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Little freeze library
Photo by Lee Krohn

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 Lark Thompson, who was instrumental in turning the dire situation around, appeared before the selectboard on Feb. 13 to call for the town to do what it can to expedite the process for reporting 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 west behind 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, Lark 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



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Mike Kirk gives a hog butchering demonstration at Philo Ridge Farm.

THE CRAFT OF CUTTING MEAT

Philo Ridge Farm offers butchering workshops

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

My 4-year-old grandson has no concept of a musical earworm and insists that he never gets songs stuck in his head.

However, he says, “Sometimes I get bacon stuck in my head because I love it so much.”

Although a butchering workshop at the end of January at Philo Ridge Farm is clearly for people much older than him, maybe someday, if my grandson’s still obsessed with bacon, the seminar on how to cut up a hog might be something he’ll be interested in.

This may be the first of what could lead to other workshops at the farm. In fact, there is another workshop called Volume I: The Whole Hog this Tuesday, Feb. 28, 6-8 p.m. For more information visit philoridgefarm.com or call 802-539-2147.

The folks at Philo Ridge Farm are gauging the interest and contemplating the viability of continuing the series with workshops on butchering beef, lamb, mutton, possibly even chicken. If the attendance and enthusiasm for the initial workshop is any indication, the demand may be so great that eventually they will get to the proper way to butcher tofu.

Running throughout the presentation by Philo Ridge Farm butchers Mike Kirk and Hannah Clark was the theme of how important it is to utilize every part of the pig that they can.

“We strive to use every piece of the

animal. I’m not going to lie — that is challenging,” Kirk said. “There’s a lot that people just don’t know.”

People don’t know about many cuts of pork that are actually delicious, so it can be difficult to market some parts of a pig. Kirk said they work to teach people about cuts that are their favorites but that most people are unaware of.

“It’s a little-known fact that some of the most tender muscles originate in the neck of the animal,” he said at one point in the demonstration.

They started off the presentation by showing the tools of their trade. It was a variety and quality of knives that would make Freddy Krueger envious.

Let’s be clear, the workshop began with the hog already killed, offsite and returned to the farm in two halves, so to be technical, it wasn’t actually the whole hog. But every part was there, including bacon.

Initially, the hog is cut into its primal parts — head, shoulder, loin, sirloin and leg. The primal cuts were then cut into subprimal cuts. So, for instance, the shoulder can be cut into a Boston butt, a picnic shoulder, hock and foot.

Clark said the hogs at Philo Ridge Farm are not technically organic because they are fed compost scraps, but the grain they are fed is certified organic. And they are pasture raised.

The hogs on the farm are heritage breeds, which is somewhat like heirloom vegetables. They are similar to the pigs

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 wacky winter. Particularly 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.

Lynne Jaunich’s school board term will end after the Australian ballot voting 7 a.m.-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 Library are holding a virtual candidates forum 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 charlottegrangevt@gmail.com. Questions can also be posed during the event. The Zoom link is <http://bit.ly/3RUJzop>.

Selectboard

Kelly Devine

Devine is the 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



Kelly Devine
Photo by Brad Pettengill

WORKSHOP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

our forefathers raised. They haven’t been repeatedly bred to emphasize parts of the hog that are popular or commercial. “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 reason the farm likes heritage breeds is because they tend to have a better flavor. But a drawback for large-scale hog farmers is that heritage breeds don’t grow as fast as commercial breeds.

When the weather is warm enough the pigs are rotated to different areas of Philo Ridge Farm for grazing, sometimes daily but at least weekly.

And the pigs are put to work, helping to renovate fields. They may be placed in fields that are scrubby on the edge. As the pigs go in and out of the woods, their rooting and foraging turn the soil, getting rid of the brush. Then the farm team can reseed those areas to eventually be grazed by cattle or sheep.

Unlike a traditional butchery, the butchers at Philo Ridge can respond to what their kitchen and their market needs, while making sure they are utilizing every part that they can, Kirk said.

One of the commonly known ways of determining better tasting pork or beef is to look for marbling, which is fine white flecks of fat that appear within the muscles of red meat. An old saying in the industry is fat is flavor.

Kirk believes their pork has more marbling than commercial breeds. Part of the reason for that is: “They’re allowed to be pigs. They’re allowed to move and to



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

express themselves as pigs,” he said. As Kirk and Clark instructed and demonstrated their butchering craft, George Stinson, director of hospitality, demonstrated his hospitality craft, periodically 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. 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.”

Photo by Scooter MacMillan

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 like a good time to try to bring some of those skills to the table, listen to the voters and try to represent what Charlotte wants,” Devine said.

She doesn’t think the town will ever have big development, but she thinks it should consider increasing the building density allowed in Charlotte’s two villages. “Charlotte, in its future, has to work very hard to balance the amazing job that’s been done to conserve land with the need to potentially make more what I call ‘the missing middle housing’ available for folks who want to be here,” she said.

She doesn’t know if she would support things like sidewalks in the villages or town sewage or water without hearing from residents and learning what the impacts on the environment would be.

“I do think it’s interesting that the state is making some more money available to do that kind of examination,” Devine said. “I think we’ve got to look at it and understand it. The best way to answer any question is to understand the variables.”

She has had experience working on municipal, state and federal projects, so she is confident in her abilities of working on a budget. Given the rise in Charlotte’s employee payroll, she was not surprised by the increase in the budget that the selectboard has proposed for town approval on Town Meeting Day.

One of her proudest accomplishments is the work she did with the Champlain Cohousing Community off Greenbush Road.

Although she no longer lives there, she was the president and owner-developer of the project that clustered housing on 10 acres while conserving 116 acres of land, including an area of rare clayplain forest, and providing a route for the Town Link Trail, helping to connect Greenbush Road with Mount Philo State Park.

Patrice Machavern

Machavern thinks one of the reasons she would be a good fit for the Charlotte

Selectboard at this time is because of how her 10 years as business operations manager for the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service will help as it transitions to a town-run service. As a taxpayer, she doesn’t think it is a conflict of interest but rather a confluence of interest.

“I can definitely compartmentalize my life. I think one of the benefits of me running for selectboard now with the transition, slated to occur in July, would be the wealth of knowledge I have from my position at CVFRS,” Machavern said. “I’m fine with finding economies of scale and looking at how can we do things smarter and better and still end up with the same outcome.”

She brings a wealth of volunteering experience from her 37 years in Charlotte. Among her volunteer positions, Machavern served on the board of the Charlotte Children’s Center, on the finance committee of Vermont’s Children’s Miracle Network, two years as town auditor, 10 years on the school board and five years as president of the Charlotte Little League board. During her tenure, the baseball team won its first state championship.

