s graduation from Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, she and Ed moved to Vorheesville, N.Y., where they lived until his passing. In Vermont, Jean volunteered as a proffreer at The Charlotte News, develo
ed a community of friends and enjoyed her summers at the family camp on Lake Champlain, spending many enjoyable hours playing mixed tennis doubles.

Jean File Melby is preceded in death by her husband Dr. Edward C. Melby Jr; her parents Sydney and Helen File, and her brother Arthur File. She is survived by her four children; Scott E Melby, Susan Melby Robb, Jeffrey T Melby and Rich-and A. Melby, 10 grandchildren; and two great grandchildren.

A private family memorial service is planned at a later specified date. Please consider an unsolicited act of kindness to others for honoring Jean’s life. Donations may be sent to the McClure Miller Respite House in Colchester, Vt., or the Silver Bay Association in Hague, N.Y.

**Congratulations**

Caroline Reynolds of Charlotte was recently initiated into the Tulane University Circle of Omicron Delta Kappa, the National Leadership Honor Society.

**Charlotte News**

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Tim Serril Tennis Clinic
Tim Serril was summer resident of Charlotte who loved to play tennis. When he died, he left the town a trust fund to provide free tennis lessons to the children of Charlotte. The program began in 1989 and has become a Charlotte community tradition. Your child will be assigned a time once registration for the clinic is complete.

Grades: 1-8  
Dates: June 19-22  
Time: 8:30-9:30 a.m. and 9:30-10:30 a.m.
Location: Charlotte Beach  
Cost: Free (please consider making a donation)

Champlain Valley Track and Field
Charlotte is proud to be a part of this three-town track and field program, which

Please Visit Our Farm Store and Experience the Extraordinary Quality of Our American Style Wagyu Beef

Wagyu is known for its extensive marbling, flavor and tenderness. It is the healthiest choice of beef, higher in monounsaturated fatty acids.  

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Charlotte students showing kindness, bravery, thinking

Naomi Strada
(Condensed by Tom Scatchard)

First and third graders joined together to color bookmarks, spreading joy by hiding them in Charlotte Central School library books.

Fourth graders sent personalized letters to helpers around the school to thank them for their care.

Steve Flint’s sixth grade advisory spent time with Sarah Cota’s kindergarten class, joining hands and laughing their way through games at the gym.

Members of the Omega seventh and eighth grade team have been reading to kindergarten and first graders during their lunch period.

The Omega team also delivered random notes of kindness to different staff members for Random Acts of Kindness Day on Friday, Feb. 17.

On Wednesday, Feb. 15, the brave students made their way to Charlotte Beach to take the plunge. The Penguin Plungers raised $4,000.

**Black History Month**

This week, diversity, equity, inclusion coach Atsuka Luna held 30-minute workshops for small groups of seventh and eighth grade students about the impact of hateful language on people of color. The small groups read an article and listened to the song “What a Wonderful World” by Louis Armstrong.

**School board candidate?**

The Champlain Valley School District is seeking a Charlotte resident to serve on its board for a three-year term beginning in March. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact the Charlotte town clerk’s office at 802-425-3071 to learn how to run as a write-in candidate on the Australian ballot on March 7.

**Baseball coaches needed**

Charlotte Central School baseball is searching for a head coach and an assistant coach for the spring season April 19 through the end of May. If you are interested and want to know more about these positions, please email Charlotte Central School athletic director Nicky Elderton at nelderton@cvsdvt.org.

Quiet Hiring a workplace trend that can be good for employees

Margo Bartsch
College Essay Coach

Imagine a Zoom screen with four video boxes: the employee, two vice presidents and a human resource officer.

“Your department is being eliminated,” announces the current vice president to the employee.

“You can either be part of the layoffs or move to my new department,” explains the other vice president.

“I can read you the severance terms,” the human resource officer states, “or explain ‘I can read you the severance terms,’ the other vice president.

“You can either be part of the layoffs or move to my new department, ‘explains the current vice president. ‘I can read you the severance terms,’” the human resource officer states.

“How can a worker be positioned for the quiet hiring job pool?”

In a February story, “How quiet hiring became the workplace trend of 2023,” CNBC explained how, by reassigning current workers who may be a good fit to new positions, companies can positively impact both employees and companies.

On the other hand, if an employee is laid off, now is the time to update their résumé and LinkedIn with quantifiable results and work responsibilities. Use consistent tone across all social media. This February, CNN Business suggests extending the job reach by adding LinkedIn to your résumé.

The LinkedIn profile should include specific words that are common in job postings such as the job title, work duration and award recognition. Many employers use Artificial Intelligence (AI) key phrases that match openings.

Another option to consider when being laid off is to apply to graduate school. The worker can gain skills and build networking for future careers. At the start of the 2022 layoffs, Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management was the first major master of business administration school to actively appeal to laid-off technology workers.

Kellogg has extended waiving its test requirements for the third-round of applications in January 2023. The test waiver includes the 2023 summer quarter for its evening and weekend MBA program.

Dictionary.com defines the term “silver lining” as a positive aspect to a negative situation. With the increases in job layoffs and potential recessionary economy, it is even more important to be prepared for career opportunities ahead. Update your résumé and LinkedIn to reflect your current and past experiences should reflect workforce trends.

