

Your nonprofit community news source since 1958

The Charlotte News

Thursday, April 6, 2023 | Volume 65 Number 20

Spring felines

Photo by Lee Krohn

These fuzzy nubs that start to appear on the branches of pussy willows are a sign of spring's approach. These silvery tufts also give the plant its common name in the Northeast because they are thought to look like cats' paws. According to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, the hairs insulate these early bloomers from freezing. These are actually flowers without petals that don't look like flowers at all. In full bloom, these flowers are also named for cats; they're called catkins, which is from the Dutch word for kittens (katteken).



State champion

Courtesy photo

Ryan Laberge won his weight division at the state championship wrestling tournament in St. Johnsbury Academy on Sunday, March 26, wrestling with the Colchester Cobras. Ryan is in first grade at Charlotte Central School. It was his first year of wrestling, and Ryan finished the wrestling season undefeated.

Town plans more user-, mobile-friendly website

Alicia Wolfram
Community News Service

A group of Charlotters is rolling up their sleeves to create a more user-friendly town website. The project, still in its early stages, is set to finish by July 1, with a beta version launching a few weeks before then.

The website can be a useful tool to find information on trail maps, selectboard agendas, meeting minutes and more. But it can be hard for residents to wade through:

The homepage features a tab for each of the website's 25 subsections, many of which branch out into two or three additional dropdown menus, creating a maze for users to navigate.

"It's not at all intuitive or visually engaging, it's very cluttered with text and it just really doesn't conform to contemporary standards in terms of ease of use across multiple platforms," said town planner Larry Lewack.

Lewack organized a kickoff meeting for the project March 14 to get people excited and recruit help. Groups with a presence on the website — such as Charlotte Library and Charlotte Recreation — were invited to the meeting to help get the ball rolling.

"I don't want to be the sole architect of the new design," Lewack said. "I want it to be something that's co-created among all the people who have an interest in making sure that we have a more functional and usable website."

Charlotte uses a web-hosting platform called Catalis. According to its website, the company "is one of the leading public

sector software companies for government and constituents across North America."

Catalis, responsible for the design and upkeep of the current town website, reconfigured its template in the last couple of years for all clients. The new framework is already in widespread use in other towns.

Now the planners need to reorganize and import the site's material into the new format.

About a half-dozen volunteers emerged from the initial meeting introducing the

project a couple of weeks ago to form a design team. The group will meet every couple of weeks until the launch date, Lewack said, to make decisions about layout and content so that the website can be as accessible as possible.

Lewack said the goal is to better serve existing customers and also help non-residents learn more about the town without getting lost and sidetracked.

The new format is more graphically engaging and mobile-friendly, with rotating pictures and information organized to reflect relevance and demand.

"About two-thirds of all people who are using websites are accessing it through a mobile device like mobile phone or tablet," said Lewack. "And given that, it's really important that websites be completely portable across platforms and that they make sense and can be read and used."

(Community News Service works in a partnership with The Charlotte News and other local media outlets to provide opportunities to University of Vermont students.)



Town manager versus town admin debate ramps up

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

An ad hoc group collecting signatures for a petition to change Charlotte's municipal government from a town administrator to a town manager has drawn the ire of some of the selectboard.

The group held a meeting to talk about the issue at the Charlotte Senior Center on Saturday, March 25. Selectboard chair Jim Faulkner said he was invited to the meeting at the last minute that morning, which he was careful to assert was not an official town meeting.

Frank Tenney also attended, but no other selectboard members did because that would have been too many discussing town business at an unannounced meeting and a violation of open meeting law.

The meeting, which both sides of the town manager issue have described as tense and heated, ended with a compromise for the group to pause its efforts until after an official meeting with the selectboard on Monday, April 17.

"I have no idea of whether a town manager or town administrator is better or worse, and maybe the benefits and pros and cons of each," Faulkner said at the selectboard meeting this Monday, March 27. "The biggest issue is, I think, that we might rush a little too fast on this concept."

Not only does the selectboard need to research the advantages and disadvantages of both systems of town government, but it needs to share that information with the

"If the town decides to do it, it's important for residents and town officials to know why they want to make the switch and what is the underlying issue they are trying to solve"

— Lee Krohn, Shelburne town manager

voters, Faulkner said.

"The town manager may be the right thing for us, but we don't know that, do we? We don't know how it affects our road commissioner, the town clerk, every department we have here, and the cost," he said. "This is the worst time to think about increasing costs on anything."

Louise McCarren applauded Faulkner for having the discussion, but criticized the way the issue was introduced by the group. "I am very unhappy with the way it has been brought forth."

Although he is a resident of Charlotte, Lee Krohn, Shelburne town manager, said he isn't taking sides on this issue. But, he came to the Saturday meeting because he thinks this is a good time for Charlotte to consider the change because Dean Bloch, Charlotte town administrator, is retiring at the end of October.

"When you have transitions, it's a good time to look at things like this," Krohn said. "The town might decide not to do it."

If the town decides to do it, it's important for residents and town officials to know why they want to make the switch and what is the underlying issue they are trying to solve, he said.

One thing Krohn has noticed about Charlotte is how long its selectboard agendas tend to be. In Shelburne his agendas are usually just a few inches long and on one side of a piece of paper. Charlotte's agendas often take up multiple sheets, and meetings frequently last longer than three hours.

He believes that after a meeting has gone on longer than two hours "things go downhill fast" because people's attention spans don't last that long.

Krohn said, when he first became town manager in Shelburne, he got some pushback for his shorter agendas, but then selectboard members realized that just because things were more efficient didn't mean they were shutting down debate.

After they got used to the shorter agenda,

selectboard members in Shelburne told Krohn, "This is efficient, and I can get up in the morning."

Former Charlotte Selectboard member Lane Morrison, who is at the center of the town-manager petition drive, said the selectboard is "pretty conscientious" about letting everybody who has an item on the agenda speak, so meetings go on for "hours and hours."

"Not everything is of equal importance," Morrison said. A town manager would have the authority to deal with lots of things, which would free up the selectboard "so they can act more like a board of directors."

He believes that with a town manager running interference the selectboard could spend more time on issues of greater importance, like the new town garage or the transition to a town-run fire and rescue service.

Morrison said they would wait to submit their petition until after the April 17 selectboard meeting. If the petitioners decide to go forward, the first step would be to turn the document over to town clerk Mary Mead, who would check to see if the signatures were from residents who are registered voters.

After Town Meeting Day, there were 3,329 registered voters and Morrison said he has at least 200 signatures which would be just over 6 percent of Charlotte voters.

According to Vermont statute, 5 percent of voters are needed to require a town vote on adopting the town manager form of municipal government.

News fromThe Charlotte News

We’ve always relied on generosity of volunteers

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

“I’ve always depended on the kindness of strangers,” Blanche Dubois says at the end of “A Streetcar Named Desire.”

Well, this newspaper has always depended on the generosity of volunteers. For more than six decades, volunteers have been at the core of The Charlotte News.

While the kindness of strangers comes at the end of Tennessee Williams’ play, from this newspaper’s beginning, the generosity of volunteers has been constant and crucial.

The Charlotte News is, and always has been, a community newspaper through and through. As a newspaper for the community by the community, volunteers are its heart and soul.

We have several volunteer opportunities that are central to our mission:

- For example, if you would like to develop your digital expertise and website skills and have a couple of hours available every Wednesday afternoon or evening, I’d love to talk with you about proofreading and checking links within articles to be posted on our website.

It is a central part of our mission to

spread the reach of the newspaper to people within and beyond Charlotte. Because our newsletter and the corresponding website posts come out in the weeks between the newspaper’s distribution, The Charlotte News is becoming more and more a weekly publication.

Your help with this work would not only mean big things for the newspaper, but could help you acquire or improve digital skills.

- We’re also looking for someone to work on pulling together our Calendar of Events. For a year and a half, Mary Landon has done an amazing job of compiling information about wonderful events in Charlotte and surrounding communities. Now, she wants time to travel. As much as we will miss her, we certainly understand.

The Calendar of Events is a vital resource keeping the “fun” in fundamental as it pertains to the newspaper’s mission of sharing important and lively information about what’s happening. (That sort of sounds like the definition of a community newspaper.)

- Also vital to a community newspaper is keeping young people well represented in these pages. Youth sports coverage is

an important way that happens.

We need someone to help with sports coverage, collecting scores and a few details of Champlain Valley Union High School games and other youth competitions.

It’s a great opportunity to bring more recognition to young people in our area and to develop your writing and sports reporting skills.

- Speaking of writing, we are always looking for folks to write for the newspaper — either for every edition or once a month or as the spirit strikes them. One thing we think would be of interest to readers is a regular cooking and recipes column.

- Another possibility is writing about farming in Charlotte. This town has deep agricultural roots, and we would like to ensure regular coverage of farms and farming in these pages.

In short, if you would like to help with producing or writing for The Charlotte News, the Charlotte sky is the limit. If you can help with any of our needs or have an idea about a regular column you’d like to write, I would love to hear from you at scooter@thecharlottenews.org or 802-881-4728.



Mission Statement

To engage and inform Charlotte and nearby communities by:

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

Editorial independence

The editor makes final decisions on stories that are published in The Charlotte News. While we are funded by advertising revenue and donor contributions, our news judgments are made in accordance with our mission and are independent of all sources of financial support.

Letters, Opinions and Obituaries

Consistent with our mission The Charlotte News publishes letters to the editor, opinion pieces and obituaries submitted by our readers. All such materials are subject to review and approval by the editor in accordance with the following standards and requirements:

- The views expressed in letters or opinion pieces are those of the author, and are not endorsed by either the board or the editorial staff of the paper. Opinion pieces and letters to the editor will be clearly labelled as such.
- The Charlotte News strives to stay clear of conflicts of interest. If an actual or perceived conflict arises or becomes known at a later date, it will be fully disclosed.
- While letters or opinion pieces may endorse political positions or candidates for public office, the paper always remains objective and impartial in such matters.
- All submissions are strictly monitored for personal attacks, score settling, blatantly false information and inflammatory language. The editor reserves the right to reject any submission that is deemed contrary to the paper’s standards.
- All submissions are subject to editing for clarity, factual accuracy, tone, length and consistency with our publishing style.
- Efforts will be made to publish submissions in their entirety and to preserve the original intent and wording, but minor editing may nonetheless be necessary. Contributors will be notified before publishing, if in the editor’s judgment, significant changes are required, or the submission is rejected.
- Submission requirements:
- Letters to the editor, opinion pieces and obituaries should be emailed to news@thecharlottenews.org as attachments in .doc format and must contain the writer’s full name, town of residence and, for editing purposes only, contact phone number.
- Letters may not exceed 300 words, obituaries 500 words and opinion pieces 750 words.
- All published letters and opinion pieces will include the writer’s name and town of residence.
- Before publishing any obituary, we will need proper verification of death.

Editorial Staff

Editor: Scooter MacMillan (scooter@thecharlottenews.org)
Production Manager: Anna Cyr (anna@thecharlottenews.org)
Proofreaders: Mike & Janet Yantachka, Katherine Arthaud

Business Staff

Ad manager: Susie Therrien (ads@thecharlottenews.org)
Bookkeeper: Susan Jones (billing@thecharlottenews.org)

Board Members

President & Publisher: John Quinney (john@thecharlottenews.org)
Treasurer: Margery McCracken (treasurer@thecharlottenews.org)
Secretary: Meredith Moses
Board members: Claudia Marshall, Peter Joslin, Bill Regan, Julia Russell, Dave Speidel, Vince Crockenberg (emeritus), John Hammer (emeritus)
Technical advisor: Melissa Mendelsohn, Orchard Road Computers

Website: charlottenewsvt.org

Subscription Information

The Charlotte News is delivered at no cost to all Charlotte residences. Subscriptions are available for first-class delivery at \$60 per calendar year.

Want a subscription? Subscribe on our website, charlottenewsvt.org

Postmaster/Send address changes to:

The Charlotte News, P.O. Box 251,
Charlotte, VT 05445 Telephone: 802-425-4949
Circulation: 2,100

Copyright © 2023 TCN, Inc., dba
Member of the New England Newspaper
and Press Association, LION Publishers
and the Vermont Press Association.

**Support local
nonprofit reporting.**



**Scan this QR code with your
phone camera and donate today.**

Julia Russell joins the newspaper’s board of directors

John Quinney
Publisher and President

As the result of a recent unanimous vote, Julia Russell is the newest member of our board of directors.

Julia moved to Charlotte in 1995 with her husband Charles and their three kids, Amanda, Katharine and Michael, who all grew up in Charlotte, attended Charlotte Central School and graduated from Champlain Valley Union High. She enjoys

living in Charlotte, especially for the beauty of the mountains and the lake, and the ability to get outside in all seasons.

After working at the University of Vermont for 27 years, Julia retired in early 2022 from her position as the associate chief information officer. She held this position for 10 years with responsibilities that included overseeing the University of Vermont’s Enterprise Technology Services group of 80 full-time staff and 20

part-time student workers. Julia had operational responsibility for the services provided by five IT departments and developed and managed annual budgets in the \$15 million range. Scattered through

her resume are references to a wide range of skills and experience including strategic planning, management, business process design, software evaluation and qualitative research methods such as focus groups, hardware and software support.

