

Your nonprofit community news source since 1958

The Charlotte News

Thursday, August 10, 2023 | Volume 66 Number 04



August encore

Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Greenbush wasn't the only group from Charlotte playing at the last Grange on the Green. Charlotte's own Greenbush played while kids frolicked. The Grange on the Green concerts that were originally scheduled for the four Thursdays in July had a coda, or lagniappe as it's known in Creole. An extra concert was added for Tuesday, Aug. 1, and the weather and the music were beautiful.

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BEING AWESOME!



Photo by Al Frey

Braden Cook came on in relief for Champlain Valley with a strong performance on the mound to help keep his team in the state title contest, but ultimately the team lost after three extra innings.

Champlain Valley Little League falls just short in state title contest

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

“Go be awesome.”

It was a constant refrain members of the Champlain Valley Little League team heard from coach Mike Niebur every time they took the field.

Every player, every time — he high-fived each and bestowed his baseball benediction: “Go be awesome. Go be awesome. Go be awesome. ...”

His players were all 11- and 12-year-olds, an age where admonishment from an adult can travel in one ear and out the other faster than the speed of thought.

But, apparently Niebur’s message found purchase in the minds of the Champlain Valley all-stars, because his players were awesome before and during the state title games on Saturday and Sunday, July 29 and 30, at Schifilliti Field in Burlington.

The team came into the finals of the state-title contest unbeaten in the double-elimination state tournament.

They had lost in the district tournament but played their way back out of the consolation bracket and into the state tournament by winning three games in four days. Their only loss was to Williston. They responded by beating Williston twice to win the district.

The players had reason to be confident, having beaten, St. Johnsbury, their opponent in the title match, 13-0 the previous weekend in a state-tournament game that was called after four innings because of the mercy rule.

Early in the Saturday, July 29, contest it looked like it would only take Champlain Valley one game to take the state title when Ty Niebur knocked a fly to right center for an RBI double.

Around the fourth inning with the score still 1-0 in Champlain Valley’s favor, the weather that had been misting turned to full-on rain. Then a couple of rumbles of thunder

joined in.

Having played the required four innings for the game to be official, it was looking like the team made up of all-stars from Charlotte, Shelburne and Hinesburg would take the state championship with a 1-0 win. But the officials opted to continue because no lightning had been seen, and the thunder ceased after just a couple of distant meteorological growls.

In the fifth inning Caleb Decker of St. Johnsbury knocked a two-run homer to put his team in front 2-1.

In the sixth with St. Johnsbury now up 3-1 and threatening to add to its lead with two more runners on, the rain had become a downpour, and the thunder returned closer and more insistent. Some in the crowd said they had seen lightning this time.

Finally, the umpires sent the teams to their bullpens for a rain delay. The delayed game turned into a called game 30 minutes later. The score reverted to 2-1 where it had been after the fifth, the last full inning completed.

Sunday

The weather for Sunday’s game was perfect for baseball — sunny and comfortably cool.

St. Johnsbury, playing for its first state title since 1985, jumped out to a 3-0 lead in the top of the second inning, but in the sixth Champlain Valley tied the game up at 3-3 to force extra innings. (Little League games are usually six innings.)

With the extra innings came extra excitement. In the top of the seventh, St. Johnsbury jumped back out in front to take a 5-3 lead, but once again Champlain Valley managed to tie it up at 5 all when Holden Rodliff hit a sharp grounder down the right side for two RBIs.

In the ninth inning with two strikes, Maddox Stacey of St. Johnsbury knocked the ball over the fence with two runners on to put his team ahead for the final 8-5 score.

Champlain Valley did not give up and loaded the bases in the bottom of the ninth

with one out, but once again Stacey came through for St. Johnsbury at short stop, catching a line drive and throwing it to third for a double play to end the game.

Niebur, who has coached Little League for 11 years, said this team was “as gritty as a group of 11- and 12-year-olds could possibly be.”

As St. Johnsbury danced and romped on the field, Champlain Valley players were crestfallen. Many tears were shed. Niebur admitted even he cried, but his tears were shed because of his pride in his team and this special experience they had shared.

“I was really sad that this this portion of our baseball careers have kind of come to an end,” Niebur said. “It really wasn’t about the loss. It was just that this journey had to kind of come to an end for us.”

Only two of his players are 11. The rest are aging out of Little League as 12-year-olds.