Quiet hiring has become a new mindset. Actively networking your skills and accomplishments could make you a more viable candidate both within your company and to outside firms. When asked to step up, look at it as a quiet hiring opportunity.

Forbes published, “How quiet hiring will shape the workplace” as a shift that can positively impact both employees and companies.

To avoid being laid off, quiet hiring is when an existing employee is recognized as having the skills and attitude to move into another job within the company. Forbes reports this January that quiet hiring benefits the employers by identifying an efficient and constructive way to fill the job gaps without hiring additional workers.

With LinkedIn profiles, many employees include their managers and other work colleagues as connections. While reading posts, they are learning about each other’s backgrounds. These interactions have become under-the-radar networking chances between potential new managers and prospective new workers.

When a firm’s management team begins developing the layoff strategy across the company, Human Resources can use employers’ LinkedIn profiles to identify current workers who may be a good fit to move within the company to a higher priority area needing more resources.

If the new job includes greater responsibilities, this is a chance to negotiate a promotion with a new title and raise. This are downsizing their overall labor costs and shifting their focus to specific corporate goals.

Kayla Lebovitz, the CEO and founder of Bumble, describes quiet hiring as “the evolution of the workplace in a post-pandemic world.”

During the pandemic, many firms increased hiring to focus on new growth opportunities. Now three years since the pandemic’s unfortunate reports that tech layoffs in January 2023 already represent one-third of overall 2022 layoffs.

“Tech workers had their pick of jobs for years,” The Washington Post reports this January. “That era is over now.”

Microsoft, Alphabet and Amazon announced double-digit layoffs. Even non-tech firms, like Dow Chemical, 3M manufacturing, GE aerospace and Disney media and entertainment, are cutting workers.

In the Alphabet layoff announcement, CEO Sundar Pichai explained, “We hired for a different reality than we face today.”

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If the new job includes greater responsibilities, this is a chance to negotiate a promotion with a new title and raise. This
Half of Vermont alpine ski team from CVU

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Half of the team of state of Vermont is sending to the Eastern High School Alpine Championships are from Champlain Valley Union High.

The Champlain Valley Union High boys basketball team will take a dominating regular season performance into the playoffs. With two games remaining — tonight (Thursday, Feb. 23) against visiting South Burlington and Saturday, Feb. 25, at Rice — the boys are 17-1 and in first place.

CVU 61, Burlington 40
On Monday, Feb. 20, the Redhawks faced the visiting Burlington Seahorses and came away with a convincing 61-40 win.

CVU had a quick start on Feb. 9 at home, taking an 18-6 lead into halftime. Although the Seahorses only managed 11 points in the first half, they got their offense rolling in the third quarter, outscoring CVU 15-12. By that time, it was too late for the visitors, as CVU continued to control the game.

CVU’s Tucker Tharpe and Burlington’s Charlie Drangeboth led the scoring with each nabbing 18 points. Tharpe added 9 rebounds to his efforts. Kyle Eaton got 17 points and 8 rebounds.

CVU 47, Colchester 34
On Thursday, Feb. 16, the Redhawks traveled to Colchester High and came away with a 13-point win, 47-34.

Coach Michael Osborne described the contest as “kind of a slow burn.” CVU jumped out to a 9-0 lead to start the game, but cooled down to just take a 25-19 lead into the half.

They went on a 10-2 run at the end of the half and beginning of the second. The Redhawks led wire to wire.

Osborne was pleased with Sam Sweeney’s shooting who knocked down three 3s and scored in a 22-point victory over the Hornets, CVU 73, Essex 51.

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CVU Sophomore George Francisco competing at the Middlebury Snowbowl in the giant slalom.

The Redhawks have been tearing it up on the slopes this season. Five of the top 10 women in two out of the three qualifying giant slalom races on Jan. 27 at the Middlebury Snow Bowl were Redhawks — Lisle, Strobeck, Manning, Bartley and Nostrand.

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As spring returns share magic of gardening with children

Deborah J. Benoit
University of Vermont Extension

Spring is in the air, and what better way to celebrate a return to gardening than to share its magic with children? It’s not too early to start planning now. Consider dedicating a small piece of the garden this summer as a spot where the kids in your life can experience the magic of gardening firsthand. To keep things simple, consider limiting the plant varieties from which they can choose. They can help pick out seeds to start indoors in early spring or join in choosing starter plants at the garden center later. When planting time arrives, guide them through the process and show them how to care for their plants. A small watering can and kid-size garden tools will make it easier for them to observe the wonder of plant growth.

Whatever form your child’s garden takes, it all begins with a seed. Making make seed-starting blocks with a soil block maker and potting soil is a fun gardening activity that kids and adults can do together. Forming seed-starting blocks is a project you can do together. Using a soil block maker, press moistened potting soil into the device, then eject onto a seed-starting tray. It takes a little practice, but that’s half the fun.

When helping your child choose what to plant, consider something easy to grow to help ensure success. Sunflowers are quick growing, showy and sure to bring a smile. Local stores should have a number of varieties available. Seed packets contain growing information, including when to plant outside, how tall the sunflower will grow and how long it will take to flower.