Julia holds an Ed.D. from UVM, an MBA from Boston University, and a BA from Dartmouth. Her work-related activities include the Anti-Racism in Academia Journey, Introduction to Courageous Conversations and Lean Train the Trainer. Over the years, she has volunteered at the Charlotte Library, with the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program, the Green Mountain Athletic Association and the Women in Science program at Dartmouth.

Julia has several hobbies and interests that have kept her busy for years, especially running, gym, reading, cooking and knitting. She has also spent several very rewarding years volunteering with Results, an anti-poverty advocacy group. She writes, “Since retiring last year, I’ve added spinning and pickleball to the fitness mix, which are both more fun than they have a right to be, and I’m learning to weave on a floor loom, which is more challenging than I expected. I’m also doing some gardening in the hopes of growing more than weeds and runaway tomatoes.” Whenever possible, Julia and Charlie travel to Baltimore and Syracuse to spend time with their kids and grandkids.

As our newest board member, Julia expects to work on expanding and improving the services we provide to our readers, with a focus on “all things digital.” She writes, “I’m excited to join the board to explore what I can contribute to all the good work they do. I’m especially looking forward to working on the website, the email newsletter and other electronic possibilities. The Charlotte News has a great team and I’m pleased to be joining the group.”

From everyone here at the paper, welcome aboard, Julia.



Julia Russell

Feeling peckish?



Photo by Lee Krohn

Photographer Lee Krohn said he’s never seen a woodpecker go this wild on a tree. Chittenden County Forester Ethan Tapper agreed that this was the work of an especially enthusiastic pileated woodpecker. This is also unusual because when a tree gets this decayed and pecked upon, it’s usually laying on the ground and not standing.

Commentary

Selectboard’s adjustments to proposed budget explained

James Faulkner
Contributor

No matter whether you voted in favor or against the town budget on March 7, we can all agree and celebrate the fact that the close vote was a great demonstration of the power of democracy, and that every vote really does count.

Since the defeat of the town budget on March 7, the selectboard has overseen a reduction of budgeted expenses by \$150,195 (5.12 percent) and an increase in non-tax revenue by \$11,000. Additionally, the Library Board of Trustees voluntarily reduced its budget (which was approved on March 7) by \$4,688, which will contribute to the reduction of the tax burden on town residents.

The reduction of expenses was achieved with the help of town committees, departments and interested residents — and

the selectboard would like to express its gratitude to all those who participated in this effort.

Reductions were achieved in 28 separate line items within 14 categories or departments. Additionally, and importantly, the senior center has begun to pivot to look at opportunities for generating new non-tax revenues, which will help reduce the reliance on the property tax.

Of particular note, two categories of expenditures affecting employee compensation were included in the budget reduction: (1) the standard 2-3 percent annual raise provided for in the Salary Administration Policy was eliminated for fiscal year 2024 (i.e., July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024); and (2) the town’s support of employees’ health insurance was reduced by \$20,000 for fiscal year 2024.

With regard to the elimination of the annual raise — the selectboard felt this was

appropriate under the circumstances and in consideration of the pay adjustments that were implemented during the past two fiscal years, based on recommendations from Gallagher, Flynn & Co., and the Library Board of Trustees agreed to eliminate the annual raise for library employees as well. In contrast, the selectboard did not feel it was appropriate to reduce the cost-of-living adjustment for employees; although the cost-of-living adjustment is substantial at 7.5 percent, it is based on a widely used metric, the Consumer Price Index, and it reflects the real inflation that occurred during the past year.

With regard to the reduction to health insurance — this is envisioned as the first phase of a two- or three-year process that will pare town support to just covering employees; employees who want to cover their partners and families would be responsible for paying for the difference. The

exact way this will be implemented is still to be determined; to that end, the selectboard plans on convening a working group to make recommendations to the selectboard.

The reduction of the expense budget by \$150,195 represents a 5.12 percent decrease from the budget that was voted on March 7; significant cuts were also made prior to putting the budget in front of voters. With the increase of \$11,000 in the revenue budget, the amount to be raised by taxes has been reduced by 12.05 percent from the budget that was voted on March 7.

The selectboard feels the resulting budget is consistent with the town’s goals and values. We believe that addressing the town’s various needs requires balancing competing goals. We feel this budget provides an appropriate balance, and we urge voters to support the budget on May 2.

(James Faulkner is chair of the Charlotte Selectboard.)

Switching to e-lawn care equipment is more important than ever

Steven Wisbaum
Contributor

While the annoying wail of conventional lawn mowers has long been associated with summer, that sound is thankfully becoming less common with the growing popularity of battery electric lawn equipment.

There’s lots of reasons why so many people are switching to e-lawn equipment. Due to advancements in lithium-ion battery technology, there are now over 25 manufacturers, including at least nine offering residential riding mowers. And in Vermont, almost all the electric utilities offer rebates, which makes e-lawn equipment (purchased or picked-up in Vermont) even more affordable.

Operating cost savings and convenience is also a huge motivating factor. E-lawn equipment eliminates the need to buy, transport and handle gasoline, doesn’t require oil changes and tuneups, and should run for many years without needing any repairs. And without any oil or gas to spill out, most walk-behind e-mowers are designed to stand upright for easy storage. Equally important, e-lawn equipment is quiet and emission free.

With ever-mounting evidence of the existential impacts of human-caused climate change, many people are trying to shrink their personal carbon footprint, either by driving electric cars, weatherizing their homes, flying less, installing solar photovoltaic systems or heat pumps, and switching to e-lawn equipment.

While a single residential conventional mower or “chore tool” doesn’t burn nearly as much fuel as a car or home furnace, the collective impact of all this lawn equipment is huge. In fact, a recent Federal Highway Administration analysis estimated that in Vermont alone, over 5 million gallons of gasoline are burned annually by lawn-care equipment, which generates over 5,000 tons of cabon dioxide. And this doesn’t even include the millions of gallons of diesel fuel consumed by diesel-powered lawn mowers operated by contractors, local and state public works departments, golf courses, schools, etcetera.

So, if your gas-powered lawn equipment is at or nearing retirement, and you’re considering making the switch, here are some things to keep in mind:

- How to choose: Since there’s lots of manufacturers, and quality is relatively consistent, choice will largely depend on the different features available. Ask your friends and neighbors about their equipment, and try it out. The Mow Electric website also has links to some of the popular video product reviews and websites.
- Stick with one manufacturer: If you’re buying multiple items (e.g., mower and chore tools), stick with one manufacturer since batteries and chargers are not interchangeable

between manufacturers.

- Battery capacity/run-time: For larger yards, it’s a good idea to buy the higher capacity/longer run-time battery options.
- Buy local: Lastly, while e-lawn equipment can be purchased on-line and at big-box stores, most hardware, building supply and lawn equipment stores now sell e-lawn equipment.

(Steven Wisbaum is the founder of the Mow Electric! Campaign and website that contains a list of available equipment, links to equipment reviews and comparison videos, a directory for contractors in Vermont offering e-mowing services, and links to utility rebates.)

Correction

A letter to the editor in the March 23 edition thanking voters for the passing of the school budget was incorrectly attributed to Bonnie Birdsall and her town of residence was misidentified. Although the intention of members of the Champlain Valley School District was for the letter to be attributed to the board of directors, the newspaper does not publish letters from boards, committees, commissions, organizations or groups, only from individuals.

The Charlotte News NEXT PUBLICATION DATES

April 20

Copy Deadline: Friday, April 14
Ads Deadline: Friday, April 14

May 4

Copy Deadline: Friday, April 28
Ads Deadline: Friday, April 28

May 18

Copy Deadline: Friday, May 12
Ads Deadline: Friday, May 12

TO ADVERTISE CONTACT:
ads@thecharlottenews.org

SEND YOUR CHARLOTTE NEWS TO:
news@thecharlottenews.org

Town

Selectboard begrudgingly passes cannabis application

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Was a motion to approve a cannabis cultivation license voted on or tabled? This issue inserted a conundrum into an already confusing application process. On March 27, the Charlotte Selectboard debated whether it had voted on a cannabis cultivation application at its March 13 meeting, or if board member Kelly Devine’s motion had died for lack of a second. Devine insisted the board did vote on her motion to approve the application and defeated it 4-1 with hers the only vote in support. Board member Frank Tenney was just as insistent that her motion died without a second. This newspaper asked at that meeting if the motion had been voted on and what the vote tally was. A couple of members of the board said the motion was defeated 4-1. Here’s what happened at the March 13 meeting: After Devine made her motion, there was silence as the members waited for one of them to second it. Their reluctance to respond was most likely due to their frustration with state

restrictions on the towns’ participation in approving applications. Most of the selectboard members expressed their resentment that the state’s regulations give them little authority over the application process. After a long pause, on a recording, Tenney can be heard saying, “As much as I hate the process that’s happened, I don’t think it’s right to hold it up.” To which member Lewis Mudge says, “Well, then second the motion.” Very clearly, Tenney says, “I’ll second the motion.” But it’s not as cut and dried as that because when chair Jim Faulkner asks for all those who support Devine’s motion to say “aye,” there’s another long silence. On the recording, not even Devine can be heard saying “aye.” Finally, Devine asks, “So, everyone else is a nay?” This seems to indicate that she thought she had cast an “aye” vote.



Although she can’t actually be heard casting her vote on March 13, Mudge said at the March 27 meeting that Devine had voted in favor of her own motion by putting her hand up. When the board couldn’t agree on what had happened, Mudge joked that they would figure out what had transpired, and that “one of us is going to buy the other a Coke.” It sounds like Tenney is in arrears for at least one soft drink. Needless to say, the process of approving applications for cannabis cultivation in Charlotte is almost as confusing as trigonometry — right now. Unlike trigonometry, there may be hope for the process becoming less perplexing. A couple of applications were submitted before the selectboard voted to give itself the authority to convene as the town’s cannabis control commission to consider applications. The planning commission is also working on changes to land-use regulations covering the cannabis cultivation application process. Ultimately, the board decided on March 27 that the question of whether a vote had been cast or a motion had failed for want of a second at the previous meeting was a moot point. Either way, it was still an issue on the board’s plate. “I’m wondering since it wasn’t approved, but it wasn’t denied, if the selectboard could just make a motion and not worry about what happened last time,” town administrator Dean Bloch said. The board agreed that this made the most sense. Then Tenney made a motion to approve an application from Vermont Cultivars for cannabis cultivation. The application was already approved by the former zoning administrator, and the appeal period passed without an appeal being submitted, Faulkner said, “so, no matter what we think about it or want to do about it, it’s a done deal.” Mudge said he would vote against the application because the process is “Kafkaesque,” invoking the Bohemian writer whose stories have come to be seen as the epitome of bizarre and confusing situations which people feel powerless to understand or control. “It represents everything that’s wrong, in my opinion, with some of the things coming out of Montpelier,” Mudge said. He once again expressed his displeasure that the board was being required to consider an application whose location it cannot disclose, according to the state. However, in the end, the motion to approve the application passed — this time 3-2, with Mudge and Louise McCarren voting against it.

PUBLIC NOTICE
The Sports Car Club
Of Vermont
Presents The Historic
Mt. Philo Hillclimb
May 06-07, 2023
At Mt. Philo
In Charlotte, Vt

The Mt. Philo mountain road and hiking trails will be closed to the public from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Saturday and Sunday. A historic hillclimb is a speed event up the mountain road with drivers racing against the clock. We thank the residents of Charlotte and the State Parks for being a wonderful host for this historic event. Thank you! www.SCCV.org

Winter coda



Photo by Jeanette Armell

A deer enjoying the sunset and the approach of spring on Lake Road.

Bunnies ready for Easter!

JAMIE TWO COATS TOYSHOP

LOCATED IN THE

OF SHELBURNE

54 Falls Road
Saturday and Sunday 11:00 to 4:00
Monday thru Friday 10:00 to 5:00

New Arrivals!
Wonderful dresses ,
T-shirts, and bathing suits
in abundance!

Hi Neighbor

York: Finding her niche at the Charlotte Senior Center

Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

There’s a bit of an age gap between Lori York’s two careers but it’s not about her age. Instead, it’s a gap between the ages of the people she has served. York worked in admissions for Waldorf Schools in Keene, N.H., and Vermont before jumping a few generations to her current position as the director of the Charlotte Senior Center.

York and her family moved to Shelburne in 2018 so she could take the job of admissions director for the Waldorf School. As the pandemic hit, the school laid off 27 members of their faculty and staff. York was not one of those people, but her job was expanded to include marketing and development and she opted not to stay on.

When she saw that there was an opening at the senior center she decided to apply and has been thrilled with that decision.

“It’s taken my whole adult life to find out where I was meant to be,” York said.

Last December, York was promoted to the position of director. At first, she worried whether she would be able to do the job because she considers herself an introvert, but she found that being the host of the center was energizing.

“It’s not the way people might picture a nursing home with people sitting in rocking chairs, doing puzzles,” she said. “We’ve got kayaking, hiking and daily exercise classes, as well as art, music and language classes. I can’t wait until I retire and can take part in the activities.