In the interest of full disclosure, it is important to note that Machavern was treasurer on the board of The Charlotte News several years ago.

There’s an old saying dating back until at least the early 1800s that, if you want something done, find a busy person and ask them to do it. She said she is that busy person: “I am the type of person that when presented with things that need to be accomplished, tasks that need to be handled, research that needs to be done, I 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 crews and drivers made it to the tracks and got fed.

Running for the selectboard is something that she has contemplated for a few years. With Matt Krasnow not running for reelection, both of her sons grown and



Patrice Machavern

her primary responsibilities reduced to her part-time work for the fire and rescue service and filling in with daycare for her grandchildren, this seems like a good time. Machavern is certain that this year’s budget process “most definitely” would have been less confused if she had been on the selectboard. This is exemplified by the budget that she brings to the selectboard every year, which gives a narrative with multiple views to see what department or personnel expenses are or what’s driving budget increases. After describing various volunteer positions she has had, Machavern remembers one more: “I just finished my two years on the board of civil authority as justice of the peace, so as I said, volunteerism runs deep in my veins.”

Open positions

Town clerk Mary Mead said she doesn’t know if anyone else is running for the school board as a write-in candidate, but if there are others interested, they should consider declaring their candidacy at the candidates forum.

Other town positions without a candidate on the ballot for which someone could declare their candidacy as a write-in candidate are auditor (three-year term), cemetery commissioner (three-year term), cemetery commissioner (two years of a three-year term) and trustee of public funds (two years of a three-year term).

Running unopposed are Hugh “Junior” Lewis for road commissioner (one-year term), Mudge for selectboard (three-year term), Lindsay W. Smith for library trustee (five-year term), Charlie Russell for town moderator (one-year term), Mead for delinquent tax collector (one-year term) and Krasnow for trustee of public funds (three-year term).

People who would like to serve in a town office can show up at the candidates forum to seek write-in votes for any of these positions, even for positions where there is candidate on the ballot.



Lewis Mudge



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To engage and inform Charlotte and nearby communities by:

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- Providing a home for stories from our neighbors and friends.
- Reporting on how other towns have addressed challenges similar to our own.

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Commentary

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. Kitt Urdang 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 residents navigate going 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 informed by Vermont’s statewide energy goals and our town plan. The town has already made great progress in this area, with 171 solar sites that produce 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-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.

Good people, communication, and organizational skills and familiarity with and excitement about residential solar are required. Low- to moderate-income Vermonters are strongly encouraged to apply.

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.)

GOATS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

attempts to contact him, but in a post on social media he said he was disappointed to see a story about the situation after so much time has passed.

However, he wrote, “I understand why people are upset. I was distraught, 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.

Thompson 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 would 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 is 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, and concluded 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 Bloch said, in 2017, at the request of the animal control officer then, the title was changed to canine control officer to reflect the reality of the town’s ordinance outlining the position. 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 Humane Society of Chittenden County whose CEO Joyce Cameron said her organization does not have the authority to initiate investigations about livestock or pets being mistreated.

“It’s different in every municipality across the state. It’s kind of the Wild West. Some towns have really robust animal control officers, and their job encompasses a lot,” said Cameron, who has lived in Charlotte for 35 years.

During those years, although there have been little changes to how this town deals with animal neglect or mistreatment, it seems to her it’s always been primarily just about



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

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

dogs.

Cameron said she has been working with a group that includes the heads of humane 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 she’s working with hopes the state will create one agency, a new division of animal welfare.

Letters to the Editor

Why I am seeking the two-year selectboard seat

To the Editor:

I’m 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 strategic thinking, autonomy, developing 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 policy committee, 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 downsizing 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 selectboard. I am fiscally 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 numbers and ability to clearly articulate how she arrived at a decision based upon all of the information at hand. We were a long way from agreeing on 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: hope to find one who they think will agree with them 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 decision process clearly and vote according to conscience — sometimes resulting in agreement 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 nor will she — 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 decision processes were 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’m 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 finance, including her familiarity 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 needs 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 most of its 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, most importantly, common sense.

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

Fritz 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 at no cost to the legislators. It would also provide legislators with childcare reimbursement and pay for out-of-session work 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 legislature 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 unpaid capacity for the rest of the year. Their salaries are relatively low, they receive no help with childcare, and they must count on getting health coverage through other sources, if that is available to them.

So, I have no objection to providing legislators with publicly funded comprehensive health care coverage for themselves and their families. But I can’t for the life of me understand why those benefits shouldn’t extend to all Vermonters.

I say so having watched the Senate Government Operations committee hearing this week at which several legislators testified as to why health coverage should be offered to them, free of charge, and why this bill should move forward. The reasons offered apply to most Vermonters, not just legislators. People having to stay in jobs they don’t like or decline jobs they do 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. Again, these are problems many Vermonters deal with on a continuing basis. In fact, 44 percent of all Vermonters with health 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. Another bill — H.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 if S.39 passes, the legislators would all be eligible for cost-free health care by January 2024.

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

Deb Richter
Montpelier
(Dr. 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 give her time and energy to 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 selflessly gave her time and energy volunteering for countless fundraisers, book fairs and annual school barbecues, always ready to roll up her sleeves and pitch in. Always finding the time to go the extra mile to get things done.

She 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 getting the job done. She has incredible organizational skills and will follow up on any question in a timely manner, ready to put in the time to do the necessary research it may require.

Most recently, I had the opportunity to see her dedication and skills again as we worked together on the Board of Civil Authority. In addition, she has volunteered at the polls and helped in the tedious job of counting ballots for years.

She has been the treasurer of a variety of local 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-run service.

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 Sharpe
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 budget setting background.
- She was always well prepared by researching the best options at decision crossroads.
- She is an articulate plain speaker.
- She has depth of experience and is certified in human resources management.

Machavern is goal oriented and will approach governance with what is best for Charlotte overall in mind. I am confident she will challenge conventional thinking and will help guide our town very capably. She will be able to bring fresh perspective.

For the benefit of our town please vote for Patrice Machavern!
Tom Cosinuke
Charlotte

News from The Charlotte News

John Quinney
President & Publisher

We’re looking for an advertising manager

Do your friends and colleagues describe you as, “enthusiastic, energetic and outgoing?” If that’s a “yes,” we’d love to meet you.

Selling print advertising is a tough game these days, but by bringing her creativity, passion and enthusiasm to bear, Christy Hagios has kept our advertising revenues stable for the past two years.

During this period, Christy has juggled her job as our advertising manager with



her many other responsibilities. Recently, she let us know that she would be transitioning away from her work at The Charlotte News. We sorry to see her go but we understand.

We are thankful to Christy, not only for all she’s accomplished as our advertising manager, but also for her commitment to stay on until we’ve hired her replacement.