For a bit of garden magic, check young sunflower flowers at different times during the day during the growing season. They begin the morning facing east and slowly turn toward the west, following the sun. When mature, the sunflower’s seeds can provide a welcome meal for local birds or be roasted as a tasty snack for the young gardener.

Integrating compassion, expertise & service

• Advanced surgical and Medical Care
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Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services

Costs

- Total FY24 appropriation request = $965,806
- Increase of 8.45% from FY23 level
- Employee wages and payroll taxes are biggest factor
- Other significant increases due to workers compensation insurance and audit fees.

Services

- Station staffed 24/7/365
- Paramedic level ambulance service
- Responder capabilities include:
  - Fire suppression
  - Heavy Rescue
  - Water rescue
  - Ice rescue
- Community education for CPR/AED, First Aid and emergency awareness.

CVFRS thanks the people of Charlotte for more than 70 years of support!

Learn more about our budget and services at CVFRS.com, by attending our special Fire Station open house on March 4th from 10am to noon or by attending the town information session on March 6th.

Once again, we ask our fellow taxpayers to support the mission and operations of Fire & Rescue. Please vote “YES” on Article 3.
Weather might be right for some coffee and ...

Crumb Cake

Ingredients:
- 1/2 cup shortening (butter)
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups sifted, enriched flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 package (1 cup) pitted dates cut up or 1 cup seedless raisins

Directions:
Mix flour, sugar and shortening with fingers until crumbly. Leave some lumps. Set aside 1 cup. Mix in spices to suit your taste. About 1 teaspoon cinnamon and 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg.

Add rest of ingredients to original mixture. Pour batter into 9x9-inch or 8-inch round greased cake pan. Sprinkle top with spiced mixture. Bake at 350 F for 35-45 mins till firm and crisp on top.

Blueberry Cake

Ingredients:
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup shortening (butter)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1-1/2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1-1/2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries.

Directions:
Beat egg whites till stiff and add 1/4 cup of sugar. Cream shortening; add salt and vanilla. Add remaining sugar gradually. Add egg yolks and beat until light and creamy. Set aside a small amount of flour. Sift flour and baking powder. Add alternately with milk to yolk mixture. Fold in beaten egg whites. Drizzle blueberries in flour and set aside. Fold carefully into batter. Turn into greased 8x8-inch pan. Sprinkle the top of the cake with granulated sugar. Bake for 50-60 minutes in 350 F oven.

Date-Nut Cutups

Ingredients:
- 1/2 cup shortening (butter)
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups sifted, enriched flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 oz. package (1 cup) pitted dates cut up or 1 cup seedless raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped California walnuts

Directions:
Cream together shortening, sugar and vanilla. Add eggs, beating well. Sift together dry ingredients; stir into creamed mixture. Add dates and nuts. Divide into four portions. On greased cookie sheets, spread each into 12x2 1/2x1/2-inch strips about 3 inches apart.
Bake in moderate oven at 375 F for about 15 minutes or till lightly browned. While it’s warm, cut diagonally into bars; remove to rack. Sprinkle with confectioners’ sugar. Makes three dozen.

I hope this warms your home and the hearts of your neighbors and friends till spring makes a call.

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Celebrate Every Season
Classism keeps us from connecting with the world

Bradley Carleton
Contributor

As a young man struggling to find my identity in high school, which never seemed to mesh with my peers, I recognized that, as most young people do, I was “different.” Truth is, we are all different. But people, young and old, seem to have this insatiable need to build walls and draw distinctions between groups; ones that can agree on one or two common values. Having gone to three different high schools, I witnessed this in all three distinct modalities.

I was raised as a privileged child in a town that was primarily steel workers and families that were mostly suppressed by a lack of opportunity. I was sent away to boarding school to pursue my first love; freestyle skiing.

I didn’t fit in there either. I was a freestyle skier and everyone else liked racing — slalom, giant slalom, downhill and Nordic disciplines. So, once again, my path brought me to yet another social paradigm. The town of Stowe.

And again, I was outside of the social norm. At the time the town was heavily focused on traditional racing, producing Olympic athletes like Billy Kidd and Tiger Shaw, and the town’s focus was similarly honed in on producing world-class racers. I was a ballet skier, aerialist and mogul skier — not cool. There were two classes — the well-moneyed and the “locals” — mostly farmers’ and lodge owners’ kids.

I was an island of dreams. The only place I fit in was with two other outcasts, who liked to get “big air” in the moguls. While attending a ski camp at Stowe High School, I signed up for one class that I felt was “a gut course.” I figured it would require less effort than some of the other more academically challenging courses and thus give me more time to ski.

That class was creative writing. It was just too easy, which if I had had the knowledge that I do now at 64 years old, I would have pursued my gift straight away.

So, where am I going with this? I will tell you that this “non-traditional” path I took me decades to accept and, if I were able to have defined myself then from the perspective of my future self, I would choose the title “class disruptor.” I think my teachers would have agreed. With multiple meanings to that title, it seems to fit the description of my non-linear journey.