For those new to the center, York recommends attending the Monday Munch. Every week, a different group of volunteer cooks and dishwashers prepare meals for 60

people.

York notes that although the center’s mission is to serve those 50 and over, all adults are welcome. For classes with limited enrollment, seniors will get priority. She is proud of some of the new programming at the center including a partnership with Age Well for weekly Grab-and-Go meals. The center distributed 4,866 meals the first year of the program.

“Chittenden County may be affluent,” York said, “but there is still a lot of food insecurity.”

The center partnered with the United Way, which allowed York to recruit four volunteers to learn how to teach a Bone Builders class. The senior center now offers two weekly classes which are attended regularly by 27 people. York lauded Bone Builders as a great way to help prevent injuries caused by osteoporosis.

She noted that the center has a variety of exercise classes including one gentle yoga class and another geared toward building strength.

The center works with the library for one-on-one tech support for seniors and the Vermont Attorney General’s office for lessons on scam prevention. York is in the process of putting together a Senior Resource Fair to be held in May which will have tables staffed by members of a variety of organizations including AARP, Age Well, the Alzheimer’s Association and the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Recognizing that there are a lot of working seniors, York is trying to reach out with programs in the evenings and on weekends. Her hope is that some of these seniors might

decide to volunteer with the center after attending a class or event.

“We have over 90 volunteers, which is the only way we can provide these programs,” York said, noting that she is the only full-time staff member and is helped by a part-time center coordinator.

Volunteers are instrumental in developing new programs and last year, one of those new events was a Veterans’ Day lunch which led York to decide to do more outreach to veterans.

The center also holds a drop-in event on Thanksgiving and Christmas for food and conversation, since holidays can be difficult for seniors who are living alone.

York appreciates the work of her volunteers because she is one herself, helping out at the Shelburne Food Shelf, joining the Lions Club and being a member of the Shelburne Social Services Committee.

“If you’re part of a community you should give back,” she said.

York truly believes she has found her niche at the senior center. “I’m grateful to come here every day,” she said. “It’s really the right



Photo by Cassie York

Lori York, pictured here at Village Wine and Coffee in Shelburne, feels as though she has found her dream job at the Charlotte Senior Center.

job for me and it’s a gift to come here every day.”

Events

Here, there will be dragons

Vicky Drew
Contributor

Registration is open for Lake Champlain’s 17th annual Dragon Boat Festival on Sunday, Aug. 6.

The festival is a favorite annual event at the Burlington waterfront featuring community teams racing in 20-person canoes from Splash to the Coast Guard station. Community teams are created from workplace communities, families, clubs and more. New and returning teams are welcome and can register at dragonheartvermont.org/lake-champlain-dragon-boat-festival.

This year, Dragonheart Vermont will work together with Community Bank to host the annual event. Dragonheart Vermont is the local non-profit organization that organizes and hosts the festival each year.

Dragonheart Vermont strives to empower breast cancer survivors and supporters

through the challenging sport of dragon boating and instilling in its members the values of teamwork, fitness and community giving. The Lake Champlain Dragon Boat Festival is a charitable event that raises money to support cancer survivors locally for Dragonheart Vermont and this year’s pledge partner, the McClure Miller Respite House.

Participants dress up in colorful costumes, compete for spirit awards with team cheers, warm up with Zumba and ride the dragons to raise money for charity. They enjoy the entertainment provided by local artists like Burlington Taiko and paddle to support cancer survivors in the community.

Dragonheart Vermont has given more than \$1 million to various cancer-related organizations, including Camp Ta Kum Ta, the McClure Miller Respite House, Integrative Therapies at the University of Vermont Medical Center’s cancer center and, most recently, the Cancer Patient Support




Courtesy photo

Network.

Teams are made up of 16 paddlers (plus a drummer who sits on the front of the boat and keeps time). Registration fees include an entry fee of \$50 with a \$75 fundraising commitment. The registration fee includes

a 75-minute practice session on practice weekend (July 9-10) with some of the best coaches in the country, at least two races on festival day and souvenir shirts and medals. Extra awards are given for team spirit, top team fundraising and top finishers.




I’M GOING TO BE A DOCTOR!

Acceptances to:

- Stanford • Univ. Pennsylvania
- Univ. Pittsburgh - Carnegie Mellon
- UVM • Univ. Rochester
- Univ. Wisconsin

Check out the complete list of accepted grad programs, 200+ colleges, and prep schools!

Founded in 2004 by Margo Bartsch, celebrating 19 years of success



College Essay CoachSM

www.CollegEssayCoach.com

mbartsch@collegeessaycoach.com • (802) 985-3770

Food Shelf News

Food shelf swings into spring, still seeking new home

Maj Eisinger
Contributor

April finds the Food Shelf in full swing, planning ways to augment the supply of fresh food, clothing and assistance for community members in need.

But, we are also looking for a new home, hoping to find a first-floor space of about 600 square feet with room for parking and receipt of large food orders.

As emergency pandemic grant assistance from the Foodbank expires, we appreciate all those in our community who strengthen the safety net for those in need. The Charlotte Food Shelf is grateful to be a beneficiary of the Farm Stand Together program. Meaghin Kennedy reports this small nonprofit will provide gift cards allowing those with food insecurity to shop at selected local farmstands.

Applications for the Farm Stand Together gift card are available through the Charlotte Food Shelf or directly through

farmstandtogethervt.org/apply. For more information visit farmstandtogethervt.org.

Children benefit from the Shoe In program. This program uses donations to the food shelf to subsidize the purchase of sneakers, required for gymnasium floors. If your child is in need of “no mark” sneakers, please contact Betsy Lloyd, Charlotte Central School counselor.

Also, used clothing donated to the Grange in April helps Charlotte children. Those doing spring cleaning can put aside donations of gently used items of children’s clothing for this purpose.

For those who look forward to gardening season, please remember the food shelf as you plan your spring planting. If you grow, consider planting an extra row. Locally grown produce helps offset rising food prices. We hope that this lovely Charlotte tradition will continue to provide healthy leafy greens and vegetables to those in need.

The food shelf is grateful for monetary contributions from Lisa Crispin and Robert

Downing, Stephen and Lynne Hale, Deborah Cook and the Hannaford Fight Hunger Bag Program. We also extend a big thank you to Rayne Herzog, the general manager of the Shelburne Athletic Club and the 18 vigorous participants in the 14-day My Zone Challenge, whose efforts resulted in a much appreciated donation.

Donations of foodstuffs are also much appreciated; we thank Stewart’s Bread, the Minkler family and Will Perry, and all who contributed to Our Lady of Mount Carmel’s monthly food drive.

As the food shelf looks for a new home, we remain grateful for the many years the Congregational Church has provided space to us in their basement. Please email Peggy Sharpe, food shelf secretary, at ckmj@comcast.net with any leads.

The Charlotte Food Shelf remains committed to providing dignified access to healthy food and assistance to those in need. We remind the community that if you or someone you know in Charlotte or North

Ferrisburgh is facing utility shut-off or an unexpected hardship, help is available. All request and grants are kept private, and are available by simply calling 802-425-3252 or by filling out a request form. Request forms are available during food shelf open hours or on our website at tinyurl.com/jrse63ap.

The food shelf is open for food distribution from 4-6 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Our address is 403 Church Hill Road behind the Congregational Church in Charlotte.

Masking is encouraged during the ongoing pandemic and its new virus variants. For emergency food, please call John at 802-425-3130. If you cannot come to the Food Shelf due to COVID symptoms, or seek further information about the Food Shelf, please call 802-425-3252.

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

Community Roundup

Conservation Stewardship Program open for applications, state funds available

A new state-funded program, the Vermont Farmer Ecosystem Stewardship Program, will assist Vermont farmers to achieve high levels of stewardship on their land by supporting them to enroll in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Stewardship Program. The largest conservation program in the United States, Conservation Service Conservation Stewardship Program is a federal program that helps land managers

enhance natural resources and improve their business operations. It requires producers to meet certain environmental objectives and commit to five years of enhanced conservation on their land. In return, producers receive an annual conservation payment.

The Vermont Farmer Ecosystem Stewardship Program is looking to increase enrollment in the program in Vermont while helping producers enhance their natural resource stewardship. Based on recommendations from the Vermont Payment for Ecosystem Services and Soil Health Working Group, technical

assistance and supplemental payments of \$2,000-\$9,500 will be provided to Vermont farms who engage in Conservation Service Conservation Stewardship Program planning or enroll in qualifying contracts for their cropland or pasture. The goal is to ensure that farms are adequately recognized and compensated for environmental stewardship and to incentivize conservation planning and enhanced conservation.

“The Vermont Farmer Ecosystem Stewardship Program is a great example of the collaboration we foster around conservation and agriculture here in Vermont,” said Alyson Eastman, deputy secretary of agriculture, food and markets and co-chair of the Working Group. Under the Vermont Farmer Ecosystem Stewardship Program, agricultural producers of all sizes who successfully engage in the development of a Conservation Stewardship Plan will receive a one-time payment from the state of \$2,000, followed by an additional state payment between \$1,500 and \$7,500 if they successfully sign a Conservation Stewardship Program contract. These one-time payments in the first year of engagement are above and beyond any

federal CSP funds made available to these producers ranging from \$1,500-\$40,000 per year for five years.

Travis Thomason, state conservationist, strongly encourages Vermont farmers to apply now to CSP and the Vermont Farmer Ecosystem Stewardship Program.

“CSP is a great opportunity for Vermont farmers to be compensated for their land stewardship and to continue pushing the envelope on conservation,” Thomason said. “The additional state funds for planning and enrollment, which may only be available for a few years, make this year a particularly good time to apply to CSP.”

To apply, producers must first contact their local Farm Services Agency to ensure their farm records are up to date, and then submit a CSP application to the Natural Resources Conservation Service by April 21, 2023.

FSA and NRCS offices can be found online at the USDA Service Center locator. Producers must complete a separate application for state assistance under the Vermont Farmer Ecosystem Stewardship Program by May 8. Application materials and more information can be found at agriculture.vermont.gov/CSP-Assist.



Courtesy photo

Shelburne Police Department holds child safety seat training

This past week the Shelburne Police Department hosted a child passenger safety technician course.

This national certification course added 11 more child passenger safety technicians to the more than 100 working around the state ensuring the safety of children in vehicles through proper installation and use of Child Passenger Safety Restraint systems.

These technicians work in a variety of settings. While many are first responders, they may also be found in hospitals, day care centers, pediatric offices or other community service organizations. They may be a neighbor wanting to make a difference in the community.

The course was sponsored by the

Vermont Department of Health.

After three days of hands-on instruction by certified instructors, the course culminated with an instructor-led Child Passenger Safety Seat Check at the Shelburne Fire Department on Saturday morning, April 1. During this two-hour event, the new technicians assisted with the proper inspection and installation of 12 car seats.

In addition, five car seats were given to those that did not have a proper car seat — either they had expired, were not appropriate for the child or otherwise needed replacing.

To find a Child Safety Seat Inspection Station near you, visit beseatsmart.org. To find out how you can become a child passenger safety technician, visit safekids.org.

Playing musical cars on a January night in Shelburne

John Quinney
Publisher and President

Once you place an order for a prescription refill, some pharmacies are as annoying as the village gossip.

On Jan. 4, I placed my Walgreens order shortly after 9 a.m. Within six hours, I had received two voicemails and two emails. If only to end the barrage, I stopped by the Shelburne Walgreens on my way back from a Williston appointment.

I picked up my meds and agreed to a 10-minute wait while the pharmacist arranged for our health care provider to pay for two COVID test kits.

Leaving Walgreens, I strolled to my car, hopped inside and reached for the key. But something was wrong. The upholstery was black not gray, and the car carried a faint tobacco smell. I quit cigarettes more than 35 years ago.

I got out of the small blue Toyota and noticed that it was a two-door model with an unfamiliar license plate. My small blue Toyota is a four-door Prius C.

Hmmm.

Perhaps I hadn’t parked my car where I thought I had? That seemed entirely possible, so I wandered around the parking lot for a couple of minutes looking for my car. Nothing.

I realized that I had parked in a handicapped spot, so went back inside. “Did you notice anyone towing my car within the last 15 minutes or so?” Baffled looks. “No. It would have taken longer than 15 minutes, though.”

Back outside for a more extensive parking lot search. No car.

Could my car have been stolen? In downtown Shelburne? After all, it was dark and I had left the car unlocked, keys in the cupholder.

I called the Shelburne Police, gave the dispatcher a description of my car and waited a few minutes until two officers arrived. One went inside Walgreens to check video footage, since my car had been parked right in front of the pharmacy camera. The other cop asked some basic questions and gave me an incident report to complete. I was thankful that he made

no judgments about people leaving keys in unlocked cars.

I called Colleen and while waiting for her to come get me ran through some “worst case” outcomes: My car gets trashed; my squash and pickleball rackets are gone; I’ll be without a car for weeks ...

Looking at the small, blue Toyota brought back memories of an embarrassing incident from the early ’90s.

I had returned to my Seventh Generation store in Burlington after running an errand to a nearby gas station and convenience store. My colleague Mark greeted me with, “Whose car is that?” I looked at the car I’d parked out front.

It was similar to mine ... but it didn’t belong to me.