If you are an outgoing person, with energy and enthusiasm, and appreciate the vital role that local news plays in the wellbeing of our communities, please get in touch. Visit tinyurl.com/4dvva5a4 for more information or call me at 802-318-7189 or email me at john@thecharlottenews.org. I’d love to talk with you.

Thank you, Susanne

Long-time Charlotte resident, Susanne Davis, recently decided to step down

from the board of The Charlotte News. We wish her all the best.

In 2013, Susanne first began working with us as a board member of Friends of The Charlotte News, the nonprofit entity that the paper established to receive charitable donations. She chaired the Friends board for several years, through May 2021, when the paper’s application to the IRS for 501(c)3 nonprofit status was approved. Susanne then joined the board of The Charlotte News in July 2021.

On both boards, Susanne’s work focused on fundraising. Speaking of the Friends, she writes, “All of our fundraising efforts were a group effort.



Susanne Davis

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 at Eating Well Magazine and The Perry Restaurant Group. As a volunteer, she served on the board of the Mozart 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.

Commentary

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? The relative quiet of 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 garage or other construction. Or maybe even 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 you in the process of getting the permit(s) you may need.

First up, an introduction to the players:

- Keith Osborne is the zoning administrative officer. Osborne’s roles include administering and interpreting the town’s land-use regulations, reviewing and issuing zoning permits, zoning enforcement and compliance. Osborne 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 intrepid 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 Lewis 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 comforting fact: 80-90 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/33jaavyk.

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. Those permits are received and managed by zoning administrator Osborne, with consultant support from Landmark 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 lot(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 Osborne 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/DRB_applications_pages. All projects listed there have had, or will have, public hearings publicized 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: bit.ly/DRB_decisions.

Outside of the permitting process, the town planner also works with members of the town’s planning commission to improve

the land-use regulations. We prepare draft updates to the land-use regulations to rationalize and streamline the town’s permitting process. We also look for opportunities to update the community’s vision for its future via updates to the town plan. The current town plan is due for an update in 2026.

The planning commission is currently working on additional updates to the land-use regulations; these drafts will be presented for public hearings this summer to be followed by town votes this fall. More details on planning work in progress, including development of permit standards

for cannabis businesses in Charlotte, can be found here: bit.ly/PC_draft_2023_LURs_amendments.

Your planning and zoning staff can be reached Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with additional hours available by appointment. If you want to get something built this year, it’s best to get started early. Please call us at 802-425-3533 ext. 2. We’re ready to answer your questions and help you get the permits you need. We look forward to working with you.

(Larry Lewack is Charlotte’s town planner.)

Hi! Neighbor

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 wheel 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 Redhawks 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 done by 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



Courtesy photo

René Kaczka-Vallière may be the only Zamboni driver with a masters in peace and reconciliation.

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 clearcut because often the 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

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 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, Maj Eisinger and I wrote articles about the problem of food insecurity on behalf of Charlotte Food Shelf and Charlotte Grange respectively, because it is a heartbreaking problem in our community which goes mostly unnoticed.

Why is that? Is it so hard to imagine that here in Charlotte, where so many live so comfortably, there also live people who don’t? Is it too easy to assume that the churches and the food shelf take care of those needs?

Maybe.

Yes, we do have a social safety net, but sadly there are still people falling through it.

In circumstances often way beyond their control, families and individuals can and do face food insecurity and inadequate nutrition.

They can’t buy either enough food or food that meets nutritional needs. It can be a chronic problem carrying a constant worry and distress over how to care for oneself and loved ones today and then again tomorrow and again the next day. Imagine how awful that must be. Food insecurity can also strike those who are generally able to get by, until something unexpected throws off the budget and there is not enough left for food. That occasional food insecurity may last only until the next paycheck or a change in circumstances; or it may occur regularly at certain times of each month. That is also a terrible position to be in.

How can we change this? There are larger societal problems and public policy issues underlying food insecurity, and they are complicated. It will take time and concerted effort to change them. Meanwhile, federal and state government assistance programs do much to provide access to nutritious food,

to those who apply and qualify (which isn’t everyone). Charlotte Food Shelf distributes significant amounts of food, again, to those who apply. Unfortunately, there are still those who fall through the safety net, and one important reason is being embarrassed to ask for help.

This is where a community’s direct action through a Little Free Pantry can be a game-changer. This modest cabinet is open all day every day, self-serve in a discrete location, with no paperwork or questions involved, stocked with mostly non-perishable food by those who are able and available free to those who need it — when they need it. Brilliant.

Charlotte Congregational Church created a Little Free Pantry last year in the parking area behind the building. Stocked mostly by community members whenever they can, food is going in and food is going out. This tells us at least two things: we have neighbors who need food, and we have a mechanism for neighbors who have enough food to share it. The Little Free Pantry provides direct and immediate food relief. Wonderful. This makes a difference.

So, problem fixed? No, not really. The Little Free Pantry is vulnerable to neglect; 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, not past their “sell by” date, and securely sealed. (In winter, no cans or bottles since they might freeze and break.) Toilet paper and common toiletries, including feminine hygiene products, are also appreciated. Think about what kids might like



Photo by Sally Wadhams

The Charlotte Little Free Pantry is behind the Charlotte Congregational Church.

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, pasta, rice, quinoa, lentils, split peas, beans, dehydrated fixings for a hearty soup or main dish, cornbread mix, 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.

(Linda Hamilton lives in East Charlotte and is a member of Charlotte Grange charlottegrange.org.)

Around Town

Condolences

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, Wisc., then to South Chicago, and then finally to Maplewood, N.J., where she finished high school and met her future husband, Dr. Edward C. Melby Jr.

Jean attended Rutgers University for two 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 skills.

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 Cornwall, Vt., where together they raised a family and ran a veterinary practice. In the early '60s following Ed's career move, Jean and family moved to Baltimore, Md. While in Baltimore, she devoted her time to raising four children, taught physical education and volunteered her time in various school activities. In 1974, the family moved to Ithaca, N.Y.

Along with raising her children, she carried on the various roles of dean's wife, learned and transcribed braille for the blind and pursued her interest in watercolor painting. From Ithaca, Jean and Ed moved to Villanova, Pa., and finally back to Vermont where they lived until their passing. In Vermont, Jean volunteered as a proofreader at The Charlotte News, developed 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 Sidney 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 Richard 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 Recreation

Nicole Conley
Recreation Director

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 03-May 31
Time: 1:40-2:50 p.m.
Cost per session: \$85

Youth lacrosse

Players in third through eighth grades will participate in the US Lacrosse league and will need a US Lacrosse membership. 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 Champlain Valley Little League is able to keep prices at the 2022 rates, but please note costs will increase by \$15 per player after Feb. 1. Registration is set to close on March 1.