“These kids fought hard all weekend and left it all on the field,” he said. “I’m super proud of them and their time, commitment, energy and effort.”

He applauded starting pitcher Reid McAvey of Charlotte who was “lights out” and Braden Cook, also of Charlotte, who did a great job in relief. Cook pitched five shutout innings with nine strikeouts while only giving up one hit.

Another Charlotte Little Leaguer, Evan Dore, had three hits to help keep Champlain Valley in the game. Niebur also applauded Dore’s strong pitching from the day before in rain so hard it was difficult to keep the ball dry.

On Sunday, Max Strauss, Isaac Russell, Pete Stephen, Chase Rodliff, Braden Cook and Holden Rodliff all recorded hits for Champlain Valley on Sunday.

But really, Niebur said, “Every single one of those kids did something positive to contribute and to keep us in that game.”

... And be awesome.

Hunger in Charlotte: An untold story

Claudia Marshall
Chair of Fundraising Committee

If we’ve learned anything from the pandemic, it’s that circumstances change. Folks whose health was top notch have had to grapple with long-term COVID consequences. Robust businesses have gone belly-up. Many people lost loved ones, including breadwinners. Quite simply, things have changed.

It’s difficult to gauge just how hard times have been here in Charlotte. After all, it’s no secret that we are an affluent bunch — generally. But not everyone has dodged the bullet.

When we were planning this newspaper’s 65th anniversary celebration, we decided to try to “give back” to this community in ways large and small.

The first order of business has been to team up with Age Well to provide free meals to our neighbors in need of a little help. If past fund drives are any indication, we expect to receive more than one hundred donations and to provide as many meals.

We got some pushback when this idea first emerged. After all, some asked, “Is there a real problem?”



While business has reportedly been brisk at the food shelf, hard numbers were not available as we went to press.

At Charlotte Congregational, the relatively recent Little Free Pantry is said to empty out just as soon as it is stocked.

Age Well reports having only a handful of clients in Charlotte. However, last year, they distributed 246 meals to

SEE **HUNGER** PAGE 2

Pickleball players push for more town beach courts

Brett Yates
Contributor

For three consecutive years, the Sports & Fitness Industry Association has named pickleball America’s fastest-growing sport. Charlotte doesn’t appear to be an exception to the rule, and there’s power in numbers.

Recently, local pickleball players have organized themselves to use it. This Monday, Aug. 7, at a meeting of the Charlotte Recreation Commission, they packed the town hall to support a proposal to turn one of the three tennis courts at the town beach into four permanent, full-time pickleball courts.

“I can say we are breaking our record,” chair Juliann Phelps told the teeming room.

But tennis players pushed back — not against the conversion itself, but against the picklers’ suggested design, which they worried would crowd one of the two remaining tennis courts, impacting their play and risking injury. By their

SEE **PICKLEBALL** PAGE 2

judgment, two pickleball courts could fit comfortably on what is now the westernmost tennis court.

In the end, the rec commission split the difference, advising three regulation pickleball courts on the site. The recommendation will go to the selectboard for final approval.

The commission didn’t arrive at the compromise easily. An hour and a half of testimony and debate followed their perusal of a detailed plan submitted by resident Steven Wisbaum and co-signed by 42 other Charlotters, several of whom wrote testimonials about their love of pickleball and the need for dedicated facilities.