I drove the car that wasn’t mine back to the gas station to find a puzzled person standing alongside my car. I had “stolen” his, and he was happy to have it back.

Back to that January night. Colleen arrived and I thanked the cops who said they would call later in the evening. “What are the odds that I’ll get my car back?” “Good. I’ve got a couple of ideas, but if those don’t check out, your car’s probably in Burlington.”

Back home, we started getting leftovers ready for a later than normal dinner. My phone rang. “Hi. This is John.” “Shelburne Dispatch. It’s a case of mistaken identity. Someone took your car by mistake. Do you give your consent for them to drive your car back to Walgreens?” “Yes, of course. We’ll be there in a few minutes.” Big smile.

Soon after we arrived at Walgreens, two cars showed up. My small, blue Toyota pulled into the space next to the other small, blue Toyota. The Shelburne Police parked nearby.

A middle-aged guy hopped out of my car and apologized. He was visiting his sister and had borrowed her car. He had hopped into mine after doing his Walgreens business and tried his key. It didn’t work, but the one in the cupholder did, so off he went. He was somewhat embarrassed.

I told him my story about “stealing” a car. He relaxed a bit. We shook hands. I thanked the cops and drove home, laughing, incredulous and much relieved.

Education

Learning the two-step dance to optimize career options

Margo Bartsch
College Essay Coach

Fifty-six percent of Americans believe a four-year college degree does not justify the cost because many graduates lack specific skills and are saddled with huge debt, according to the Wall Street Journal-National Opinion Research Center Poll this March. Overall, most respondents fear that their children will not be better off in their future.

If students and families choose to make the investment to attend college, it is essential to develop a two-step plan to optimize success.

The first stage begins in high school, where the student is exposed to varied interests. The second phase is optimizing the college experience to be prepared for a career.

Starting in high school, developing a plan to be exposed to a range of interests can create a compelling college application. College planning begins with taking classes that explore academic interests. Being able to identify academic strengths can pave the way for future careers. It is helpful to review college websites for their academic admissions requirements for high school courses.

Extra-curricular activities highlight a student’s unique interests and personality. The Common Application, used by most colleges, includes a top 10 activity list for a student to describe their talents and time commitments.

There is a drop-down menu to choose from among 27 categories, such as academics, athletics, community service, internships and work.

The activities that a student enjoys can be a catalyst to explore professional interests. For example, if a student likes international travel, this can influence their future college major and career options that have a global outlook.

In this case, a high school student could create a plan to attend a summer program abroad and take a University of Vermont dual-enrollment foreign language class. Also, participating in an internship with Vermont businesses that work with Canadian companies could be a way to speak another language and learn about international fields.

Also, students’ college essays highlight how activities have shaped their interests. The Common Application includes seven essay prompts to choose from. For example, one prompt asks: Discuss an accomplishment, event or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

Once in college, the planning process continues with an eye toward a career. It is essential to optimize the college experience while taking a range of classes and participating in activities that can enlighten their future opportunities.

CBS News reports that specific college

majors can influence job opportunities and financial outcomes. “There are just very large differences in labor market outcomes depending on your major,” explains Richard Dietz, an economist at the New York Federal Reserve.

Data from the New York Federal Reserve shows that degrees in STEM have some of the highest earnings, compared to majors in theology, social services, performing arts, education and leisure and hospitality.

Although college graduates typically earn more than students with only a high school diploma, this is not the case for everyone. Economists explain that college students majoring in less lucrative disciplines can earn around the same as those who do not attend college.

College students pursuing less financially strong majors should consider adding a minor with greater earning potential. For example, a theater major could add a real estate minor to work in property management interacting with the public.

Students can meet with the career-planning center and advisers, who provide concrete recommendations to achieve goals. These resources can suggest majors and clubs to enhance qualifications and build professional networks.

Colleges offer many learning opportunities beyond the classroom walls. Participating

in career-focused internships, teaching assistant positions, study abroad programs and recruiting job fairs are essential to building professional skills.

In addition, if a student is applying to a graduate program, academic coursework and varied experiences provide relevant background for compelling essays. Teachers and professional references are included in the application to highlight overall strengths.

College is a growth experience that encourages students to become more excited for their ongoing educational journey. Planning for college begins in high school, where activities and classes can influence personal interests. Once in college, developing a four-year college roadmap can build a tangible foundation for professional career goals.

Each student has a unique and thoughtful path toward their future. Sifting and sorting through various choices can help high school students create a plan that can make a big difference in college.

(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.)

Charlotte Central School announces 2023-24 teaching teams

Naomi Strada
(Condensed by Tom Scatchard)

Champlain Valley School District meeting

At the March 21 Champlain Valley School District board meeting, newly elected members were welcomed, including Charlotte board representatives Meghan Metzler and Meghan Siket.

Shelburne Community School’s diversity, equity and inclusion coach, LaShawn Sells, talked about her work with families, staff and students.

Retired district chief operating officer Jeanne Jensen explained the impact of changes in school funding laws on the school district.

Also, Charlotte Central School kindergarten teachers Sarah Cota and Jensa Bushey talked about the learning some of the educators are involved in, focusing on a deeper understanding of the science of reading and the need for a balanced literacy program.

Configuration of 2023-24 teaching teams

Every year Charlotte Central School arranges personnel to best meet the needs of the student population. The following will be the configuration for the coming school year:

- Kindergarten: Sarah Cota and Beth Rowntree
- First grade: Michelle Filardi and Monica Lubic
- Second grade: Danielle Hall-Potvin, Shannon Spellman and Devon Davis
- Third grade: Linda Poirier and Sophie Hatch
- Fourth grade: Katie Fraser and Dana Hanf
- K-4 special educators: Lizzy Healy, Doug Pierson and speech-language pathologist Alyssa Jones
- Fifth grade math and science: Dave Baird
- Fifth grade English language arts and social studies: Brian Loughlin
- Sixth grade math and science: Chris Evans
- Sixth grade English language arts and social studies: Conor Emerson
- Seventh and eighth grade: Matt Lutz
- Seventh and eighth grade humanities: Julia Beerworth
- Seventh and eighth grade world language: Sarah Pierson (World Language)
- Seventh and eighth grade math: Rachael Miller
- Seventh and eighth grade science: Andrew Lounsbury
- Fifth-eighth grade special educators: Betsy Martin, Beth Slater, Allison Carr and

- Angie Morin
- Fifth-eighth grade speech-language pathologist: Caroline Homan.

School safety and security

Schools are always refining their safety practices with new information and training to meet changing patterns in student groups. This can’t be done alone. The following are some of the partnerships helping the school keep students and staff safe:

- Relationships — Charlotte Central School has a social emotional curriculum. Time is set aside every day for advisory and morning meetings. The school is staffed with highly skilled mental health and behavioral professionals. These educators are learning to recognize the impact of race, economic hardship, gender identity, visible and invisible disability and trauma. Charlotte Central School hopes to send a unanimous and resounding message that all of us belong — every student and every family, every similarity and every difference.
- A digital world — Coming out of the pandemic, students craved connection and they turned to their devices to fill time and a need. The following titles can be digitally searched by parents for helpful resources: “Meet the Digital Citizens!”, “Want Kids to

be More Responsible Online? Start Early”; “Harvard EdCast — How to Support your Child’s Digital Life.”

- School Violence — After recent reports of school violence and false school threats, the following resources could help facilitate conversations with students or help answer complex questions at home — “National Association of School Psychologists’ Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers”; “Common Sense Media’s How to Talk to Kids About School Shootings”; “Child Mind Institute’s How to Talk to Kids About School Shootings.”

Community partners — Charlotte Central School has partnerships with the Vermont State Police, the Shelburne Police Department, Charlotte Fire and Rescue, Howard Center and the Department for Children and Families. The school completes schoolwide and staff-focused training to work through scenarios that they hope they will never face.

The Wizard of Oz

The Charlotte Central School performances of The Wizard of Oz will be given in the school multi-performance room at 7 p.m. Friday, April 14, and at 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday, April 15.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Go Solar with AllEarth Renewables

allearthrenewables.com

Customer-driven solutions designed, engineered and built in Vermont, with over 3,000 installations in the state.

CALL 802.872.9600 x122

AllEarth
RENEWABLES™

Advertise your business here!

Only \$25 per issue or \$20 per issue when you run six months or more. Contact ads@TheCharlotteNews.org

www.DeePT.com
23 San Remo Drive
SOUTH BURLINGTON | 865.0010
166 Athletic Drive
SHELBURNE | 985.4445
feel good again!
52 Farmall Drive
HINESBURG | 482.3333

BRUSHHOGGING by Adam

- BACKHOE
- FIELD MOWING
- CHAIN SAWING
- HAUL AWAY
- DELIVERY
- LAWN MOWING

(802) 578-8347

Volunteers

Volunteers dwindling for Lewis Creek Association



The drop in volunteering to help with Lewis Creek could have consequences beyond that watershed, said an official with the state Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Rachel Elliott
Community News Service

The pair of volunteers reach Lewis Creek just after sunrise in the summer, plastic bottles in hand. While one takes notes and plays lifeguard, the other wades out into the water, turns upstream and fills the bottles.

The one wading passes the bottles up to their buddy before scrambling back up the bank, careful to avoid slippery rocks and poison parsnip. The pair pack the bottles into a cooler, then head home.

That’s how it usually goes for members of the Lewis Creek Association, a local environmental group that has been working to protect and restore Vermont waterways since 1990. It does a mix of policy advocacy and on-the-ground restoration in and around streams — replanting riparian buffers, removing invasive species — especially its namesake, which stretches 33 miles through Addison and Chittenden counties.

The state says the work of groups like the Lewis Creek Association fills crucial gaps. Towns along the creek greenlight funding for the organization every year. But the association says it is struggling to maintain and grow its network of volunteers for some of its initiatives, putting its future at risk.

“Without our programs and general work, things would look quite different,” said Kate Kelley, the association’s program manager. Waterways would be choked with invasive species, riverbanks would be eroding into the creek and the state wouldn’t be able to track water quality throughout local watersheds, Kelley said.

Ten years ago, about 40 community members spent 300 hours volunteering in one of the group’s key programs to pull invasive plants out of a local bay, Kelley said.

Last year, she said, only eight showed up, and the group instead relied mostly on seasonal workers from a government program. Even then, the workers and volunteers combined could only muster up 172 hours of work.

The consequences of that trend could be felt on a much broader plane than the immediate area of the creek. Will Eldridge, an aquatic habitat biologist with the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, says the association and its work has given his agency vital support.

“We rely heavily on Lewis Creek Association to do that,” Eldridge said. “They’re in the watershed. They are landowners. They live there. That’s really important for credibility and connections.”

The dynamic between neighbors is easier to navigate than that between locals and the state. Eldridge said, “We’re at a different level. And so, we rely heavily on watershed groups and partners to be that local voice in the community.”

Those volunteers taking water samples with plastic bottles end up providing data that tells state scientists key information about how rivers look and move and the kind of habitat they provide for wildlife. The association and the state work together to identify restoration projects and decide which ones are most important, too.

And the association does a lot more than just collect data and decide on priorities. Take the invasive plant program that’s been losing volunteers, for example. It’s focused on

freeing up waterways choked by the invasive European frogbit, a lily pad-like plant.

Before the program started 14 years ago, almost half of Charlotte’s Town Farm Bay was covered with the plants, the group says. Volunteers pulled nearly 50 tons of the invasive species out of the bay in just the first three years of the program. Now, frogbit only covers about 5 percent of the bay’s surface. That makes recreation better for people and habitat better for other plants and animals.

“Definitely the frogbit stewardship has been a wildly successful program and has significantly increased the water quality in the bays of Charlotte,” said longtime Charlotte Selectboard member Matthew Krasnow. “It’s just an incredible work.”

He credited almost all the advocacy for clean waters in the LaPlatte River, the Holmes Creek and the Lewis Creek watersheds to many years of work by the Lewis Creek Association.

That explains why Charlotte and Shelburne have both been regularly giving between \$2,600 and \$2,700 each year to the group since 2012 to support its work in the area, according to Kelley. The support goes beyond appropriations: After one of the group’s founders, Marty Illick, and her husband, Terrence Dinnan, died in a waterway accident on the creek almost two years ago, town officials honored her work and life. State legislators passed a resolution doing the same.

But that money can only do so much to bolster a group strained by an aging and shrinking circle of volunteers.

The core group of volunteers is getting older and less able to take on the grunt work that keeps the association’s programs going. And it’s struggling to recruit new volunteers, especially young ones.

“Just speaking for myself, I’m just not that into technology. I just don’t do Facebook. I don’t have an Instagram account. I don’t understand what Twitter is. And yet that’s how we need to connect with younger people,” said Andrea Morgante, the association’s founder and board president. “Younger people are, I’m sure, just as concerned about the environment. ... I don’t doubt that there’s volunteers out there and there’s people — it’s just like there’s this split between us old fogies and young people.”

One recent way association leaders have tried to mend that divide is by launching an account on Instagram at [tinyurl.com/5awy6dm4](https://www.instagram.com/5awy6dm4) with the support of University of Vermont students. That’s on top of its more traditional recruitment methods: a website and accompanying newsletter and, of course, word of mouth.