Mini lacrosse

Mini lacrosse practices will be offered to kindergarten through second graders on Saturday mornings at Charlotte Central School. Each participant will get a chance to learn more about the game while having fun. Saturdays, April 22-June 3
Time: 9 a.m.
Cost: \$40

Spring driver's education

The Charlotte Recreation Department will be offering two driver's education programs this spring by the 802 Driving school at Charlotte Central School. The driver's ed programs will be taught by Joe Barch, who has over 15 years of experience teaching in the public schools. Dates will be listed on the website.
Time: 6-8 p.m.
Cost: \$775

Afterschool tennis lessons

The program is open to first through fifth graders and age groups will be split into the two timeslots listed below.

Mondays & Wednesdays
Session 1: May 1-17
Session 2: May 22-June 12 (no lessons May 29)
Grades 1-3: (Mon.)
3:30-4:30 p.m. (Wed.)
2:30-3:30 p.m.

Grades 3-5: (Mon.)
4:30-5:30 p.m. (Wed.)
3:30-4:30 p.m.
Cost: \$85 (six lessons)
Tuesdays & Thursdays
Session 1: May 2-18
Session 2: May 23-June 8
Grades 1-2: 3:30-4:30 p.m.
Grades 3-5: 4:30-5:30 p.m.
Cost: \$85 (six lessons)



Safe Sitter babysitters course

Safe Sitter prepares teens to be safe when they're home alone, watching siblings or babysitting. The course offers four main content areas: safety skills, child care skills, and first aid and rescue skills, and life and business skills. Lessons are filled with fun activities and role-playing exercises. Teens will practice choking rescue and diapering. Register with the town offering the program. Grades: 6-8
Time: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Williston-Saturday, March 11
Charlotte-Saturday, May 20
Cost: \$60

After-school spring soccer

It's time to lace up those cleats and enjoy a fun afternoon of outdoor 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 Vermont, eight-hour classroom course, 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 and 10
Time: 6-8:30 p.m.
Where: Rei 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, club face angle and speed.
Tuesdays and Thursdays (3:30-5 p.m.)
Session 1: May 16-May 25
Session 2: May 30-June 8
Wednesdays (2:30-4 p.m.) and Fridays (3:30-5 p.m.)
Session 1: May 17-26
Session 2: May 31-June 7
Where: Cedar Knoll Golf Course
Cost: \$160

Tim Serrell Tennis Clinic

Tim Serrell was a summer resident of Charlotte who loved to play tennis. When he died, he left money in a trust fund to provide free tennis lessons to the children of Charlotte. The program began in 1989 and has become a Charlotte summer tradition. Your child will be assigned a time once registration for the clinic is complete. Grades: 1-8
Date: 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



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

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, club face angle and speed. The golf swing is a series of movements that must be executed in the proper sequence for optimal results.
Camp days: Tuesday-Friday
Week 1: June 20-23
Week 2: July 18-21
Time: 9 a.m.-noon
Ages: 6-13
Cost: \$320



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. Tiny Tykes, ages 3-5, 8-9 a.m. Resident \$110
Half-day program, ages 6-14, 9-noon Resident \$205
Full day program, ages 7-15, 9-3 p.m. Resident \$270
Note: Host a coach and receive a rebate on your registration!

Adult programs

Pick-up basketball

Join the basketball fanatics on Monday and Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. at Charlotte Central School. All levels and ages are welcome to join, register online.

Outdoor pickleball

The spring season of pickleball in Charlotte begins April 3 at the beach on Mondays and Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. through late fall. Register online to be placed on an e-mail distribution list.

Intro to pickleball

Join Greg Smith for free pickleball instruction on Saturday mornings at 10 a.m. at the Charlotte Town Beach courts. The outdoor season will begin the week of April 8 depending on weather. Register online to be placed on an e-mail distribution list.
Full and partial scholarships are available for all youth recreation activities. You can find additional information on recreation department programs on the website at charlottetrec.com.
Questions? Contact Nicole Conley by email recreation@townofcharlotte.com.

Education

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.

The PTO potluck lunch was a delicious smorgasbord in the staff room filled with soups, salads, breads and sweets. Thanks to all of the families who contributed with food prep, set-up and clean-up. It was a lovely pause in the day to appreciate good food and colleagues.

Brave plungers

The 2023 Penguin Plunge was canceled due to sub-zero temperatures. As a result, the 12 Charlotte Central School students who volunteered to plunge have been

brainstorming for a way to honor their commitment to the Special Olympics. 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 Ainaka 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 10 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 your new promotion to a different group at

our company.”

Thanks to “quiet hiring,” this real-life technology industry story has a happy ending.

Sometimes an employee is simply in the wrong place at the wrong time in an underperforming division of the company. 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 employees to new positions in the company, the firm avoids growing the workforce. The stock market is rewarding companies who

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, Fortune 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.”

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 cost-effective 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 employees’ 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

January, Forbes published, “How quiet hiring will shape the workplace” as a shift that 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 the LinkedIn hashtag #openforwork.

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. Updating your résumé and LinkedIn to reflect your current and past experiences should reflect workplace 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.

(Margo Bartsch founded College Essay Coach, a full-service college admission business, and has been an adjunct professor in business at Champlain College and at Middlebury College.)

Tea’d off?



Photo by Photos by Kintz

From left, Kohl Comtess, Danielle Dukette, Irene Halibozak, Joanne Puente and Marci Robinson are concerned about the contents of Roberta Harold’s tea in the mystery-comedy “Murder by Membership Only,” playing March 2-19 at the Valley Players Theater in Waitsfield.

Sports

Half of Vermont alpine ski team from CVU

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

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

The state team will have 24 members — 12 boys and 12 girls. After Vermont’s Eastern Qualifier at Bromley Mountain on Feb. 6, six of the males and six of the females who qualified to compete for the state in Mittersill, N.H., March 3-5 are Redhawks alpine skiers.

Ella Lisle, Dicey Manning, Carly Strobeck, Rachel Bialowoz, Addison Bartley and Elizabeth Nostrand are the females who’ll be competing for CVU and the state of Vermont.

Lisle dominated the women’s qualifying at Bromley, winning all three races.

The males who’ll be traveling to the Eastern High School Alpine

Championships from CVU are Jake Strobeck, George Francisco, Stephen Zubarik, Ray Hagios, Ari Diamond and Sebastian Bronk

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.

Lisle took the second-place medal for one of those races and Strobeck took the medal for third place in another.

In the first men’s race that day, Francisco took third place and five more CVU men —Zubarik, Strobeck, Diamond, Bronk and Hagios — finished in the top 10.