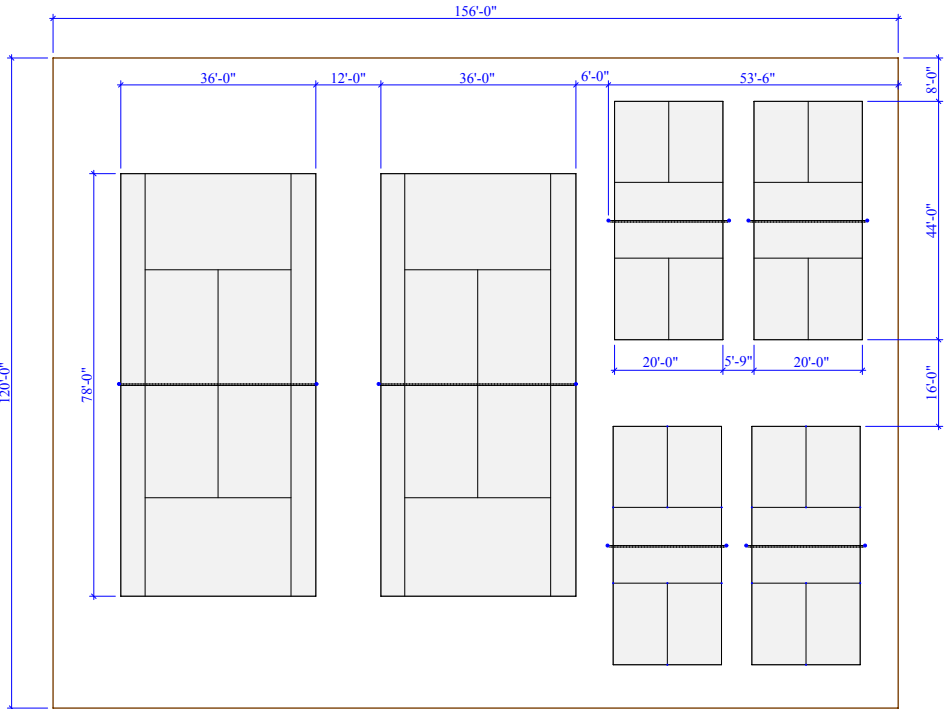
Wisbaum estimated that, already, the town beach hosts more than 10,000 hours of pickleball play annually. The picklers bring portable nets to the two tennis courts that bear overlapping markings for their sport. They hope to see the tennis courts remain usable for both games.

The selectboard has already hired a contractor to resurface all three courts later this month. It would cost extra to add new pickleball lines and nets, but the pickleball community has promised to donate enough cash to cover the difference.

Wisbaum’s proposal anticipated that tennis players would object on the basis of overcrowding. It acknowledged that the pickleball conversion would shrink the buffer on the western side of the middle tennis court from 12 feet to 6 feet, but it included a message of support from Charlotte’s contractor, Advantage Tennis, and an image of Rossignol Park in Williston, where the gap between the pickleball courts and the tennis court is, by Wisbaum’s measurements, even smaller.

“I encourage all of us to see this proposal not in terms of pitting the pickleball community against the tennis community,” Wisbaum said, “in part because many people who are in the pickleball community were or still are tennis players, including myself, but also because the pickleball community is simply asking the rec commission and the selectboard to acknowledge that the beach courts have become a multi-use facility.”

David Raymond, however, recognized a measure of conflict between the groups. “It is a fact that these courts were underused up until maybe three years ago,



Proposed Tennis to Pickleball Court Conversion at the Charlotte Beach • August 3, 2023
Submitted by Steven Wisbaum

when this group really started gathering,” said Raymond, a pickleball player. “And quite honestly, very unfortunately, it’s bothering tennis players all over the world that we are moving into their area, if you will. But these are rec courts, not truly tennis — they’re designed for tennis originally, but they’re owned by the town.”

Katie Taylor, a tennis player, denied any animosity. “I think we’re trying to be acquiescent to the craze that is pickleball,” Taylor said. “I’m not speaking for all tennis players, but I think we’re happy to forgo one court for two pickleball courts, as long as it makes the second and third courts that get resurfaced playable.”

Matt Bastress, who also plays tennis, agreed with her. “This proposal essentially leaves one court,” Bastress said. “I would love to see kids who are learning to play tennis continue to have access to tennis courts nearby. I’m just concerned that this really eliminates that to a great degree.”

But Wisbaum stressed that the town shouldn’t waste the site by building fewer pickleball courts than it could accommodate. He urged the commission to table the four-court proposal for future consideration, if it came to that, rather than approve a two-court design.

That’s nearly what happened. Recreation commissioner Robin Reid opined that the pickleball idea warranted consideration as an independent proposal, not as a “last-minute” addendum “tagging onto a maintenance project.” Her colleague Elisa Miller lamented that the tennis community hadn’t had as much time to respond to the pickleball plan as the pickleball community had had to create it.

But Craig Reynolds counseled his fellow commissioners to “stop kicking the can down the road.” He put forward a motion that borrowed from selectboard member Frank Tenney, who, from the audience, had raised the notion of building three pickleball courts instead of four (or two).

That way, just one pickleball court, instead of two, would border the middle tennis court. And it could be aligned in such a way as to minimize the chance of collision or interference, at least in theory.

The motion passed on a 4-2 vote. But that doesn’t necessarily mean it’ll pass twice.

“This is, again, just a recommendation,” Phelps warned. “So, the selectboard could just say, ‘I’m sorry, but we’re not allowing any more money outside of the request for proposal. The work is just being done as is.’ That could be a likely outcome. I just want people to be prepared for that.”