Here’s what I mean by that. There are certain poems that bring me to tears. Poems with some elevated language I am wholly unproductive cycle as killing coyotes only protect their livestock may find themselves in higher survival rates. Farmers aiming to coyotes’ reproductive strategy is key to arrives.

nine weeks of gestation, a litter of pups coyotes mating, a quiet night is a tall order Between courting owls and Eastern much — taking place all around us. And how echoes across the land. ‘Tis a fecund season, fills the morning air. Woodpecker drumming For starters, 10 hours of daylight. Red-whinged blackbirds are back and birdsong fills the morning air. Woodpecker drumming echoes across the land. ‘Tis a fecund season, fills the morning air. Woodpecker drumming For starters, 10 hours of daylight. Red-whinged blackbirds are back and birdsong fills the morning air. Woodpecker drumming echoes across the land. ‘Tis a fecund season, fills the morning air. Woodpecker drumming For starters, 10 hours of daylight. Red-whinged blackbirds are back and birdsong fills the morning air. Woodpecker drumming echoes across the land. ‘Tis a fecund season, fills the morning air. Woodpecker drumming For starters, 10 hours of daylight. Red-whinged blackbirds are back and birdsong fills the morning air. 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### Calendar of Events

**Saturday, Feb. 25, 9:30-11:30 a.m.**

Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services trains participants in compensations, automated external defibrillator (AED) use and choking assistance at this in-person class. Held at the Charlotte fire station, this class does not lead to certification. To receive a spot, call 802-586-3437 or email cfrs@charlottenews.org.

**Fingerpicking guitar**

Friday, March 3, 6-8:30 p.m.

Aaron Friel has played in numerous venues and accompanied well-known artists. Tonight, he plays his style of Americana, folk and indie rock in a free show at Shelburne Vineyard. For more info, see tinyurl.com/mn597p.

**Choral Chameleon**

Friday, March 3, 7-9:30 p.m.

This workshop explores music, offering programming and fearless experimentation. They perform at the Mahaney Arts Center at Middlebury College; for more info, in person tickets and streaming tickets, see tinyurl.com/badh423.

**Out of hibernation**

Saturday, March 4, 5-7 p.m.

After a nearly four-year hiatus, the Vermont Flower Show is back for its 20th year. Spend all day, or all three, at the Champlain Valley Exposure in Essex Junction, getting excited about all things gardening, flowers, food and spring growth. For info, tickets and hours, see tinyurl.com/26y296lke or call 888-518-6484.

**Zen workshop**

Saturday, March 4, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Participants are introduced to the bodhisattva mind disciplines of Zen Buddhism in this workshop at the Vermont Zen Center in Shelburne. For more info and to register, see vermontzen.org/workshops.html.

**Snowbowl festival**

Saturday, March 4, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

The Middlebury Snowbowl ski area hosts the Vermont Splitboard Festival. No registration fee; participation requires a day pass purchase. The day includes demos, instruction and terrain tours. The Snowbowl is on Route 125 in Hancock. More info and pre-registration at 203afox5.com or register upon arrival.

**Healthy food prep**

Saturday, March 4, 10-11:30 a.m.

Learn how to make a week’s worth of healthy meals-prepared breakfasts, free of gluten and refined sugar. Cook along with a nutritional meal-prepped breakfasts, free of gluten and refined sugar. Cook along with a nutritional practitioner. Tonight, offered by Shelburne Vineyard. For more info, see tinyurl.com/4doyr5y.

**Spring growth**

Saturday, March 4, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

The spring season of Montpelier’s farmer’s market classes. For more info and to register, see vermontfarmersmarket.com.

**Animal science jobs**

Saturday, March 4, 1 p.m.

High school and college students interested in animal science careers might be interested in internships and employer events. The University of Vermont’s Department of Animal Nutrition and Business is hosting these job opportunities.

**Fingerpicking guitar**

**Choral Chameleon**

**Out of hibernation**

**Zen workshop**

**Snowbowl festival**

**Healthy food prep**

**Spring growth**

### Forester for a day

**Saturday, Feb. 25, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

A few tickets remain for this popular event at Shelburne Farms for ages 5 and older with the Shelburne Farms calendar for info about winter horse-drawn rides.

### Wildlife celebration

**Saturday, Feb. 25, 10-4 p.m.**

Families can attend or participate in the wildlife celebration at Shelburne Farms; for more info, see tinyurl.com/zzystblat. Join staff from Outreach for Earth Stewardship and the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department to connect wildlife conservation with traditions and reverence of the land.

### Family bird walk

**Saturday, Feb. 26, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.**

Families participate in winter activities, snow horse-drawn rides, ski tours, stargazing. For more info and to sign up, see tinyurl.com/y5p03jx.

### Build a telescope

**Friday, March 3, 4-7 p.m.**

At Catamount Outdoor Family Center in Williston, families make a telescope with Cheryl Owens of Art Adventure Box, followed by games, see live reindeer and learn how to make a telescope with Cheryl Owens of Art Adventure Box.