And things continued to go well for the Redhawks in the second race when Strobeck, Zubarik and Francisco swept the podium and Bronk, Diamond and Hagios



Photo by @devxphoto

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

came in seventh-ninth, so another six Redhawks finished in the top 10.

Strobeck took first place again in the third race, while Franciso finished with his third third-place finish.

“While we are all looking forward to the Easterns, the CVU alpine team has its sights set on the remainder of the

season’s final races, with the district championships taking place at Cochran’s Ski Area and Middlebury Snow Bowl on Feb. 28 and March 1, and the Vermont State Alpine Championships at Burke Mountain on March 6 and 7,” Redhawks coach Steve Francisco said.

CVU basketball teams playoff bound with high seeds

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

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.

The game started with CVU in control as the team took a 30-11 lead into halftime.

Although the Seahawks 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 Charite Dzingbou 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 led the scoring with 13 total points. Tharpe knocked down 12 and Logan Vaughan 10.

CVU 73, Essex 51

At Essex High on Feb. 10, 13 Redhawks scored in a 22-point victory over the Hornets, 73-51.

Leading the scoring for the Redhawks was Eaton with 18 and Tharpe with 11.

Girls basketball

For the tenth time since 2012, the Redhawks take the No. 1 seed into the

playoffs.

Like the boys, the Redhawks girls team has only one loss and no losses against Vermont teams, its only defeat coming against Shenendehowa High School of Clifton Park, N.Y.

“We are consistently playing good team basketball and improving defensively as the season continues,” Coach Ute Otley said. “We are getting great contributions from different players each night, with approximately 10 different players scoring each game.”

Champlain Valley 48, Rice 32

CVU took a 48-32 win over Rice at home on Saturday, Feb. 18, to end the regular season at 17-1.

The Redhawks led 25-10 at the break and 31-14 after three quarters.

Otley was proud of her team’s defense.

Shelby Companion led CVU with 15 points, Addi Hunter added 9 points and 8 rebounds, Elise Berger had 9 rebounds and 5 assists, and Samara Ashooh kicked in 7 points and 7 rebounds.

Champlain Valley 57, Burlington 37

Hunter led the scoring for CVU in a victory over Burlington on Feb. 15 with 15 points and 10 rebounds.

Companion added 9 points, 5 assists and 5 steals for the Redhawks, while Berger contributed 8 points, 4 assists and 4 steals.

Champlain Valley 59, Mount Mansfield 43

The day before, the Redhawks traveled to Mount Mansfield Union to take a 16-point win on Feb. 14.

Nursing just a 4-point led at halftime 32-28, CVU turned up the heat on defense in the second half, holding Mount Mansfield to three baskets.

Once again, Hunter led the way on offense with 19 points and 12 rebounds, while Companion kicked in 14 points. Berger dished out 11 assists.

CVU 61, St. Johnsbury 42

CVU had a quick start on Feb. 9 at home, taking an 18-6 lead after one quarter. Hunter posted 22 points to lead the Redhawks. Berger added 12.

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Gardening

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

take part.

If there's no space for a tiny garden plot, containers are good alternatives for a child's first garden. After planting, place the containers in good light where your child can easily observe the wonder of plant growth.

Whatever form your child's garden takes, it all begins with a seed. A tray of seed-starter mix or pellets that expand with the addition of water are readily available at garden stores and easy to use.

Creating your own 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.

For another gardening idea, what could be more fun for kids than growing their own jack-o-lantern for Halloween?

Pumpkin seeds can be started indoors about three weeks before the average last frost date for your area. Or purchase starter plants from a local nursery.

Transplant outdoors or directly sow seeds in the garden after all danger of frost has passed. Information regarding your average last frost date can be found at garden.org/apps/frost-dates.

Bush beans and snow peas also are fun options for kids to grow. They're quick



Photo by Deborah J. Benoit

Making seed-starting blocks with a soil block maker and potting soil is a fun gardening activity that kids and adults can do together.

growing and can be eaten right off the vine. Other possibilities include radishes (harvest in less than a month), cherry tomatoes and marigolds. For more on seed starting, see go.uvm.edu/startseeds.

Whatever plants you choose, be sure to involve your children in planning, preparing, planting, growing and harvesting the garden. If you're so inclined, save some of the seeds from this year's harvest for next year's adventure so they can see how the magic continues.

When you venture into the garden with children, introduce them to the magical presence of nature: fat bumblebees buzzing among the blossoms, the sound of birds singing as they go about their days and devouring insect pests and even the persistence of weeds. Don't forget the frogs, toads, salamanders and garter snakes that help with pest control. How many can they identify?

Introducing the magic of gardening to children can be rewarding on so many levels. Along the way, you just might reawaken your inner child and find yourself smiling at the magic yourself.

(Deborah J. Benoit is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener from North Adams, Mass., who is part of the Bennington County Chapter.)

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Weed’s in the Garden

Weather might be right for some coffee and ...

Joan Weed
Contributor

Are the midwinter blues beginning to get to you? Are you searching out your windows for the first snowdrops? Longing to see friends you’ve missed for these past months? How about getting together for some coffee and ... ?

You get to bake a treat from your mom’s recipe cards or perhaps the old PTA cookbook. Then you get to serve it to those missed pals. You’ll catch up on the news and perhaps discuss the ballot for town meeting or a recent book you’ve read. I’ll offer a couple of tried-and-true treats to go along with the coffee or tea.

The first is from the aforementioned PTA cookbook and a guaranteed favorite whenever it’s offered. It’s the recipe that taught me how to make pâte à choux.

Next is the very first cake I conquered as a child. Here’s one you can make with your kids, and it’s delicious.

The third is from my mom’s cards. Not sure where she got it, but it filled our tummies as kids. Plus, it takes advantage of the very berries grown right here in Charlotte.

Lastly, I offer a different sort of cookie that I have not made in too long a time.

Almond Puff Coffee Cake

Base

1/2 cup soft butter

1 cup flour

2 Tbsp. water

Pâte à choux

1/2 cup butter

1 cup water

3 teaspoon almond extract

1 cup flour

3 whole eggs

Directions

Cut soft butter into 1 cup flour, sprinkle 2 tablespoons of water over the mixture, mix with a fork. Divide dough in half and pat into two 12x3-inch strips on an ungreased baking sheet.

Heat 1/2 cup of butter and 1 cup of water in a saucepan to a boil. Remove from the heat. Add extract and flour. Stir vigorously over low heat until the mixture forms a ball. Remove from the heat and beat in eggs all at once till satiny smooth. (I used a sturdy whisk.) Divide mixture and spread over each base, covering completely. Bake at 350 F for 60 minutes until crisp and lightly browned.