HUNGER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

their Meals on Wheels clients in Charlotte. You may not have believed that the need for food aid in our town is significant but tell that to the people facing food insecurity. To them, the need is very real. So, we say “thank you” to you, the generous supporters of this paper. Your



donations this summer are going to go even further this year. For each donation we receive, of any amount, we will provide one meal to a neighbor whose next meal isn’t otherwise guaranteed. We also say “thanks again” for keeping us in business and telling the stories of Charlotte for the past 65 years. Because

of you, The Charlotte News is one of the longest-running community newspapers in Vermont.

Please help tee up the next 65 years with a donation of any size to your nonprofit, community newspaper. If it makes sense for your budget, put \$10 or \$20 a month on your credit card, just as you’d do to support public radio, for instance. It’s quick and easy. Simply grab your card and go to the “Give Now” page at charlottenewsvt.org.

If you’d prefer to write a check, send it to P.O. Box 251, Charlotte VT 05445. Last year, 320 Charlotters made gifts that made a difference and helped keep this paper in business. Today, I’m asking you to join them.

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Ads Deadline: Friday, Aug. 18

Sept. 7

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Thanks to a grant from the Lionheart Charitable Trust, all first-time gifts will be matched, dollar for dollar, up to a total of \$2,000.



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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.

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The editor makes final decisions on the 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.

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The Charlotte News has adopted the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics as the touchstone to guide newsroom practices. The Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics is built on four principles:

- Seek truth and report it.
- Minimize harm.
- Act independently.
- Be accountable and transparent.

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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 standards and requirements listed on our website at charlottenewsvt.org/about.

Send submissions, questions, photos, etcetera to scooter@thecharlottenews.org

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Town manager petition amended to keep elected road commissioner

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

The group pushing for a vote by residents on whether to switch to a town manager had another meeting on Aug. 1 after looking into state statutes to determine how they wished to proceed.

And they decided they were going ahead with their effort, which means that they will be soliciting signatures for a revised petition.

The group already had close to 200 signatures for a petition calling for a town vote on the issue. If submitted, that petition would have forced a vote in 30 days, but after discovering that state statute requires a town manager to become the de facto road commissioner, the group decided to hold off while they decided their next move.

Now, they have a revised petition, including a provision requiring a charter that would enable Charlotte to continue with an elected road commissioner if it switches to a town manager. As an elected town official, the road commissioner would not answer to the town manager if the

residents vote to make that change to town governance.

The members of the group hope to have more than the required 5 percent of town voters or 180 signatures collected for their petition by the selectboard’s Monday, Aug. 14, meeting. If the selectboard does not decide to call for a vote on the town manager issue, the group hopes to submit its plan to the town clerk the next day.

But if they haven’t collected enough signatures by that time, they planned to continue the effort. And they’ve got plenty of time because now they can’t have a vote on their amended petition until March.

Although the group had originally planned to have a called vote on the change to a town manager from a town administrator form of municipal government before current town administrator Dean Bloch retires at the end of October, they have come to the conclusion that their amended petition will have to be approved at town meeting because it now includes a proposal for a charter keeping an elected town road commissioner.

Charles Russell read from state statute



that requires a “petition charter proposal shall be submitted to the voters at the next annual meeting, primary or general election.”

Lane Morrison said, although it could be submitted to voters at a special meeting called by the selectboard, it’s unlikely that the current selectboard would call for a special meeting before Town Meeting Day this March.

Voting on the town manager proposal would be by Australian ballot.

Charlotte Rep. Chea Waters Evans said, if the town manager proposal goes to a vote at town meeting and is approved, she would already have a bill prepared to

submit to the legislature to get its required approval of a town charter. If the town approves it by a reasonable margin of voters, she doesn’t think getting legislative approval will be difficult.

Generally, what a town wants the legislature approves, Evans said. “It could definitely be done by the end of the session.”

For example, a bill that was not controversial for a local option tax in Shelburne passed this year in less than 60 days.

The revised petition reads: “The town shall have a town manager form of governance per Title 24 Chapter 37, with the town manager’s duties per 24 V.S.A. § 1236, except for the duties of the road commissioner, which shall continue to be performed by an elected road commissioner.”

“I think it’s a good thing we pushed this petition because I think they’ve attracted better candidates,” said Russell, who is a member of the recruitment committee to review candidates for Bloch’s position.