### Veggie fermentation

**Saturday, March 4, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.**

Discover the health benefits of fermenting and how to do it at home. The workshop, a one-day class in fermentation equipment. This free event takes place at the Intervale Center in Burlington; all equipment provided. Drop in anytime, try a new sport and receive basic instruction. More info, parking directions and a map are at catamounttrail.org/community-skiday/

### Full moon snowshoe

**Saturday, March 4, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m.**

The Catamount Trail Association partners with the Craftsbury Outdoor Center to offer a day of trail running, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. This free event takes place at the Intervale Center in Burlington; all equipment provided. Drop in anytime, try a new sport and receive basic instructions. More info, parking directions and a map are at catamounttrail.org/community-skiday/

### Expo in Essex Junction

**Fri., Mar 3- Sunday, March 5**

The Middlebury Flower Show is back for its 20th year. Spend all day, or all three, at the Champlain Valley Exposure in Essex Junction, getting excited about all things gardening, flowers, food and spring growth. For info, tickets and hours, see tinyurl.com/26y296lke or call 888-518-6484. The day includes demos, instruction and terrain tours. The Snowbowl is on Route 125 in Hancock. More info and pre-registration at 203afox5.com or register upon arrival.

### Community ski day

**Sunday, March 5, 9-3:30 p.m.**

The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival presents a film festival featuring Vermont filmmakers and accompanied well-known artists. Tonight, shown at Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater. See more info and get your tickets at tinyurl.com/34py5xz9.

### Full moon snowshoe

**Saturday, March 4, 6-8:30 p.m.**

Aaron Friel has played in numerous venues and accompanied well-known artists. Tonight, he plays his style of Americana, folk and indie rock in a free show at Shelburne Vineyard. For more info, see tinyurl.com/mn597p.

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Learn how to make a week’s worth of healthy meals-prepared breakfasts, free of gluten and refined sugar. Cook along with a nutritional practitioner. Tonight, offered by Shelburne Vineyard. For more info, see tinyurl.com/4doyr5y.

### Capital city market

**Saturday, March 4, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.**

The winter season of Montpelier’s farmer’s market is underway, held at the Caledonia Spirits Distillery in Montpelier. Market repeats the first and third Saturdays through April. For vendor info and directions, see capitalcityfarmersmarket.com.

### The Bridge to 1777

**Saturday, March 4, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.**

In May, 1777, American soldiers at Fort Ticonderoga labored to build a bridge across Lake Champlain to block the big boats of the Royal Navy. It was tactful and dangerous work. Come to the fort in Ticonderoga, N.Y., to experience this living history event and explore the fort’s many buildings. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/ywwxwuxc.

### Animal science jobs

**Saturday, March 4, 1 p.m.**

Colby Sawyer College is offering an internship for students interested in animal science careers. The University of Vermont holds this free, drop-in event at the Miller Research Center, 500 Spear Street, Burlington. More info at tinyurl.com/yjj52zv.

### Wine and cheese pairing

**Saturday, March 4, 6:30 p.m.**

The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival presents a film festival featuring Vermont filmmakers and accompanied well-known artists. Tonight, shown at Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater. See more info and get your tickets at tinyurl.com/34py5xz9.

### Veggie fermentation

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### Goldie Meir documentary

**Sunday, March 5, 2-3:30 p.m.**

The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival presents a film festival featuring Vermont filmmakers and accompanied well-known artists. Tonight, shown at Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater. See more info and get your tickets at tinyurl.com/34py5xz9.

### Full moon snowshoe

**Monday, March 6, 6:30-7:30 p.m.**

The winter season of Montpelier’s farmer’s market is underway, held at the Caledonia Spirits Distillery in Montpelier. Market repeats the first and third Saturdays through April. For vendor info and directions, see capitalcityfarmersmarket.com.
Buckley named president and CEO of Wake Robin
Wake Robin, a home to about 400 older adults off Boyce Road just north of Charlotte, has named Megan Buckley of Richmond as president and CEO. Buckley has served as the director of health and resident services at Wake Robin for five years and held the interim president and CEO role prior to her appointment. She is a licensed nursing home administrator who held leadership positions within the industry before joining Wake Robin’s staff. “Megan has a proven track record, knows the community well and is able to get things done effectively, with compassion, poise and a wonderful sense of humor,” Wake Robin board chair John Maitland said. Buckley succeeds outgoing president and CEO Martha Maksym, who led Wake Robin for three years before retiring, including through the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic.

Shelburne Age Well
Grab and Go Meal
Age Well and St. Catherine’s of Siena Parish in Shelburne are teaming up to provide a meal to go for anyone 60 and older on Tuesday, March 14. The meal will be available for pick up in the parking lot at 72 Church Street from 11 a.m.-noon. These meals are available for anyone 60 and older and are free and delicious. The menu is: beef roast, boiled potatoes, cabbage and carrots in beef stock, wheat dinner roll with butter, leprechaun cake with frosting and milk. To order a meal: please contact Sheryl Oberding by Wednesday, March 8. Email is preferred at soberding@yahoo.com or call 802-425-8546. If you haven’t yet filled out a 2022 congragulate meal registration, please bring a completed registration form with you or send one to: Age Well; 875 Roosevelt Highway, Suite 210; Colchester, VT, 05446. We will have forms on hand for you to fill out at meal pick up.

An Age Well representative will be available to obtain the suggested $5 donation restaurant tickets to dine at one of the participating restaurants. More information on this program can be found on the Age Well site: agewelvt.org.

Winona Smith Scholarship opportunities now open
The League of Women Voters of Vermont Education Foundation is now accepting applications for its Winona Smith Scholarship program.