Cool a bit and frost with: 1 1/2 cups of confectioners’ sugar, 2 tablespoons of soft butter, 1 teaspoon of almond extract, 1-2 teaspoons of warm water. Frost lightly while warm and decorate with sliced almonds.

Slice on the diagonal to serve. This has very little sugar, but it’s deceptively sweet.

Crumb Coffee Cake

Ingredients

2 1/2 cups flour

3/4 cup shortening (I use butter.)

1 1/2 cups sugar

2 eggs

3/4 cup milk

2 teaspoons baking powder

pinch of salt

ground nutmeg

ground cinnamon

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



Crumb Cake

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 teasp. salt

1/2 cup shortening(butter)

1 teasp. vanilla

1-1/2 cups flour

1 teasp. 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. Dredge 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 teasp. 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 6 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 1/2-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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Sacred Hunter

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 classes and divisions 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 singularly 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 my senior year 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 “road less traveled” has taken 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 have fit the description of my non-linear journey.

Here’s what I mean by that.

I have hung out with some uber-privileged people and I’ve worked in both white-collar and service jobs. What I have observed is that people tend to surround themselves with people who think like themselves. Now I don’t pretend to be any kind of anthropological expert, but I have witnessed this so often that it has inspired me to embrace my mission of breaking down social barriers of all different groups. We all have so much to learn from one another; why can’t we just drop our pre-conceived notions about what it means to be “redneck” or “elitist”?

For instance, why do fly-fishermen (and women) look down on bullhead fishermen (and women?) When I speak with those who are privileged enough to book a trip for an Argentinian dove hunt on a classic plantation, would they ever consider sitting next to a local guy on the shore of a backwater slough, swilling a Pabst Blue Ribbon, while watching a heavy fishing

rod with 10-pound line gently twitch while fishing for bullhead beside a small fire at night? Would that be “beneath them”?

Or how about the guy who works in the factory or drives a truck who goes home and worries about how he’s ever going to retire and leave anything for his family? Would he ever accept an invitation from a friend to go to the Mansfield Trout Club in Stowe, where members have been on a waiting list for generations to soak in the luxury of casting a 1940s classic Orvis bamboo rod while sitting in a classic Mansfield canoe with a perfect patina of rubbed linseed oil on the mahogany gunwhales?

Do you undertand what I am getting at?

If you see yourself as a “local” who shoots deer because you need to feed your family, or shoots pike in the spring because it’s a traditional Vermont anomaly, would you accept an invitation from a friend who likes to shoot driven pheasant while dressed in moleskin pants, a tweed jacket, an ascot and wellies on his feet?

Or how about you, who thrills at the sound of a flushing ruffed grouse deep in the Adirondacks, while carrying a Perazzi shotgun with a gold inlaid pheasant and dog scene engraved on the stock? Would you be willing to sit beside me on a pickle bucket on the ice, jigging for yellow perch in the bright blue sunlight of the bay?

I have known both worlds and will share with you, my dear reader, that as diverse experiences as we have had, none of us are better than another for what we can afford for sporting experiences. We all could strengthen our appreciation of nature, if only we were courageous enough to shatter the walls of classism that separate us.



Courtesy photo

Chris Holwager of Vergennes with a handsome bullhead.

Here’s my point: Step outside of your comfortable social circle and take the time to learn a new way to enjoy what we all crave — connection to the world around us. Drop those judgements about “them” and join “us” — all of us.

(Bradley Carleton is executive director of Sacred Hunter, a privately owned limited liability corporation that seeks to educate the public on the spiritual connection of man to nature through hunting, fishing and foraging at sacredhunter.org.)

In The Outdoors

Rekindled fecundity in the cloudiest place in the lower 48 states

Elizabeth Bassett
Contributor

What’s to love about late February?

For starters, 10 hours of daylight. Red-winged blackbirds are back and birdsong fills the morning air. Woodpecker drumming echoes across the land. ‘Tis a fecund season, too, with mating — both silent and not-so-much — taking place all around us. And how about snow fleas?

Between courting owls and Eastern coyotes mating, a quiet night is a tall order in some neighborhoods right now. Coyotes begin breeding at 2 years of age. After about nine weeks of gestation, a litter of pups arrives.

As humans encroach on their habitat, coyotes’ reproductive strategy is key to survival. When their numbers decrease, remaining coyotes produce larger litters with higher survival rates. Farmers aiming to protect their livestock may find themselves in an unproductive cycle as killing coyotes only

increases the population.

About those snow fleas. For starters, they are not fleas but springtails. Mary Holland, a superb nature writer, tells us that springtails, measuring about 1/10 an inch, can propel themselves up to 20 times their body length. The human equivalent is a jump over one-third of a football field.

Snow fleas are black but their relatives can be red, orange, white, green, blue, yellow and brown.

Holland writes, “The springtail’s body is covered in scales and its mouth is deeply pocketed, looking like it lost its dentures and then sucked on a bunch of lemons.”

Several hundred thousand springtails may inhabit a cubic yard of earth where they feast on decaying fungi and algae. Only on warm spring days do they emerge to the surface, looking as if a pepper shaker was upended on the snow. Their hopping, or springing about, is fun to watch.

February averages the same number of

sunny days as January but there is more warmth and hope in that sunshine. When we bought our Charlotte home in the mid-’80s, then town clerk Hazel Prindle congratulated us on moving to the cloudiest place in the lower 48 states, the Champlain Valley.

The Farmers’ Almanac affirms, “Lake Champlain, the Atlantic Ocean and the Green Mountains are just a few of the factors that account for Vermont’s huge number of overcast days.” Vermont, it claims, sees only 58 days of full sunshine each year, whereas Seattle, legendary for its rain, experiences 71 sunny days.

Spending Vermont’s cloudiest months, November and December, slumbering is a viable strategy. Whether black bears are true hibernators is debated as definitions change, but call it what you will, they sleep through the coldest months when food is scarce. The Vermont Center for Ecostudies writes, the largest mammals that are true hibernators are marmots, including woodchucks, also known

as groundhogs, which tip the scales at about 11 pounds. Hibernation entails lowered body temperature, respirations and metabolic rates.

My garden nemesis, the woodchuck, lowers its heartrate from 80 beats per minute to just four or five during hibernation. Body temperature drops from 98 to 38 degrees. Woodchucks are rodents, characterized by incisors that grow continuously. Their teeth are kept short by constant gnawing, on my vegetables for example. During hibernation, growth stops. Male woodchucks awaken in February and prowl for females with whom to mate as the latter slumber in underground tunnels.

Other mammals breeding now include racoons, beavers and bobcats. River otters are giving birth after delayed implantation and a 10-month gestation.