Anyone can get involved, even if they don’t have the time or interest to get waist-deep in the creek.

“It’s a nice antidote to a feeling of powerlessness that I think, we all have at various points,” said Louis DuPont, a longtime volunteer and association board member. “You look at the news and hear the news — it can be fairly overwhelming. ... It’s a way to salvage a productive relationship to the world.”

(Community News Service works in a partnership with The Charlotte News and other local media outlets to provide opportunities to University of Vermont students.)

WARNING
TOWN OF CHARLOTTE
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
MAY 2, 2023

The legal voters of the Town of Charlotte are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Charlotte Town Hall & Town Office, 159 Ferry Road in said Town on Tuesday, May 2, 2023 to vote on the following article by Australian ballot to begin at seven o'clock in the forenoon and to close at seven o'clock in the afternoon, in accordance with Title 17 §2680(c)(2), Vermont Statutes Annotated.

BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT

Article 1: Will the voters of the Town approve the Selectboard’s revised budget of \$2,780,713 for the fiscal year July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 of which an anticipated sum of \$1,176,392 will be raised by property taxes and an anticipated sum of \$1,604,321 will be raised by non-tax revenues?

Dated this 31st day of March, 2023 at Charlotte, Vermont.

Town of Charlotte Selectboard

NOTICE TO VOTERS
For Local Elections

BEFORE ELECTION DAY:

CHECKLIST POSTED at Clerks Office by April 2, 2023. If your name is not on the checklist, then you must register to vote. **SAMPLE BALLOTS** will be posted by April 12, 2023.

HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE: There is no deadline to register to vote. You will be able to register to vote on the day of the election. You can register prior by visiting the town clerk’s office or going online to [olvr.sec.state.vt.us](https://www.olvr.sec.state.vt.us).

REQUEST EARLY or ABSENTEE BALLOTS: You or a family member can request early or absentee ballots at any time during the year of the election in person, in writing, by telephone, email, or online at [mvp.sec.state.vt.us](https://www.mvp.sec.state.vt.us). The latest you can request ballots for the Town Meeting Election is the close of the Town Clerk’s office on March 6, 2023. (Any other person authorized by you who is not a family member must apply in writing or in person for a ballot for you.)

WAYS TO VOTE YOUR EARLY BALLOT:

- You may vote in the town clerk’s office before the deadline.
- Voter may take his or her ballot(s) out of the clerk’s office and return in same manner as if the ballots were received by mail.
- Have ballot mailed to you, and mail or deliver it back to the clerk’s office before Election Day or to the polling place before 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.
- If you are sick or disabled before Election Day, ask the town clerk to have two justices of the peace bring a ballot to you at your home. (Ballots can be delivered on any of the eight days preceding the day of the election or on the day of election.)

ON ELECTION DAY:

If your name was dropped from the checklist in error, or has not been added even though you submitted a timely application for addition to the checklist, you can fill out a new registration form.

! If the clerk or Board of Civil Authority does not add your name, you can appeal the decision to a superior court judge, who will settle the matter on Election Day. Call the Secretary of State’s Office at 1-800-439-VOTE (439-8683) for more information.

If you are a first time voter who submitted your application to the checklist individually by mail and did not submit the required document, you must provide a current and valid photo identification, or a bank statement, utility bill, or government document that contains your name/ current address.

If you have physical disabilities, are visually impaired or can’t read, you may have assistance from any person of your choice. If any voters you know have disabilities let them know they can have assistance from any person of their choice.

If you know voters who cannot get from the car into the polling place let them know that ballot(s) may be brought to their car by two election officials.

If you have any questions or need assistance while voting, ask your town clerk or any election official for help.

NO PERSON SHALL:

- ! Vote more than once per election, either in the same town or in different towns.
- ! Mislead the board of civil authority about your own or another person’s true residency or other eligibility to vote.
- ! Hinder or impede a voter going into or from the polling place.
- ! Socialize in a manner that could disturb other voters in the polling place.
- ! Offer bribe, threaten or exercise undue influence to dictate or control the vote of another person.

FOR HELP OR INFORMATION: Call the Secretary of State’s Office at 1-800-439-VOTE (439-8683). (Accessible by TDD)

If you believe that any of your voting rights have been violated, you may file an Administrative Complaint with the Secretary of State’s Office, 128 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05633.

If you believe you have witnessed efforts to commit any kind of fraud or corruption in the voting process, you may report this to your local United States Attorney’s Office.

If you have witnessed actual or attempted acts of discrimination or intimidation in the voting process, you may report this to the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice at (800) 253-3931.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VOTERS using Paper Ballots

CHECK-IN AND RECEIVE BALLOTS:

- Go to the entrance checklist table.
- Give name and, if asked, street address to the election official in a loud voice.
- Wait until your name is repeated and checked off by the official.
- An election official will give you a ballot.
- Enter within the guardrail and go to a vacant voting booth.

MARK YOUR BALLOT: For each office listed on the ballot, you will see instructions to “Vote for not more than one, or Vote for not more than two, etc.”

- To vote for a candidate, fill in the oval to the right of the name of the candidate you want to vote for.
- WRITE-IN candidate(s). To vote for someone whose name is not printed on the ballot, use the blank “write-in” lines on the ballot and either write-in the name or paste on sticker, then fill in the oval.

CHECK OUT:

- Go to the exit checklist table and state your name in an audible voice.
- Wait until your name is repeated and checked off by the official.

CAST YOUR VOTE by depositing your voted ballot in “Voted Ballots” box.

LEAVE the voting area immediately by passing outside the guardrail.

Report from the Legislature

Legislature’s crossover week is a very busy time

Chea Waters Evans
State Representative

The past two weeks were what people in the General Assembly call crossover week, and what I call, what-the-hell-just-happened week.

In simple form, here’s how it works: the House works on bills for the first half of the session, and the Senate works on bills for the first half of the session. Since we all have to vote on the same things by the end of the session, around the halfway point — crossover week — everyone works nonstop to pass out of their committees and out of the House and Senate all the bills that are a priority, that the parties or committees have decided are the most important to advance to the next step to make into laws.

The House passed some significant, and sometimes a little controversial, legislation after a lot of debate and discussion and amendments and votes. (I’ve written about these bills over the past couple of months.) We sat in our, I’m not going to lie, terribly uncomfortable seats for up to 10-hour sessions. I set a world record by eating two pieces of pizza in about 30 seconds during a quick break.

Because the Democratic party has a sizable majority, none of the bills coming out of the House failed. Now, they go over to the Senate, and the Senate bills come over to the House, and then people (not me, I’m new, I don’t get to participate in this part of the fun) who are part of the parties’ leadership and the governor’s administration get to hash out what the bills will look like in the end. Then we’ll vote on them again. This time, everyone will be voting on the same form of the same bills.

I guess I should have known this, but before I got here, I didn’t quite realize how much a bill changes from when it’s introduced to when it becomes a law. Bills frequently change before they’re even voted out of committee. I hear from constituents

a lot (which I really appreciate and enjoy) expressing their opinions or thoughts on a particular bill, and this can help inform my discussions with my colleagues. I don’t want anyone to think, though, that when I write back to you and say, “I’m going to wait to reserve my vote decision until the final bill,” that I’m putting anyone off or trying to avoid making a commitment. I’m just trying to be thoughtful.

Some bills that covered these topics came out of the House in the past couple weeks. I’d love to hear feedback about:

- Flavored tobacco-product ban. The argument for it is that fruity, sweet and mint-flavored tobacco vapes and chews and other types of tobacco appeal to young people and encourage them to use and become addicted to, these products. The argument against it is that we already have laws prohibiting people under age 21 from purchasing these items and that enforcing the laws would allow local stores (instead of online, out-of-state sellers) to continue to sell these products to legal users and prevent kids from getting their hands on them.
- The “bottle bill.” Proposed in previous sessions, this bill would add sports drinks, wine bottles and water bottles to the list of beverage containers that have a redemption deposit. Pros: It would make the sorting process much easier for small redemption centers and eventually will raise deposit amounts. Cons: there already exists a mechanism for plastic recycling through large recycling facilities, which would run short of materials to recycle and possibly, eventually increasing their costs, which could be passed on to customers.

If you’d like to come see me at the Statehouse, please do reach out and we can arrange a visit. I’m expecting some Charlotte Central School students next week, and I’m really excited to see them.

As always, you can find me at cevans@leg.state.vt.us or 917-887-8231.

Gardening

Encourage beneficial insects in garden with a bug hotel

Andrea Knepper
University of Vermont Extension

Many gardeners find ways to invite beneficial insects into their spaces by planting native pollinator plants, mulching and avoiding pesticide use. Another way to support a healthy beneficial insect community is a bug hotel.

Bug hotels provide a variety of nesting options for insects that we want to see in our gardens, such as solitary bees, wasps, ladybugs, beetles and spiders. Bug hotels also can be attractive pieces of garden decor.

Follow these easy steps to create a bug hotel for your garden during these last few weeks of colder weather. When our insect friends emerge as the weather warms, they will be happy to find a new home to nest and lay eggs.

Start by finding or building a wooden frame for your bug hotel. This should be made out of untreated wood and have a depth of about 8 inches. Something the size of a small shoebox is a good size to start with, although boxes can be any size. If one side of the box is longer, that can act as an overhang and protect the nesting materials when exposed to the elements.

Our goal in creating the bug hotel is to replicate the natural habitats that these insects search for in nature. Collect materials from around the garden or during a walk in the woods. Or you can order a kit online. Different insects look for different nesting spots, so there should be a variety of materials inside the box that are arranged in layers or sections.

Small pieces of bark and dead wood are attractive to beetles and spiders. Centipedes and millipedes also will enjoy making a home

in this layer.

Ladybugs like to burrow together in the gaps made by piles of twigs and small sticks. Make sure all the sticks are trimmed so they are even with the depth of the hotel frame.

Hollow, pithy stems make ideal nesting tunnels for wasps and solitary bees. Some common native plants that can provide these are milkweed, blackberries, black-eyed susans and sumac.

Bamboo also can be used for nesting cavities. I sometimes use bamboo in my garden for staking and trellising. After a season or two, the bamboo becomes brittle. Putting it into the bug hotel is a great option to continue to use this.

Another way to provide nesting tunnels for solitary bees and other insects is by drilling holes into small pieces of wood. Different insects look for different-sized cavities. The recommended range is 2-10 millimeters in diameter.

Once you have arranged all of your chosen materials in the box, fill any gaps with dry leaves, pieces of straw or small twigs to ensure a tight fit.

Mount or place the bug hotel in a south-facing location at least 3 feet above the ground. Ideally, the spot you choose will be sheltered, or you can choose a frame that includes an overhang.

To maintain a healthy environment for your residents, you will need to replace materials occasionally. Early summer is a good time for clean-up, as the residents will have moved out to pollinate and protect our gardens.

For more information, check out these resources: go.uvm.edu/bee-support and go.uvm.edu/pollinator-nesting.

(Andrea Knepper is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener from Bolton.)



Photo by Seema Miah/Unsplash

Gardening

Tulip Mania and other interesting tulip facts

Deborah J. Benoit
University of Vermont Extension

It’s finally spring (never mind any snow still on the ground). Daffodils have emerged, their buds anxious to open. Soon tulips (Tulipa), perhaps the most anticipated flowers of spring, will grace front yards and town squares.

Tulips are so plentiful that sometimes we take their presence for granted. They’re common flowers, but how much do you really know about them?

Many people assume that since tulips are associated with Holland, they originated there. They’re actually descendants of wildflowers native to Central Asia. The word “tulip” is derived from the Persian word for turban.

Around 3,000 years ago, they were being grown in what is now Turkey.



Today, the tulip is Turkey’s national flower.

In the late 1500s, tulips made their way to Europe as a gift to a botanist at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. By the 1630s, tulips were being grown commercially in Holland, and hybrid varieties were being developed. The new and exotic

flowers were a favorite of the well-to-do.

Along with an increasing demand for tulips, prices grew. During a few years in the 1630s, speculators drove the contract price of the rarest varieties to extremes, eventually reaching a fever pitch with certain bulbs selling for as much as a craftsman might earn in a year. That bout of “Tulip Mania” came to an end in 1637 when prices outpaced contract buyers’ willingness to pay.

Some of the most sought-after varieties that helped fuel Tulip Mania had striped or streaked petals, a condition referred to as “broken.” It wasn’t until nearly 300 years later that scientists had the technology to discover that the broken coloration of the petals was caused by a virus (tulip breaking virus aka tulip mosaic virus) transmitted by aphids.

After the drastic drop in the price of tulip bulbs and the end of contract price speculation in 1637, commercial growing of tulips continued to expand. Holland is still recognized for its production of tulips and remains the world’s largest producer with about 3 billion bulbs each year.

Today, there are over 3,500 named tulip varieties that come in a wide selection of colors and shapes. While they can be grown from seed, to do so would take 7-12 years to flower since a bulb must be formed first.

Growing tulips from bulbs is quick and easy. Just plant in the fall and enjoy flowers the next spring.