Created in 1998 to honor the legacy of League leader Winona Smith, the scholarship is awarded annually to local high school seniors who embody the characteristics and qualities Smith displayed of civic participation and community service.

Four $1,500 scholarships will be awarded to students who demonstrate financial need, scholastic achievement, and are highly recommended by their teacher. Application due on May 1, can be completed online at lwvt.org/recommend-scholarship/applicant. Students need to submit two essays (500 words), one on issues concerning voting rights, and the other on the impact of a recent civic, national or world event. A letter of recommendation from a teacher is also required, bit.ly/3WVTeacherRec.

The scholarship can be applied towards continuation of education in an accredited vocational-technical or trade school and two- or four-year college or university. Scholarship recipients will be announced on June 1. Questions can be directed to Becky Miller at lwvt.edufund@gmail.com.

Blood donation important during the winter
Winter brings seasonal illnesses and dangerous weather, which can hurt the blood supply. When donors give now, they can help ensure blood is on hospital shelves when it’s needed.

All who come to give in February will get a $10 Amazon.com gift card by email. Those who come to donate this month will also be entered to win a trip for two to Clearwater Beach, Florida. Details are available at RedCrossBlood.org/heart.

Donate all blood types — particularly type O blood donors, the most needed blood group by hospitals — and platelet donors are needed daily to meet demand. Protect the blood supply from dropping — book a time to give by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, downloading the Red Cross Blood Donor App or calling 1-800-RED CROSS.

Library News

Read “Love Letter to Libraries” and share your ideas
Margaret Woodruff
Director

If you missed “Love Letter to Libraries” in the New York Times, it is worth a look: tinyurl.com/3nybbs4. The creative and thoughtful ways that libraries across the country are serving their communities is wonderful and inspiring. There is a lot to learn from the article and from our own town. We’d love to know what ideas you have for our library. You can email us: info@charlottelibrary.org or give us a call at 802-425-3864.

Black History Month
Clemmons Family Farm
During Black History Month 2023, enjoy our free curriculum for grades K-5 about two courageous African American women who were pioneers in travel. Commune and create with people in your community around modern-day connections with Bessie Coleman and Bessie Stringfield’s joy in motorcycles, airplanes and adventure. Check out the curriculum online and enroll to access the curriculum.

Black Experience celebration
Saturday, Feb. 25, 9-9 p.m.
The 2023 celebration is a free, holistic celebration of Vermont’s Black experience (cultural, communal, educational) of Black History Month at the Flynn Theatre. Featuring Angela Davis, Philadelphia and Tricia Rose. Learn more about BZ23 at blackexperiencevt.com.

Black History Month email series
During February, the state of Vermont Human Rights Commission and Office of Racial Equity will share events, art, resources, facts and literacy excerpts that are from or for the Black community. There will be a weekly raffle, where you could win a book or a package of coffee from a featured Black-owned roaster. Sign up for the email series at tinyurl.com/3uz5a.

Children’s programs
Young children’s story time
Tuesdays, 10 a.m.
No registration required.

Kindergarten/first grade story time
Tuesdays, 3-5 p.m., through Feb. 21.
Please contact Cheryl for information about this session at youth@ charlotepubliclibrary.org.

Preschool free play
Wednesdays, 10 a.m.
Exploring the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks, go dough — there are a few of the open-ended projects planned for Wednesday morning play-based learning at the Charlotte Library. Ages 2-4. No registration required.

Programs for adults
Book Chat
Wednesdays, 3 p.m.
Meet each week to discuss new books, old books and books we might have missed. Each week, Woodruff selects a theme and highlights related titles from the library collection. No registration necessary.

Candidates Night
Thursday, Feb. 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Ask questions and share concerns with the candidates on this year’s ballot. Learn more about each candidate, their priorities, reasons for running and points of view. Join the Zoom event at bit.ly/3RZUzop. Moderated by Jonathan Silverman. Questions for the candidates can be emailed to charlottereanget@gmail.com or posed during the event.

Stillwater Meditation
Saturday starting Feb. 25, 10 a.m.
Beginning and experienced meditators are welcome. Come to one, many or all meetings. No registration necessary.

Stillwater Meditation is an offering of Rain Elizabeth Healing Arts.

Short Story Selections
Wednesdays, March 15 & 22, 1 p.m.
Join library director Margaret Woodruff to share and discuss short stories old and new. The reading list will include a variety of authors and at two to three stories will be featured each session. Copies of the stories are available at the library circulation desk or via email. Register at bit.ly/3QmFrwy.

Better Together Book Club
Wednesday, March 8, 7-8:30 p.m.
Join us for a discussion of The Long Answer, including a virtual visit by Vermont author Anna Hogeland. This thought-provoking novel unravels the intimate dynamics of female friendship, sibling, motherhood and grief, and the ways that women are bound together and pulled apart by their shared and contrasting experiences of pregnancy, abortion, miscarriage and infertility. Copies available at the library.

“Gal’s Garden” book study
Mondays, March 13-April 3, 7-8 p.m.
Back by popular demand. Join Karen

The Town of Charlotte MEETINGS
Visit charlottelvt.org for more information.