Letters to the Editor

Bring your board, enthusiasm to backgammon at senior center

To the Editor:

My name is Jonathan Hart and I’m a long-time backgammon player. I grew up playing the game with my dad.

When I became a young father, I played with local friends and neighbors every Friday night for about 10 years. My growing daughter loved the clack-clack sounds of checkers being moved around a homemade wooden board as she fell asleep.

I’m always fascinated by the complexities of the game. Like many board games, it’s easy to learn and challenging to master.

Backgammon is a tactical table game with a 5,000-year history. It involves a combination of strategy and luck (from rolling dice). While the dice may determine the outcome of a single game, the better player will accumulate more wins over a series of many games. With each roll of the dice, players must choose from numerous options for moving their checkers and anticipate possible counter-moves by the opponent. The optional use of a doubling cube allows players to raise the stakes during the game.

A year ago, I started our backgammon league at the Charlotte Senior Center thanks to the invitation of director Lori York. I was eager to renew my play and learn new strategies.

Thirty-four people have signed up to play, so we will be organizing an in-house tournament later this fall or early winter. Weekly games include shared tips and round-robin friendly play. We welcome players at all levels from beginner to advanced for weekly games. Come on by and make some new friends.

If you are interested in joining our fun league, please contact me at jonathanhart1@gmail.com.

During the summer we play Tuesdays, 6-8:30 p.m. During the fall and winter, in addition to games on Tuesdays, there are games Saturdays, 2-4:30 p.m.

Bring your board and stop by.

Jonathan Hart
Charlotte

Time for Charlotte to consider short-term rental ordinance

To the Editor:

Sometimes you are not aware of a trend that is taking place until it affects you. This is the case for me and my neighbors on Nature’s Way.

We have recently learned that one of the houses in our neighborhood has become exclusively an Airbnb rental property. There is no permanent resident at the

address. The property was bought by an out-of-state entity for the purpose of creating a short-term rental property in a desirable area. In effect, it has become a commercial enterprise in a residential neighborhood.

Apparently, this is not the only case of its type in our town, but it is very disconcerting to those of us who are permanent residents. According to the town zoning administrator, Aaron Brown, there are around 100 Airbnbs in Charlotte. It is not known how many are absentee-landlord homes for rent versus auxiliary housing units for rent on an owner-occupied property or a few bedrooms for rent in an owner-occupied house.

Why would this matter to the residents of Charlotte? There are a number of impacts that should be considered for housing exclusively for short-term rental:

- Disruption of the neighborhood as a result of strangers’ activities inconsistent with neighborhood norms;
- Increased traffic on private roads and driveways as well as parking;
- Potential diminishing of property values as a result of a commercial enterprise in a residential area;
- Decrease in the housing stock available to people who would live in town and contribute to our community.

Properties rented with a long-term lease are different because they contribute much-needed housing in this time of short supply. However, short-term rental properties are characterized by continuously changing occupants who are unfamiliar with the neighborhood and the understandings we neighbors have concerning behavior, traffic, road maintenance and property boundaries.

It may be time for the planning commission and the selectboard to consider enacting an ordinance like the one recently passed in Burlington, i.e., to restrict short-term rentals in residential zoned properties in Charlotte to owner-occupied premises. If a homeowner wishes to offer a few rooms in their home or offer an adjacent building, aka an auxiliary housing unit, on their property for short-term rental, or even their entire house while they are on vacation, that would be allowed. If the primary residence of the homeowner is not on the property in question, short-term rentals would not be allowed. Exceptions can be made for seasonal properties like those on Thompson’s Point.

Charlotte has a special quality that we residents are lucky to enjoy. Creation of commercial properties in residential neighborhoods will impact this quality of life negatively and alter the essential character of Charlotte. I would welcome a discussion in Front Porch Forum and in

our local newspapers to learn what others think of this situation.

Mike Yantachka
Charlotte

(Mike Yantachka is a former state representative from Charlotte and is a regular volunteer for The Charlotte News as part of the team that proofreads the newspaper.)

State should make online tax filing easier, free for citizens

To the Editor:

Government should always be looking for ways to make people’s lives easier. Whether it’s responding to natural disasters like the recent flooding in Vermont, or investing in critical programs and services for low-income and working people.