February is a busy time. Even paying slight attention, we can’t help but notice that spring is in the air and the equinox is less than four weeks away.

Calendar of Events

Calendar by Mary Landon
Please send event listings to
calendar@thecharlottenews.org
at least three weeks in advance.

Dr. Strangelove film
Thursday, Feb. 23, 5:30-8 p.m.
Hinesburg’s Carpenter Carse Library screens “Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb,” a 1964 film directed by Stanley Kubrick. Enjoy popcorn and stay for a post-film discussion. Direct questions to rachel@carpentercarse.org.

Vermont’s woodpeckers
Thursday, Feb. 23, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Learn about our diverse array of woodpeckers from a bird expert, through the Green Mountain Audubon Society. This online presentation is free and requires pre-registration at greenmountainaudubon.org/events.

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 accompanying adult. Wear a hard hat, watch a tree being felled and learn about the importance of trees in our lives. Work in the woodshop to make a wooden product to bring home. Dress for being outside; more info and registration at tinyurl.com/yz9fcdx4. Also, see the Shelburne Farms calendar for info about winter horse-drawn rides.

Wildlife celebration
Saturday, Feb. 25, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Families participate in winter activities, snow or no snow, at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science in Quechee. Hunt for forest fairies, play games, see live reindeer and learn how raptors survive winter, plus much more. For more info, see tinyurl.com/yvzz6axt.

BX23
Saturday, Feb. 25, 5-9 p.m.
Performing artists and speakers gather at Burlington’s Flynn Theater for a celebration of Black culture, community and education in Vermont. The Black Experience 2023 is free and open to all. Angela Davis is a keynote presenter. For more info, see blackexperiencevt.com or tinyurl.com/yvnb3kes.

Reggae legend Livingston
Saturday, Feb. 25, 7 p.m.
The Town Hall Theater in Middlebury presents Carlton Livingston in concert joined by Prince Negasi. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/yc6fb5d7 or call the theater box office at 802-382-9222.

Get your cookies
Sunday, Feb. 26, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Charlotte Girl Scout Troupe 30066 will be selling boxes of cookies at a booth at Walmart in Williston. It’s not too late to stock up and support the local troupe.

Folk on stage
Sunday, Feb. 26, 4-6 p.m.
Canadian folk singer/songwriter Annie Sumi and her bandmates take the stage at the Richmond Congregational Church. Her sound has been described as contemplative and ethereal. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/4fwrr7jh or see valleystage.net for other upcoming shows in Richmond and Waterbury.

Indigenous artworks
Monday, Feb. 27, 1-2 p.m.
The on-going care and conservation of Shelburne Museum’s Native American art collection is the topic of this free webinar, led by Nancie Ravenel. Live audience Q&A follows. For more info and to register, see tinyurl.com/4n8daxjh.


Fish art contest
Entry deadline Tuesday, Feb. 28
Vermont Fish & Wildlife’s fish art contest deadline for submissions has arrived. The contest, open to youth ages 5-18, involves writing about a Vermont fish species and illustrating it (essay not required for grades K-3). For details on submissions and contest rules, see tinyurl.com/bddxv68v.

Family bird walk
Tuesday, Feb. 28, 10-11:30 a.m.
Join staff from Outreach for Earth Stewardship for a winter walk on the grounds of Shelburne

Express CPR class

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

Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services trains participants in compressions, 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 reserve a spot online, go to cvfrs.com/book-online or ask questions by emailing CPR@cvfrs.org.



Farms, looking for birds and wildlife. Best for ages 7 and older, with accompanying adult. For more info and to register, see tinyurl.com/5n93p5st. Event repeats Thursday, March 2.

How forests work
Tuesday, Feb. 28, 1 p.m.
The Burlington Garden Club hosts Chittenden County forester Ethan Tapper for a free talk on the importance of forests in preserving a healthy environment. The public is always invited to the club meetings, held at Faith United Methodist Church on Dorset Street in South Burlington. For more info, see bgcvt.org/events.html.

The Art of Mycology
Tuesday, Feb. 28, 5-7 p.m.
Highly detailed photographs of mushrooms are the subject of a new show at the Jackson Gallery, part of Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater. Author, photographer and mycology educator Meg Madden has an opening reception for her photo exhibit that runs through Sunday, March 19. For more info, see townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery. On Tuesday, March 14, at 6 p.m., Madden presents a slideshow and talk about her work and newest book, also at the Jackson Gallery in Middlebury.

Animal butchery workshop
Tuesday, Feb. 28, 6-8 p.m.
Learn how to break down an entire animal into familiar, as well as less common, cuts of meat. A family-style meal is included with each ticket. Event is at Philo Ridge Farm in Charlotte. More info and tickets may be found at tinyurl.com/bdduu9ca.

Zach Nugent in the loft
Wednesday, March 1, 6-8:45 p.m.
In his Uncorked shows, Zach plays new music, vintage tunes and includes some storytelling and special guests. He’s known for his soulful roots music, and he plays two free sets at Shelburne Vineyard. For more info, see tinyurl.com/4dcrryc5.

Race, identity and hiking
Wednesday, March 1, 7-8 p.m.
The Green Mountain Club presents Mardi Fuller, an avid hiker, outdoors person and first known Black person to hike the New Hampshire 48 (hiking all 48 peaks over 4,000 feet) in winter. Mardi’s talk is free, via Zoom. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/36pypebn.

Lovingkindness course
Wednesdays, March 1-Apr. 5
Shelburne’s Vermont Zen Center offers a six-week course on practicing lovingkindness, an ancient Buddhist meditation practice. Class is 7-8 p.m., in person or via Zoom. Appropriate for anyone of any belief, beginners or experienced practitioners. For more info or to register, see tinyurl.com/3hnkn7f5 or call 802-985-9746.

Virtual open studio
Thursday, March 2, 6-8 p.m.
Work on your own creative project while learning about what other artists are working on. Charlotte artist and poet JC Wayne hosts frequent open studio Thursdays and welcomes all levels to share the process. For more info and to register, see poartry.org/open-studio.

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 stargazing. For more info and to sign up, see tinyurl.com/344y8dw7.

Fingerpicking guitar
Friday, March 3, 6-8:30 p.m.
Aaron Flinn 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/mvt5r97p.

Choral Chameleon
Friday, March 3, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
This vocal ensemble specializes in new choral music, adventurous 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/bdfh423u.

Out of hibernation
Fri., Mar 3- Sunday, March 5
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 Exposition in Essex Junction, getting excited about all things gardening, flowers, soils and spring growth. For info, tickets and hours, see tinyurl.com/2jn2f6ke or call 888-518-6484.