Candidates Night
sponsored by Charlotte Grange charlottegrange.org/events Thursday, Feb. 23, 6:30 p.m.
Charlotte Energy Committee Meeting
Wednesday, March 1, 7 p.m.
Planning Commission: CANCELLED Thursday, March 2
Town Meeting polls open for voting
Town Hall, Tuesday, March 7, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.
Trails Committee Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, March 7, 6:30-8 p.m.

The Charlotte Library is growing its book collection and is looking for used books. If you have a box of used books, please contact Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian, at 802-425-3864.

Community Roundup

Tuints and Linda Hamilton for this four-part study of Toby Hemenway’s classic guide to home-scale permaculture. New and experienced gardeners are welcome for the study of this practical book. Expect interesting reading (about 70 pages in preparation for each session) and lively discussions.

Whether you missed our first “Gaia’s Garden” discussion series or want to come back for a deeper dive in revisiting this book, we hope you will join us. Registration is required at tinyurl.com/msj2vz. Copies of the book are available at the library. Note: We will meet in person at the Charlotte Library with the option to use Zoom in bad weather.

Library contact information:
Margaret Woodruff, director Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian Susanna Kahn, tech librarian Phone: 802-425-3864 Email: info@charlottelibrary.org For the latest information about programs, books and activity kits, sign up for our monthly newsletter: Charlotte Library News CharlotteLibraryNews@gmail.com

The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets regularly on the first Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. The next meeting takes place on Thursday, March 9, online and in-person. Please contact the library for additional information.
When you stop by the senior center or look at the newsletter, you may be surprised by the variety of classes being offered. What you may not realize is that the senior center is able to offer a large portion of the programming because of the very talented and dedicated volunteers.

Do you know that there are over 90 volunteers at the senior center? Some volunteer regularly on a weekly basis while others volunteer for a specific activity. From the popular Monday Munch-ers, where over 50 lunches are served each week, to the program leaders and the worker bees behind the scenes. If you are interested in volunteering, reach out to Kerrie at kpughe@charlotteseniorcenter vt.org. If there is a specific program that you would like to offer at the center, please contact Lori York at lyork@charlotteseniorcenter vt.org.

And speaking of volunteers, Carol Pepin is now the coordinator for the Age Well meal registrations. Interested in learning more about the Thursday Age Well Grab & Go meals? Please email Pepin at meals@ charlotteseniorcenter vt.org.

The senior center offers programming for adults 50 and older from Charlotte and surrounding communities. Priority is given to seniors, but programming is open to adults of all ages.

Interested in receiving a weekly reminder about what is happening? Sign up for the email newsletter at charlotteseniorcenter vt.org. The “Week Ahead” email is sent out on Friday mornings with activities, lunch menus and special programming for the upcoming week.

Programs

Birding Expedition Wednesday, March 15, 9 a.m.

There is a wide range of birding habitats in Chittenden County. Join avid bird watch-er Hank Kaestner and learn to identify the various bird species and habitats right here in Vermont. Registration required and group size is limited. To register for this trip, create an account on the Charlotte Senior Center website under the Registration tab and follow the instructions for registering. Cost: Free.

Solo cello performance Wednesday, March 22, 1-1:45 p.m.

Jonah Hutchin is a premier young adult performer and cellist from Charlotte. Join us for this solo cello performance at the senior center. You can listen to his music at jonahhutchin.com. Cost: Free. No registration required.

Meditation

Tuesdays, March 14-April 11, 5-6 p.m.

Meditation is an easy-to-learn practice that has been proven to reduce anxiety, stress, pain and depression. This five-part series will explain breathing techniques, chants and guided visualizations to lead into medita- tion. Learn ways to deal with an unruly mind, difficult relations and personal stress by applying meditation philosophy. No experience necessary. Cost: $50. Pre-registra- tion and payment due by March 9.

Tai Chi Ch’uan for beginners Thursdays, 10-11 a.m.

Tai Chi is an excellent balance, memory and coordination practice. The flowing movements and postures will increase flexibility, improve balance, and strengthen core muscles. Cultivate a deeper sense of relaxation, gain an increased energy level and experience a sense of confidence. Cost: $8 per class. No registration required.

Yoga strength building practice Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-noon.

Join Heidi Kramnak weekly in this in- teractive practice that builds strength and stability, while maintaining a sense of ease and spaciousness in both body and mind. The class will practice longer held postures that strengthen muscles, bones and core, as well as breath-led flowing movement, in- cluding sun salutations. Prerequisite: Must be able to easily get down to and up from the floor with or without props. Cost: $10 per class. No registration required.

Knit & Crochet for a Cause Thursdays, 2-3 p.m.

This new group will meet weekly to work on projects that will be donated to local organizations in the community, to include COTS, Lund and UVM Oncology. Bring a skein of yarn and needles or hook and let’s stitch. Patterns will be available, but feel free to bring your own project to work on. As this is a new group, please register so the organizers know how many people plan to attend. Questions? Contact Susan Cantor at 802-124-8853. Cost: Free. All skill levels are welcome.

Still Life — Matisses inspired Friday, March 17, 10:30 a.m.-noon.

Unlike traditional paint & sips, this “coffee & canvass” will allow you to ex- plore and create your own unique painting. But don’t worry — there will be plenty of inspiration. No prior painting experience needed. All materials included. Cost is $25.