Perhaps the most difficult part of growing tulips is choosing which tulips to grow. Pick one color or several. Tulips come in warm colors ranging from white, cream and yellow to pink, red and orange. Flowers are available in the readily



Photo by Getty Images

Tulip fields in the Netherlands.

recognizable egg shape, along with ruffled or fringe-edged petals, pointed petals and single or double varieties.

Tulips bloom for about a week. If you’d like to extend the time, plant several types, including early, mid-, and late-spring bloomers.

While tulips are a perennial, they may fail to bloom after the first year. Sometimes the bulbs fall victim to hungry squirrels. Sometimes it’s the result of unfavorable conditions.

Tulips prefer sun or partial shade and well-drained soil. The bulbs will rot in

soggy soil. After flowering, leave foliage until it dies back on its own to allow the bulb to store nutrients for flowering the following spring.

For more information on growing tulips, see go.uvm.edu/tulips.

It won’t be long before tulips are blooming in gardens all around us. While it’s too late to plant bulbs for this year, there’s plenty of time between now and fall planting to choose the perfect tulips for your garden.

NOW HIRING

MIDDLEBURY FENCE RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

1341 Ethan Allen Hwy, New Haven, VT 05472 (802)-388-2225

Commercial Fence Project Manager/ Estimator

An established company within the construction industry is looking to fill a full-time Project Manager/ Estimator in New Haven, VT. You will be responsible for reading blueprints and bidding projects. After winning the project, you become the project manager for the project. The ideal candidate will have an in-depth understanding of construction preferably with experience within the fence industry.

Responsibilities and Duties

- Bidding Projects
- Managing won projects
- Pay Applications

Qualifications and Skills

- Construction experience
- Blueprint Reading
- Able to effectively multi-task
- Ability to work in a team environment or as a sole contributor
- Good verbal and written communication skills
- Strong organizational, record-keeping and follow-up skills
- Be self-motivated and able to work effectively and efficiently under pressure
- Proficient in using Microsoft Office Software
- High degree of accuracy and attention to detail

As a full time Employee, you will be eligible for the following benefits:

- Competitive Pay
- Simple IRA with Company matching
- Paid Holidays and Vacation (PTO)

Job Type: Full-time

Job Pay: Regular pay, Bonus Pay, Incentive Pay

Our Company is an equal employment opportunity employer. The Company’s policy is not to discriminate against any applicant or employee based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or any other basis protected by applicable federal, state, or local laws. The Company also prohibits harassment of applicants or employees based on any of these protected categories. It is also the Company’s policy to comply with all applicable state and federal laws respecting consideration of unemployment status in making hiring decisions.

Send your resume to sales@middleburyfence.com

NOW HIRING

MIDDLEBURY FENCE RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

1341 Ethan Allen Hwy, New Haven, VT 05472 (802)-388-2225

Receptionist / Customer Service Rep

Middlebury Fence is looking for a Receptionist to join our team! We are looking for someone who is detail-oriented and takes pride in being highly organized with a strong ability to multitask. This position plays a key role in supporting the Middlebury Fence team and the customers we serve! This position is full time, year round.

Responsibilities and Duties

- Answering calls on a multi-line phone in a professional manner and transferring calls to the appropriate person or department
- Greeting visitors in a courteous and professional manner
- Performing general office tasks such as data entry
- Processing customer invoices
- Employee travel arrangements
- Incoming and outgoing mail duties
- Maintaining an impressive client satisfaction.

Qualifications and Skills

- Ability to multitask effectively
- Two years’ experience in an office or clerical position
- Effective oral and written communication skills
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite
- Knowledge of office equipment operation

As a full time Employee, you will be eligible for the following benefits:

- Competitive Pay
- Simple IRA with Company matching
- Paid Holidays and Vacation (PTO)

Job Type: Full-time

Job Pay: Regular pay, Bonus Pay, Incentive Pay

Our Company is an equal employment opportunity employer. The Company’s policy is not to discriminate against any applicant or employee based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or any other basis protected by applicable federal, state, or local laws. The Company also prohibits harassment of applicants or employees based on any of these protected categories. It is also the Company’s policy to comply with all applicable state and federal laws respecting consideration of unemployment status in making hiring decisions.

Send your resume to sales@middleburyfence.com

Calendar of Events

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

Merlin tech talk
Thursday, April 6, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Bridget Butler, known locally as the Bird Diva, presents a free online class for participants wishing to become proficient at using the Merlin bird identification app. The class is offered through the Green Mountain Audubon Society. Read more and reserve a spot at tinyurl.com/26mmu6td.

Poetry and cultural identity
Friday, April 7, 11:30 a.m.
Richard Blanco is the fifth inaugural poet in U.S. history, born in Spain to Cuban exile parents. In this free, online presentation for any Vermont middle or high school students, homeschoolers, teachers and school librarians, Blanco reads from and discusses his work. Presented by Vermont Humanities, see tinyurl.com/29nz95wz for more info and to register yourself or a group.

Festival of short films
Friday, April 7, 6-9 p.m.
Lunafest features award-winning films for and about women at Main Street Landing in Burlington. Doors open at 6 p.m. for snacks, cash bar, reception and raffle; film starts at 7 p.m. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/yfddtdewh.

The power of music
Friday, April 7, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
Middlebury College hosts The Westerlies, along with Theo Bleckmann, in a musical program combining elements of jazz, classical and contemporary music. Trumpets and trombones are joined by vocals for an inspiring evening. The program, called This Land, is an examination of music’s power to invigorate protest movements as well as provide solace in difficult times. Concert held at Middlebury’s Mahaney Arts Center. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/ybzjt56d.

New Haven Ledges race
Saturday, April 8, 9 a.m.
A time trial kayaking event takes place on the New Haven River in Bristol, with a half-mile Class IV course. Boaters get two attempts at the course. Entry cap of 60 participants; sign up ahead or at the event. This is also a popular spectator event. See facebook.com/NewHavenRace for more details and a waiver form. More info also at tinyurl.com/mvsk6tpy.

Neptune Frost
Saturday, April 8, 3-5 p.m.
Get ready for Neptune Frost, a sci-fi punk musical that takes place in the Republic of Burundi. Part of the Black is Beautiful Film Festival, the film defies description and has been called “visually wondrous.” Free film is shown at the Fletcher Free Library in Burlington. For more info, see tinyurl.com/23nh9he6.

Disappearing structures
Saturday, April 8, 6 p.m.
Photographer Jim Westphalen, Shelburne resident, chronicles the iconic, weathered and aging buildings that represent our country’s rural heritage. His documentary, Vanish, takes viewers along on his travels, where he shares the history and the stories of these disappearing buildings across the country. Movie is shown at Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater. More info, trailer and tickets available at tinyurl.com/5n82upk5.

Global folk dancing
Sunday April 9, 2:30-5:30 p.m.
An afternoon of traditional dances from around the world is happening at the Brownell Library in Essex Junction. Free to attend, with instruction, second Sunday of every month. For more info, email dance@together.net. Call library to confirm this gathering at 802-878-6955.

Guitar and saxophone
Tuesday, April 11, 2 p.m.
Classical guitarist Jason Vieaux and saxophonist Timothy McAllister perform together at All Souls Interfaith Gathering in Shelburne as part of the Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival. For tickets and more info, see lccmf.org/concerts.

Comedy for peace
Wednesday, April 12, 7 p.m.
The Argosy Foundation brings an interfaith comedy show to All Souls Interfaith Gathering in Shelburne. Four comedians, no politics,

just laughs, poking fun at themselves and life. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/4s5962af.

Learn the eBird app
Thursday, April 13, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Bridget Butler offers another tech training for bird watchers using the eBird app. With eBird, your observations become data for science communities studying bird migration, disappearing species and changes in climate. The free online class is through the Green Mountain Audubon Society and requires registration. For more info, see tinyurl.com/yxuvz93f.

Navalny documentary
Thursday, April 13, 7 p.m.
Feel like a fly on the wall witnessing the investigation into the poisoning of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny. This film delves into Navalny’s life and his pursuit to identify the men who attempted to poison him in 2020. Film is at the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. For more info, trailer and tickets, see tinyurl.com/ynt4mrna.

Made Here film festival
Thursday-Sunday, April 13-16
This competitive film festival is devoted entirely to films made by filmmakers in New England and Quebec. Most in-person screenings are held at Burlington Beer Company on Flynn Avenue in Burlington. Films shown virtually between April 17-23. Movies are free to attend; donations encouraged. Filmmakers will be in attendance and participating in Q&As. For a complete schedule and tickets, see tinyurl.com/yctxf8p3.

Snags are crucial for owls
Friday, April 14, 6-7 p.m.
The Vermont Institute of Natural Science presents staff from the Owl Research Institute, speaking about their ongoing research on Great Gray Owls and the importance of tree snags for their habitat. Free online event; donations gratefully accepted. More info and registration at tinyurl.com/3e55uf8y.

The people’s music
Friday, April 14, 6-8:30 p.m.
Milton Busker and The Grim Work entertain at Shelburne Vineyard in a free concert; no tickets or reservations required. The Vermont-based group play Americana and what they call “suit- folk,” folk that’s all dolled up for a night on the town. To read more, see tinyurl.com/mhdd5h66.

A fly fishing lifestyle
Friday, April 14, 7:30 p.m.
Attend the International Fly Fishing Film Festival, or IF4, at Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater. Professional filmmakers from around the globe take viewers into the world and culture of fly fishing. For trailer and ticket info, see tinyurl.com/yccdenu2.

Solaris Vocal Ensemble
Friday, April 14, 7:30 p.m.
Based in Burlington, the ensemble performs Deep River: A Spiritual Journey at Bethany United Church of Christ in Montpelier. Tickets for this show, as well as a show at the College St. Congregational Church in Burlington on April 16, are available at solarisensemble.org.

Motion and emotion
Friday, April 14, 7:30-8:30 p.m.
The University of Vermont Concert Band presents their spring concert, Motion and Emotion, at Recital Hall. Free and open to all. For a complete schedule of all band, voice, ensemble, choir and instrumental recitals, see tinyurl.com/mr2xc7sf.

Peter, Wendy and Hook
Friday, April 14, 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 15, 5:30 p.m.
Burlington’s Very Merry Theatre troupe presents The Further Adventures of Peter, Wendy and Hook, on stage at Orchard Elementary School in South Burlington. Performance is free; donations gratefully accepted. For more info and aschedule, see verymerrytheatre.org/performances.

Alliums for the pantry
Saturday, April 15, 10 a.m.-noon
Julie Rubaud of Red Wagon Plants in Hinesburg gives an in-depth workshop about successful production of garlic, onions, leeks and shallots, enough to keep your pantry stocked all year. Essential ingredients that every chef wants, grown in their own garden. To learn more and sign up, see tinyurl.com/45h75cvr.

Science showcase 4.0
Saturday, April 15, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
If you are between the ages of 8-14, register by April 12 for a free science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) event held at the University of Vermont. This free event introduces youths to hands-on STEM activities and workshops. Registration required; more info at go.uvm.edu/stem-showcase.

New-time string band
Saturday, April 15, 7:30 p.m.
The Stragglers take the stage at the Vergennes Opera House, bringing their originals and classic renditions of bluegrass and Americana tunes. For more info and tickets, see tinyurl.com/2p8rk9ut.

Deep in song
Saturday, April 15, 7:30-9 p.m.
The Burlington Choral Society joins forces with the Onion River Chorus in a program of music from, and to, Ukraine. Over 100 voices will sing at the Elley-Long Music Center on the campus of St. Michael’s College, Colchester. For tickets and more info, see tinyurl.com/4wew7kjm.

Singers who are composers
Saturday, April 15, 7:30 p.m., Richmond;
Sunday, April 16, 3 p.m., Hinesburg;
Saturday, April 22, 7:30 p.m., Burlington;
Sunday, April 23, 3 p.m., Charlotte
The local troupe of singers who call themselves Social Band are pleased to be back to in-person concerts and are celebrating their 25th year. They present their spring slate of shows at four local sites; the program is aptly called “Where Does the Music Come From?” These are works of Social Band singing members who are also composers. Suggested donation at the door. More info on venues and tickets is at socialband.org/concerts.

Archaeology of the Homestead
Sunday, April 16, 2 p.m.
A free talk on the archaeological history of the Ethan Allen Homestead at the homestead with Neils Rinehart. Program is in person or online. No registration needed to attend in person; link for online streaming is at ethanallenhomestead.org.

Spring is for leaping lambs
Sunday, April 16, 2-3 p.m.
Learn about sheep, lamb season, wool and afternoon chores at the Children’s Farmyard at Shelburne Farms. Event is also offered Sunday, April 23. More info and registration, plus a complete calendar of upcoming events, is at shelburnefarms.org/calendar.

Music from Madagascar
Sunday, April 16, 3:30-4 p.m.
Singer Mikahely performs at the Fletcher Free Library in Burlington in a program of original music inspired by his upbringing in Madagascar. Free; call library to confirm event at 802-863-3403.

Folk quartet in Richmond
Sunday, April 16, 4-6 p.m.
Rani Arbo and Daisy Mayhem play at the Richmond Congregational Church. This band is known for its folk influences, with some jazz, blues and country thrown in. Their harmonies and soulful sophistication are well known. For tickets and more info, see tinyurl.com/4uys5fdj.