Zen workshop
Saturday, March 4, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Participants are introduced to the body-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 tinyurl.com/26tcs82x 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 meal-prepped breakfasts, free of gluten and refined sugar. Cook along with a nutritional therapy practitioner in this free, virtual City Market class. For more info and to register, see tinyurl.com/46jnpbpe.

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 March, 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 difficult and dangerous work. Come to the fort in Ticonderoga, N.Y., to experience this living history event and explore this soldier’s base. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/ypwvuscv.

Animal science jobs
Saturday, March 4, 1-3 p.m.
High school and college students have an opportunity to meet with bovine, equine and companion animal industry professionals to talk about internships and jobs. The University of Vermont holds this free, drop-in event at the Miller Research Center, 500 Spear Street, South Burlington. More info at tinyurl.com/vjuj9n2v.

Wine and cheese
Saturday, March 4, 4:30-6 p.m.
City Market presents a guided wine and cheese pairing event at Shelburne Vineyard. Learn about the local wine scene while enjoying tasty combinations. Event is for ages 21+. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/xyz7b6u5.

Community ski day
Saturday, March 5, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
The Catamount Trail Association partners with the Craftsbury Outdoor Center to offer a day of trying out cross country skiing or snowshoeing 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-ski-days/.

Golda Meir documentary
Sunday, March 5, 2-3:30 p.m.
The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival presents the Vermont premiere of “Golda,” a film about the first and only woman to ever govern the state of Israel (1969-74). Film is shown at Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater. Trailer, tickets and more info at tinyurl.com/34py5xz9.

Veggie fermentation
Monday, March 6, 5:30-7 p.m.
Discover the health benefits of lactofermentation and how to do it at home. This hands-on, in-person class is held at City Market on Flynn Avenue in Burlington. No experience necessary; all materials included. For more info or to register, see tinyurl.com/ysezfnp9.

Full moon snowshoe
Monday, March 6, 6-7:30 p.m.
Weather permitting, a snowshoe walk happens on the trails at the Birds of Vermont Museum in Huntington. A fire and cocoa follow the walk. Event is free; donations gladly accepted. Dress appropriately and bring snowshoes. Pre-register by calling 802-434-2167.

See more events on our website:
charlottenewsvt.org/category/local-events





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Community Roundup

Buckley named president and CEO of Wake Robin

Wake Robin, a home to about 400 older adults off Bostwick Road just north of Charlotte, has named Meagan 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.

“Meagan has a proven track record, knows the community very 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 age 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 or older and are nutritious and delicious.

The menu is: beef round, 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 802-825-8546.

If you haven’t yet filled out a 2022 congregate 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: agewellvt.org.

Winona Smith Scholarship opportunities now open

The League of Women Voters of Vermont Education Fund 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 come highly recommended by their teacher.

Applications, due on May 1, can be completed online at lwvofvt.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/LWVTeacherRec.

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 lwvofvt.edfund@gmail.com.

Blood donation important during the winter

Winter brings seasonal illness 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.

Donors of 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 blood or platelets 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 the article “Love Letter to Libraries” in the New York Times, it is worth a look: tinyurl.com/3nyybsb4.

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@charlottepubliclibrary.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 outline and enroll to access the curriculum.

Black Experience celebration

Saturday, Feb. 25, 5-9 p.m.

The Black Experience 2023 is a free, holistic celebration of Vermont’s Black experience (cultural, communal, educational) of Black History Month at the Flynn Theatre. Featuring Angela Davis, Philadanco and Tricia Rose. Learn more about BX23 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 literary 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/y7tzz5ur.

Children’s programs

Young children’s story time

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.

No registration required.

Kindergarten/first grade story time

Tuesdays, 3 p.m., through Feb. 21

Please contact Cheryl for information about this session at youth@charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Preschool free play

Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

Exploring the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks, play dough — these 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/3RUJzop. Moderated by Jonathan Silverman. Questions for the candidates can be emailed to charlottegrangevt@gmail.com or posed during the event.

Stillwater Meditation

Saturdays 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 1 & 15, 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 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, sisterhood, 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.

“Gaia’s Garden” book study

Mondays, March 13-April 3, 7-8 p.m.

Back by popular demand. Join Karen



Tuininga 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 in 2020, 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/mw3rj2zs.

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@charlottepubliclibrary.org

For the latest information about programs, books and activity kits, sign up for our monthly newsletter: Charlotte Library Newsletter.

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.



The Town of Charlotte
MEETINGS
Visit charlottevt.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.

Senior Center News

Over 90 volunteers make varied programming possible



Lori York
Director

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.

Did 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 event or activity. From the popular Monday Munches, 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@charlotteseniorcentervt.org. If there is a specific program that you would like to offer at the center, please contact Lori York at lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.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@charlotteseniorcentervt.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 newsletters at charlotteseniorcentervt.org. The “Week Ahead” email is sent out on Friday mornings with activities, lunch menus and special programming for the upcoming week.

Programs

Birding Expedition

Wednesday, March 15, 9 a.m.

There is a wide range of birding habitats in Chittenden County. Join avid bird watcher 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 performing cellist from Charlotte. Join us for this solo cello performance at the senior center. You can listen to his music at jonah-hutchin.com. Cost: Free. No registration required.

Meditation

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

Spring is in the air and it’s time to clean out old habits and start some new, healthy ones. Join Charlie Nardoizzi and meditate. Meditation is an easy-to-learn practice that has been proven to reduce anxiety, stress, pain and depression. This five-part series will explore breathing techniques, chants and guided visualizations to lead into meditation. Learn ways to deal with an unruly mind, difficult relations and personal stress by applying meditation philosophy. No experience necessary. Cost: \$50. Pre-registration and payment due by March 9.

T'ai Chi Ch'uan for beginners

Thursdays, 10-11 a.m.

T'ai 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 Kvasnak weekly in this integrative 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, including 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 Suzanne at 802-324-8853. Cost: Free. All skill levels are welcome.

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

Unlike traditional paint & sips, this “coffee & canvas” will allow you to explore 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 & 25, 9 a.m.-noon.

Students will be painting spring-themed subjects in this fun four-week class. Beginners 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 opportunities 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 experience 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 explore 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, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

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



Photo by Lori York

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



Photo by Jim Hyde

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



Courtesy photo

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 charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday lunches

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

Weekly Age Well Grab & Go meals

Pick up on Thursdays 10-11a.m. at the Charlotte Senior Center. Registration is required by Monday for the Thursday meal. To register, contact Carol Pepin at 802-425-



Photo by Lori York

Jordan Cotto of the Vermont Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association gave a presentation on the 10 warning signs of Alzheimer’s.

6345 at meals@charlotteseniorcentervt.org. \$5 suggested meal donation but not required.

Senior Center contact info

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

Write Ingredients

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.



PRESORTED STANDARD

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