Watercolor spring fling Tuesdays, April 4, 11, & 18, 9 a.m.-noon.

Students will be painting spring-themed subjects in this fun four-week class. Begin- ners and intermediates are welcome. Register by March 28. Cost: $160.

Languages

French conversation Mondays, 1-2 p.m. (Zoom) & 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Parlez-vous français? This is an intermediate group of French speakers who meet weekly for French conversation. As the group grows, there may be opportuni- ties to split according to skill levels. Questions? Contact Roberta Whitmore at robertawhitmore27@gmail.com. Cost: Free.

German conversation Thursdays, 3-4 p.m., March 9, 16, 23 & 30

Möchtest du dein Deutsch üben? Come join this new group to meet other German speakers and practice your German. No agenda, just a casual conversation. All ex- perience levels are welcome. Questions? Contact Dan York at dyork@lodestar2. com. Cost: Free.

Italian Beginner II Fridays, 10-11 a.m., April 7, 14, 21, 28, May 5 & 19

Interested in learning Italian? This class is for those who have a beginner level of Italian and is a continuation of the Italian for Total Beginners class. Join us to ex- plore the beauty of the Italian language and culture. If you have questions about whether this class would be appropriate for your specific skill level, please reach out to Nicole Librandi at nicolelibrandi2@gmail. com. Cost: $60 for the six-week session.

Spanish conversation Tuesdays, 10-10:30 a.m.

¿Hablas español? The group will meet weekly. At each session one member of the group will announce the topic of con- versation for the following week. Come join the group for conversation in Spanish. Questions? Contact Bernice Wesseling at bernice.wesseling@uvm.edu. Cost: Free.

Tuesdays, 2-3 p.m.

Jonah Hutchin will give a free cello performance at the library at 1 p.m. on March 22.

Meals

Menus are posted on the website at charlotteseniorcenter vt.org. Suggested meal donation $5.

Senior Center contact info

Lori York, director, lyork@charlotteseniorcenter vt.org.

Valentine craft activity with Charlotte Senior Center volunteers and preschool children from Charlotte Children’s Center.

There was no snow for snowshoeing so, from left, Susan Hyde, Laura Calhoun-Ford, Susan Cantor and Eliza Hammer decided to go to Red Rock for a walk.

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Beans and human beings closely connected

Susan Ohanian  
Contributor

Be it beanpoles, bean counters or bean spillers, when we’re full of beans, both linguistically and nutritionally, we’re well off. Beans, an important part of every known cuisine for more than 10,000 years, are high in fiber, vitamins and minerals. Eat up!

The Naval History and Heritage Command lists three staple recipes from the Navy Cook Book: baking powder biscuits, creamed sliced dried beef and Navy bean soup. Seamen called that creamed dried beef SOS, but Navy bean soup has been a required and beloved menu tradition in Senate restaurants for more than a century. There, it is known as Senate Soup.

In his wonderful “The Best Cook in the World … Tales from My Momma’s Table,” Rick Bragg starts off a chapter titled “A Man Who Knew Beans” with a picture of his great-great-grandfather who observed that a bland bean was a poor bean, and unfit for men or hogs.”

Toothsome details fill the rest of the chapter, ending with a recipe for Depression-era cornbread. Bragg’s strong feeling about whether or not cornbread should have sugar is sure to stir up conversation and even heated discussion any time a few people get together.

Don’t fret that BeanCon23, held in Medellin with a 1,200-mile tour of Colombian bean fields, ended on Feb. 17. You can enjoy your beans and lots more at the Charlotte Senior Center.

Monday, Feb. 27  
Monday Munch: 11:30-12:30
- Navy beans with ham, green salad, cornbread, brownies.

Thursday, March 2  
10-11 a.m.  
Grab & Go meal pickup
- Dried beef with potatoes, Burgundy wine sauce, broccoli florets, raisin muffin, strawberry shortcake

In March, the Charlotte Senior Center will celebrate “Eat like the Irish” just a bit early.

Monday, March 6  
Monday Munch: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- Irish beef stew, Irish pub salad, Irish soda bread, Bailey’s poke cake.

A ballad from 1800 proclaimed:
Then hurrah for an Irish Stew
That will stick to your belly like glue.
The sons of St. Patrick forever,
And three cheers for a real Irish Stew.

There’s general agreement that Irish stew is a great dish, but start polling people on the ingredients and you’ll find lots of opinions on whether it contains lamb, mutton or beef — and whether to add carrots, peas, turnips and more.

Canadians seem to take Irish stew very seriously. In 2017, a Food and Drug regulation listed the contents. We figure our own selectboard has enough on its plate without asking them to take this on.

Come to the Charlotte Senior Center, and you’re sure to find a stobhach gaelach that is tasty. Not to mention that Bailey’s poke cake.

Thursday, March 9  
Men’s Breakfast: 7-9 a.m.
- Grab & Go meal pick-up: 10-11 a.m.
- Stuffed chicken, mashed red potatoes, French green beans and chocolate raspberry birthday cake

Here’s a great rendering of the sentimental “Irish Eyes” by Dennis Morgan: tinyurl.com/52w57jab.

Beans and human beings closely connected