Globes made by a farmer
Wednesday, April 19, noon-1 p.m.
In 1810, Bradford farmer James Wilson made the first American-made globes for sale in history, without much formal schooling or scientific background. They were manufactured and in use for the next 50 years, a less expensive and quite successful alternative to imported globes from England. The Vermont Historical Society presents a free Zoom discussion about Wilson and his ground-breaking product. For more info and to register, see tinyurl.com/y3bs9aek. Several examples of Wilson’s globes are on display, through June 2023, at the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier.

Portrait of an artist
Wednesday, April 19, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Design visionary Bruce Mau is the subject of the film “Design the Time of Your Life,” which follows Mau’s career path, from graphic designer for global brands to involvement with some of the world’s best-known architects. Movie is free at Contois Auditorium in Burlington and may be live-streamed on the same day. For more info, see adfilmseries.org.

Let’s go fishing
Saturday, April 22, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife offers a training clinic for those who would like to become a certified instructor of Let’s Go Fishing clinics, which happen at many state locations throughout the season. The clinics teach skills to those who are new to fishing, as well as regulations, gear, Vermont fish species and a joy of the sport. There is no fee for the training which is held at the Essex Junction district office. For more info or to register, see tinyurl.com/59jxmf8c.

Antiques Roadshow preview
Saturday, April 22, 5 p.m.
Three episodes of Antiques Roadshow were filmed at Shelburne Museum in July 2022. The episodes will air on Vermont Public on April 24, May 1 and May 8, at 8 p.m. To get a sneak preview of the upcoming episodes, make plans to attend an advance screening event at the Double E Performance Center in Essex. Make a small donation to Vermont Public (which serves as your ticket) and you can attend the preview, a Q&A with an appraiser and a VIP reception. More info and ticket options at tinyurl.com/2uv387jm.

Local Holy Week services

Charlotte Congregational Church –
• Thursday, April 6, 7 p.m., Maundy Thursday service
• Thursday-Friday, April 6-7, 8 p.m.-3p.m., Easter vigil
• Friday, April 7, 4 p.m., Good Friday service
• Saturday, April 8, noon, community Easter egg hunt
• Sunday, April 9, 5:45 a.m., Easter sunrise service
• Sunday, April 9, 9 a.m. Easter worship (also live-streamed)
• Sunday, April 9, 11 a.m., Easter worship

Lighthouse Baptist Church, Hinesburg
Sunday, April 9, 10:30 a.m., Easter service

Hinesburg Community Alliance Church
• Friday, April 7, 6 p.m., Good Friday service
• Sunday, April 9, 10:30 a.m., Easter Sunday service

United Church of Hinesburg
• Sunday, April 9, 6:45 a.m., Easter sunrise service
• Sunday, April 9, 10 a.m., Easter service

St. Catherine of Siena, Shelburne
• Saturday, April 8, 7:30 p.m., Easter vigil mass
• Sunday, April 9, 10:30 a.m., Easter mass

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Charlotte
• Sunday, April 9, 8 a.m. Easter mass
• Sunday, April 9, 11 a.m., Easter mass

All Souls Interfaith Gathering, Shelburne
• Sunday, April 9, 6 a.m., Sunrise meditation
• Sunday, April 9, 7:30 a.m., tea and coffee
• Sunday, April 9, 9 a.m., Morning Meditation Service
• Sunday, April 9, 10 a.m., Easter brunch potluck
• Sunday, April 9, 11 a.m., Music and Spirit service
• Sunday, April 9, noon, community. Easter egg hunt



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

Planning Commission:
regular meeting
Thursday, April 6, 7-9 p.m.

Selectboard
Monday, April 10, 6:30 p.m.

Development Review Board: regular meeting
Wednesday, April 12, 7-9:30 p.m.

Selectboard (public informational meeting on amended budget town vote on May 2)
Monday, April 17, 6 -7 p.m.
Regular meeting: 7 p.m.

Planning Commission:
regular meeting
Thursday, April 20, 7-9 p.m.

Gardening

Plant CSI: Solving crimes with plants

Jodi Larison
University of Vermont Extension

Plant materials have been used to solve crimes on television shows, in books and in real life. The use of plant materials in solving crimes is called forensic botany. Plant materials that have been utilized in solving crimes have included flowers, fruits, leaves, pollen, seeds and wood.

In his book, “Fruits of the Poisonous Tree: A Joe Gunther Mystery,” Vermont author Archer Mayor’s character Detective J.P. Tyler, when commenting on evidence from a crime scene, held up a small baggie with a tiny fragment of organic matter in it. As to this organic matter, he said, “It’s Russian olive ... not a rare plant. ... The point is, there ain’t a single Russian olive on Gail’s property.”

Gail was the victim. Tyler also noted that he found “a Russian olive right in front of” a suspect’s trailer.

While that’s an example of plant CSI in fiction, one of the first and most famous cases solved using forensic botany was the 1932

kidnapping and murder of the Lindbergh baby. A homemade ladder used in the kidnapping was left behind at the scene.

The rings of a piece of wood in the ladder matched perfectly with the rings of a floorboard in the attic of Bruno Richard Hauptmann, according to Dr. Arthur Koehler, chief wood technologist at the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin. The match was an exact match of the annual rings as well as their unique pattern.

The defense team tried to disallow the forensic botany evidence, but the judge decreed that Koehler was an expert and allowed his testimony. Hauptmann was convicted with the testimony presented by the wood technologist key to his conviction.

The first time plant DNA was used to get a conviction was in a 1992 murder of a woman in Arizona. In this case, an investigator noticed that a Palo Verde tree near the victim’s body had recently been scraped, possibly by a vehicle. DNA in the seeds from the tree matched the DNA of seeds found in seed pods in the suspect’s truck.

In both these cases, the plant material

created botanical “fingerprints” that led to convictions.

Pollen also can act as a botanical fingerprint. For example, pollen might help identify a region where an event occurred or where a suspect has been. In some cases, DNA analysis actually can link a leaf to a single tree.

While the pollen of some plants is unique, this is not true for all plants. For example, grass pollen generally cannot be linked to specific plants or areas, but seeds and fragments of grass may have unique DNA. While not technically a plant, algae also has aided in solving crimes.

Additionally, plant materials may provide clues as to the timing of an incident. In the 2011 trial of Casey Anthony, plant materials were used by the defense to refute the prosecution’s timeline. In this case, a forensic botanist determined the duration of time that her daughter Caylee’s body was in the woods,



Photo by DCStudios/Freepik

A scientist studies a green leaf from a crime scene before placing it under a microscope for further examination.

all based on the growth of the plants in and around her remains.

Forensic botanist Christopher Hardy, a professor at Millersburg University, has been cited as stating that forensic botany is an ideal investigative tool because it is always unbiased. So, the science of botany may be more important than one might think when it comes to solving crimes.

On Books

A compelling story of standing up to evil in World War II

Katherine Arthaud
Contributor

Happy spring — even though the temperature feels more like winter at the moment. But the sun is shining, and the sky is mostly blue, so it isn’t inconceivable that spring will really spring.

But what about books? What have you been reading? Anything good?

I just finished a hefty work of nonfiction that my friend Sally in Florida handed me one day at the tennis shop, informing me that she had just finished it and thought I should give it a whirl.

My first thought was that it didn’t look much like a beach read.

“All the Frequent Troubles of Our Days, the True Story of the American Woman at the Heart of the German Resistance to Hitler” is a Pen America winner, a National Book Critics Circle award winner and one of the New York Times 100 Notable Books of 2021. Impressive, yes, but as I said, I wasn’t sure it was the right book at the right time.

I had just finished “The Hotel Nantucket,” a delightfully refreshing romantic drama by Elin Hilderbrand, queen of the beach read, about an old, abandoned, Gilded Age hotel that has just been rehabbed into a spectacular



luxury state-of-the art resort destination and the guests and staff whose lives revolve around it, including the ghost of a former chambermaid.

So, I did need a new book. And to get in a car and go find a bookstore seemed exhausting somehow. In the past, I would always pack extra books in my suitcase to read on vacation, but with the money airlines charge these days for overweight bags, I decided to only bring the one: that easily digestible, perfect, lightweight, beachy paperback. And so, yes, being handed a fresh book that day at the tennis courts felt serendipitous. Except, well ... this book? World War II, Nazi Germany and the German resistance to Hitler?

Not exactly what I had had in mind for the lounge chair by the pool.

There are many, many positive things one could say about this book, one of which is the way its author, Rebecca Donner breaks up the narrative into smallish segments, making the story easier to process than had it been written in long, dense narrative blocks. Also, there is something approaching poetic in the way Donner pauses and restarts the narrative. Plus, the inclusion of photographs of people and of fragments of original documents (including diary entries, letters, notes smuggled out of a Berlin prison, etcetera) render the book more personal, more engaging, more artful than your typical history book or biography.

“Her aim,” the book begins, “was self-erasure. The more invisible she was, the better her chances of survival. ... She was at the harrowing center of the German

resistance, but she wasn’t German, nor was she Polish or French. She was American — conspicuously so. ... The nature of her work required absolute secrecy. She didn’t dare tell her family, who were scattered across the towns and dairy farms of the Midwest. They remained bewildered that she, at 26, had jumped aboard a steamer ship and crossed the Atlantic, leaving behind everyone she loved. ... She preferred anonymity so I will whisper her name: Mildred Harnack.”

Mildred Harnack (Donner’s great-great-aunt) was born Sept. 16, 1902, in Milwaukee, Wis. In 1932, she held her first clandestine meeting in her German apartment with “a small band of political activists that grew into

SEE **ON BOOKS** PAGE 14

NOTICE FOR PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARING FOR AUSTRALIAN BALLOT ARTICLE TO BE VOTED AT THE SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MAY 2, 2023

The Selectboard of the Town of Charlotte hereby gives notice that, in accordance with 17 V.S.A. §2680(g), a public informational hearing will be held on **Monday, April 17, 2023 beginning at 6:00 p.m.** at the Charlotte Town Hall, 119 Ferry Road, Charlotte, Vermont, to discuss and hear questions regarding the article to be voted by Australian ballot at the Special Town Meeting on May 2, 2023. Town officials will be present during the public informational hearing to answer questions.

Public may participate in the hearing in person or via electronic means (Zoom)—see the link, phone number and meeting information below. The Zoom link, phone number and meeting information will also be posted on the Town’s website: www.charlottetv.org.

Please contact Dean Bloch, Town Administrator (425-3071 ext. 5; dean@townofcharlotte.com), with any comments, questions or suggestions regarding the accessibility of this meeting.

Link to join meeting online (via Zoom): <https://tinyurl.com/2ffnh5a4>

Join by phone at this number: 1-929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 838 4563 7552

Passcode: 350891

One tap mobile: +19292056099,83161778546#,*794802#

Please see information for participating in Selectboard meeting by clicking here: <https://is.gd/7oPSt6>

The following article is to be voted by Australian ballot at the Special Town Meeting:

Article 1: Will the voters of the Town approve the Selectboard’s revised budget of \$2,780,713 for the fiscal year July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 of which an anticipated sum of \$1,176,392 will be raised by property taxes and an anticipated sum of \$1,604,321 will be raised by non-tax revenues?

Library News

Crocheting, archaeology, microscopic viewing and more

Margaret Woodruff
Contributor

We have some new and renewed offerings for April. Our popular knitting night is expanding to include crochet fans and will meet weekly on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. beginning April 5.

State archaeologist Jess Armstrong comes to the library April 11 for “An Archaeological History of Chittenden County.” Celebrate National Poetry Month and join us for a reading by Charlotte poet Bethany Breitland, award-winning author of “Fire Index.” Many more offerings below, including a microscopic look at spring for kids. We hope to see you at the library soon.

Children’s programs

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

Kindergarten/first grade after-school story time
Tuesdays, 3 p.m.

Please contact youth services librarian Cheryl Sloan 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.

Project Micro
Monday, April 24, 2 p.m.

Jan Schwarz will bring microscopes, hand lenses and lots of spring material to study. Registration required, ages 7 and up. This is a live event on the Charlotte Library porch. Registration required. Please email youth@charlottepubliclibrary.org

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. Note: No Book Chat on April 19.

An Archaeological History of Chittenden County
Tuesday, April 11, 7 p.m.

Jess Robinson, Vermont State Archaeologist, will give an overview of the pre-contact Native history of the Chittenden County area from the first human entrants in the region until the time of European contact. He will highlight some notable archaeological sites and offer insights into the first Vermonters gained from over 50 years of professional archaeological work in the area. A question-and-answer session will follow the presentation. Register to reserve a seat at bit.ly/chittendenarch.

Repair Café
Saturday, April 15, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Get your broken stuff ready. The Repair Café is coming up in April. It is open to

anyone in any town. Everyone wishing to have an item fixed should register beforehand so the repairers know what items to expect or tools they might need. To register, go to the event calendar at charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Mystery book group: The Maltese Falcon
Monday, April 17, 10 a.m.

Dashiell Hammet’s classic noir tale from the 1930s that launched the character Sam Spade as the hardboiled detective in San Francisco. Copies available at the library circulation desk.

Book discussion: Treeline
Mondays, 7 p.m., April 17-May 22

“The Treeline: The Last Forest and the Future of Life on Earth” has been called a page-turner that poetically challenges us to confront the elephant in the room. This will be a six-part discussion of this landmark book. Join us in-person or via Zoom. In-person: eventbrite.com/e/book-discussion-treeline-the-last-forest-and-the-future-of-life-on-earth-tickets-547922790817. Zoom: bit.ly/3E3RPwE.

Book discussion: Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow
Thursday, April 20, 7:30 p.m.

Spanning 30 years, from Cambridge, Mass., to Venice Beach, Calif., and lands in between and far beyond, Gabrielle Zevin’s “Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow” is a dazzling and intricately imagined novel that examines the multifarious nature of identity, disability, failure, the redemptive possibilities in play, and above all, our need to connect: to be loved and to love. Yes, it



is a love story, but it is not one you have read before. Register in advance at tinyurl.com/2p8ckaaz.

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 this Thursday, April 6, online and in-person. Please contact the library or visit the library website at charlottepubliclibrary.org for more information.

ON BOOKS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

the largest underground resistance group in Berlin by the end of the decade.” They helped Jews escape, collaborated in writing leaflets denouncing Hitler and calling for revolution, and secretly circulated these leaflets throughout the city of Berlin. During World War II, this group collaborated with a Soviet espionage movement that was conspiring to defeat Hitler and couriered top-secret information to the Allies.

As it turned out, very few outlived the war.

Despite Harnack’s wish to remain invisible, she left, says Donner, “a trail for us to follow.” We learn about her family of origin, her marriage (to a German and fellow resistor), her friendships, her special gift of discerning who might be a possible recruit for the movement and who could not be trusted, her unspeakable bravery, her loyalty, her dedication, her strength, her time in prison. This was a woman who sacrificed everything — life, safety, comfort, family — to stand against as best she was able the evil blossoming around her.

It is an eerily intimate portrait that Donner paints of an extraordinary ordinary human being who might well have otherwise

remained obscured by the shadows of her time and the sheer madness and confusion of those days.

In the end, the reader learns about a number of heroically courageous, able souls who worked alongside Harnack and in their own right to sabotage the meteoric rise of the Nazi Party. One individual whose story is braided into those of Mildred, her husband Arvid and others is a child, Don, whose father, a Kansas native, was working at the U.S. embassy at the time.

We first meet 11-year-old Don skittering across the city with a blue knapsack to meet with his tutor, who is also American. “The boy is her courier, in the language of espionage. An 11-year-old spy.” Once his lessons are finished, his tutor “helps him with his coat and slips a piece of paper into his knapsack. Sometimes the paper looks like a reading list. Sometimes it looks like a recipe. Sometimes it looks like a letter, which she signs Mildred or, simply, M.”

This book is a masterpiece — not one I will soon forget. And I couldn’t help but notice, with chills icing my spine even in the heat of a Florida sun, how much 1940s Germany parallels some of what we are now witnessing in our own country. Like, for instance, the pressure the Nazis put on

German women to leave their careers and professions to remain in the home, serve their husbands and give birth to as many children as possible — reminiscent of the war on women going on now in the U.S. with the systematic stripping away of women’s reproductive rights. Also, the banning of books. The prejudice and marginalization of certain ethnic groups. And the marginalization of LGBTQ+ people. And more. Yikes.

Oh, and just two more things:
• “An accurate tally of the deaths at concentration camps is impossible. Available evidence indicates that two-thirds of the Jewish population in Europe—or six million Jews—were murdered.”

• The title, “All the Frequent Troubles of Our Days,” is from a Goethe poem that Harnack, shackled in her cell at Gefangnis III, was translating into English with a secret pencil stub in her last days alive. On the margin of page 74, Mildred had written: “In all the frequent troubles of our days A God gave compensation — more his praise

In looking sky- and heavenward as duty In sunshine and in virtue and in beauty.” This book is “a real-life thriller,” says the New York Times. It’s true. I highly recommend it.



ANIMAL HOSPITAL
of
HINESBURG

482-2955
205 Commerce St.
Hinesburg

Integrating compassion, expertise & service

- Advanced surgical and Medical Care
- Exotics and Companion Animals
- Evening Hours Available



Senior Center News

Developing social connections at a happening place

Lori York
Director

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of social connections. The Charlotte Senior Center is more than just a building where activities happen. The senior center is a community center where people gather for enrichment and social interactions.

Visit the senior center and attend some of the programming. Learn about growing a pollinator garden or view the new photography exhibit. There are language groups, daily exercise classes. Or, visit for Monday lunch and gather for board and card games afterwards.

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.

Events

Art show: photographic exhibit

A collection of scenic and wildlife photography by David Pearson. Pearson’s artistic style conveys his belief that “sometimes all it takes is pausing to take a deeper and longer look at the simple and ordinary, to see it from a different perspective.”

Chat with Chea Waters Evans Monday, April 17, 1 p.m.

Bring your questions and concerns for a legislature meet and greet with Chea Waters Evans. Waters Evans is your newly elected Chittenden-5 representative and is interested in hearing from you so she can bring forward your issues in Montpelier.

Red Cross blood drive Thursday, April 13, 2-7 p.m.

Please consider donating blood. The Red Cross is experiencing the worst blood shortage in over a decade. Call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit redcrossblood.org and enter: CHARLOTTE to schedule an appointment.

Senior Resource Fair Wednesday, May 24, 3-5 p.m.

Stop by the senior center for the first annual Senior Resource Fair and learn about all the great resources available to seniors in the community. Over 20 local organizations have registered to be at the center to share information about their services.

Annual Plant Sale Saturday, May 27, 9 a.m.-noon.

It is time to plan for the Charlotte Senior Center’s Annual Plant Sale. If you are interested in donating plants or helping out with the plant sale, please contact Sukey at 802-877-2237 or Polly at ppolly62@ymail.com.

Programs

Antarctica Tuesday, April 11, 1 p.m.

Interested in learning more about the Earth’s southernmost and least-populated continent? Join Bill Fraser-Harris for this presentation about his recent trip to Antarctica, including his experience hiking and touring in Patagonia, Torres del Paine National Park and Fitzroy in Chile and Argentina. There will be photographs to pique your interest in travel and discussion around the preservation of this natural resource. Q&A to follow the presentation. Cost: Free. Registration recommended.

Birding expedition Wednesday, April 12, 9 a.m.

There are 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 class, create an account on the Charlotte Senior Center website under the Registration tab and follow the instructions to register for this birding trip. Cost: Free.

Carmen discussion Tuesday, April 18, 1 p.m.

Toni Hill of the Chittenden County Opera Lovers will present a discussion on Georges Bizet’s Carmen, including video excerpts of the opera and covering how the music and the drama were combined, reflecting changes in style based on pulp fiction in the 19th century. Cost: Free. Registration recommended.

Grow a pollinator garden Thursday, April 20, 7-8 p.m.

Everyone is becoming more aware of the importance and plight of pollinators. Pollinating insects, birds and other creatures are essential not just for flower gardens, but also the food we eat. Every plant helps for pollinators. Charlie Nardozzi will discuss the essential ingredients to a successful pollinator garden beyond the plants, including habitat, water, shelter and best gardening practices for pollinators, and highlight pollinators beyond just honey bees. He will also discuss the plants that are best for pollinators, with emphasis on the open pollinated varieties. Cost: Free. Registration recommended.

Pilates fitness Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

This Pilates class with Phyllis Bartling is for folks over 55. It is designed to be challenging yet safe. It includes upper-body strength work with hand weights and mat exercises. The exercises will work core muscles to improve balance, strength and posture. Cost: \$8 a class. No registration required.

Creative arts group Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-noon

Come create, experiment, share ideas, encourage others and have fun. Bring whatever creative endeavor you’re working on or thinking about and enjoy making new friends while being creative. As Einstein said, “Creativity is intelligence having fun.” Let’s have some fun together. Any questions, call Katie Franko at 802-425-6270. Cost: Free

Knit & crochet for a cause Thursdays, 2-3 p.m.

This group will meet weekly to work on projects that will be donated to local organizations in the community, to include COTS, Lund and the University of Vermont Medical Center’s oncology division. 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. All skill levels are welcome. Registrations appreciated, but not required.

Meals

Menus are posted on the website: charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Men’s breakfast Thursday, April 13, 7-9:30 a.m.

On the second Thursday of the month, the men gather for breakfast and conversation. This month, John Brawley, president of Sweet Sound Aquaculture, will be presenting “The Joys and Challenges of Raising and Selling Shrimp in Vermont.” Register by Tuesday, April 11, by noon. Suggested breakfast donation of \$6. To register, contact Tim McCullough at cubnut5@aol.com.

Monday lunches

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



Photo by Lori York
Every Tuesday a group gathers in the cafe to play Mahjong. From left, Susan Sims, Jean-Carol Dunham and Nancy Rosenthal playing mahjong on a recent Tuesday.



Photo by Lori York
From left, Frank Califano, Sean Moran and Carol Pepin help with Grab-and-Go meals. Volunteers distribute between 70-120 meals on Thursday mornings.



Photo by Lori York
Music is always a popular attraction at the senior center.

Weekly Age Well Grab-and-Go meals

Pick up on Thursdays 10-11a.m. at the Charlotte Senior Center. Registration is required by Monday for the Thursday meal. \$5 suggested meal donation but not required. To register, contact Carol Pepin at 802-425-6345 or at meals@charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Senior center contact info:

Lori York, director,
lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org
212 Ferry Road, Charlotte
802-425-6345
charlotteseniorcentervt.org

Follow the senior center on Facebook or Instagram at charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Write Ingredients

Enjoy mulligatawny — a well-traveled soup

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

Mulligatawny soup, the featured item for Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center, has a long, intriguing history. This popular soup has traveled from India, settling in at points around the globe, before making its appearance in Charlotte.

The article “Some Like It Hot: Class, Gender and Empire in the Making of Mulligatawny Soup,” published in Economic and Political Weekly and available at tinyurl.com/3kxe2hab, offers insights into the identity and power structures embedded in this food — and in everything else we eat.

Noted missionary and explorer David Livingston wrote of eating mulligatawny during his African explorations; Charles Dickens’s weekly magazine, “All the Year Round,” published a recipe. Another Victorian novelist, William Makepeace Thackeray, who was born in Calcutta where his father worked for the East India Company, had his poem about mulligatawny published in “Punch.” Charles Francatelli, chief cook for Queen Victoria, had his own version, which included ham, a turnip, a carrot and six apples.

Heinz put the popular soup in tins where you can still find it today.

Look at the menu board near the counter in the “Soup Nazi’s” shop in this episode (tinyurl.com/2p9zh62w) of Seinfeld, and you will see 11 soup choices. Mulligatawny sits at the top of the list.

There are no Soup Nazis at the Charlotte Senior Center and rest assured that you won’t be kicked out if you ask for bread with your soup. Bread is always served with Monday Munch.

Monday Munch, April 10 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or until the food is gone

Mulligatawny soup with chicken, green salad, almond cake with whipped cream and fruit. Remember: Reservations for Grab-and-Go meals are required by the previous Monday at meals@charlotteseniorcentervt.org or 802-425-6345.

Thursday, April 13 Men’s Breakfast: 7-9:30 a.m.

Enjoy a conversational breakfast and then hear a talk on the joys and challenges of raising and selling shrimp in Vermont by John Brawley of Sweet Sound Aquaculture. To register contact Tim McCullough at cubnut5@aol.com.

Grab-and-Go meal Pick up time 10-11 a.m.

Baked ham with raisin sauce, sweet potatoes, Capri blend vegetables and Congo bar. The meal is provided by Age Well. Suggested donation of \$5, but not required. Pay what you can, when you can.

Monday Munch, April 17

At press time, volunteer cooks are still planning. For menu update, go to charlotteseniorcentervt.org/lunch/meals.

Thursday, April 20 Grab-and-Go menu. Pick up time 10-11 a.m.

Beef with BBQ sauce, baked beans, broccoli florets and pumpkin cookie.

A few more words about Monday Munch. Mulligatawny soup with a glass of sherry is the first course served in “Dinner for One,” an 18-minute British slapstick farce. Not popular in Britain, try to figure out why watching this film is a German New Year’s rite, the most frequently repeated TV program there. People in Denmark, Sweden and Finland have adopted this New Year’s tradition (tinyurl.com/587s9uws).

There’s a short introduction in German, followed by the farce in English. I confess I could not make myself sit through all 18 minutes, but Rotten Tomatoes reports that lots of people give this high approval.

Think about what message people were trying to send when they reincarnated the soup as potage de madres and consommé l’idienne.

Meanwhile, at McSweeney’s, Sam Woods gives us an Olive Garden menu written by H.P. Lovecraft at tinyurl.com/bdzn92kn. Reading this should make you aware of how fortunate you are for the open invitation to come for Monday Munch at the



Charlotte Senior Center.

Yes, there is a song called “Mulligatawny.” Here’s Fred Douglas singing it in 1927: tinyurl.com/bdftybxw.

Searching for a song to welcome spring? Here’s one: tinyurl.com/4t9hax7j.

PRESORTED STANDARD

U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MAILED FROM
ZIP CODE 05482
PERMIT NO. 9