One way we can save everyday people time and money is with the IRS’s new Direct File tax system. This will allow taxpayers to file taxes quickly and easily, online, free of charge. It means we wouldn’t have to rely on paid services like TurboTax and H&R Block, which charge people, on average, \$250 to file their taxes each year, according to a 2019 ProPublica article.

But, even as the IRS is preparing to bring Direct File online for the 2024 tax season, there’s a catch.

The new system will only allow you to file your federal tax returns, unless states opt in. And, the deadline for states to do so is less than a month away, on Sept. 4. While I recognize the governor is doing a lot to help people recover from the

floods, he can also do something to help Vermonters save hundreds of dollars by opting in.

Click tinyurl.com/3mseuax5 to send a message to opt your state in to the new IRS Direct File system before it’s too late.

An estimated 70 percent of U.S. taxpayers are eligible to use free tax prep software. However, through tricks and traps set by the tax prep industry, only roughly 2 percent use the free options.

But the tax prep industry is doing more than fooling us into using their paid services. Greedy corporations like H&R Block have also been illegally selling our private information to Google and Meta (the owner of Facebook and Instagram), according to the CNN Business headline: “Tax prep companies shared private taxpayer data with Google and Meta for years, congressional probe finds.”

But, thanks to investments made by Democrats in Congress in last year’s Inflation Reduction Act, we will soon have a free government-sponsored online system that competes with paid corporate options.

Take action today and urge to opt in to the new IRS Direct File system to save taxpayers time and money.

When Americans are provided with a free, easy-to-use federal tax filing system, shouldn’t Vermonters have the same opportunity to save hundreds of dollars in fees that are currently going to corporations and Wall Street investors?

Lt. Gov. David Zuckerman
Hinesburg

Volunteer opportunities

John Quinney
Publisher and President

It has oft been said that this town runs on volunteers. If you’d like to become a volunteer, joining the community of people who provide essential services to your friends and neighbors, here are some ways to do that. And as you may already know, volunteering is not only an important activity, it also feels great.

Meals on wheels and more:

Since 1974, Age Well has been part of Vermont’s Area Agencies on Aging, coordinating services and care for older adults throughout Addison, Chittenden,

Franklin and Grand Isle Counties. Age Well continues to seek new volunteers to support older Vermonters in their homes. Opportunities include: delivering Meals on Wheels, providing a regular friendly visit, grocery shopping, running errands, assistance with medical appointments, organizing, bill paying, providing caregiver respite support, minor home repairs, Veterans visiting other Veterans and more. Volunteers feel an incredible sense of satisfaction and reward seeing the impact they have on those they support.

Time commitment: Based on your availability, varying from one day a week to two days a month.

Interested? For more information, please contact Age Well’s volunteer office: email volunteer@agewellvt.org, call 802-662-5249 or visit agewellvt.org/giving-back.

Conservation commission and Thompson’s Point Design Review Committee:

There are currently unfilled seats available on the conservation

commission (one seat, term ending April 30, 2025) and the Thompson’s Point Design Review Committee (three seats, terms ending April 30, 2024, 2025 and 2026).

The conservation commission’s mission is “to support the Charlotte Town Plan by promoting land and other resource use decisions which protect and enhance Charlotte’s natural and cultural resources.”

The Thompson’s Point Design Review Committee “acts as an advisory committee to the development review board when construction requiring conditional-use approval is proposed in the Thompson’s Point neighborhood.”

Additional information about both groups is available at charlottetv.org. If you have questions about these opportunities, please call Dean Bloch at 425-3071 ext. 5, or stop by town hall.

Time commitment: Variable.

Interested? Send a short statement explaining your interest and relevant background information to Dean Bloch, town administrator at townadmin@townofcharlotte.com.

A wide range of opportunities:

The Charlotte Library is an essential community resource that is used by Charlotters of all stripes. And the library’s over 20 volunteers, who include some of your friends and neighbors, play an essential role in keeping operations running smoothly.

The library is currently looking for new volunteers for a variety of tasks in the library and outdoors in the library gardens. These tasks include: computer entry, internet and website, interlibrary loan preparation, book care and repair, book reviews, book shelving, shelf reading, circulation desk staffing, craft preparation and program preparation as well as help with the library Garden Circle.

Anyone over the age of 14 is welcome to participate. Volunteer application forms are available upon request or on the library’s website at tinyurl.com/2mdrnf4u. Time commitment: Two to three hours a week depending on the task. Interested? Contact Margaret Woodruff, library director, at margaret@

Editor wins New England press association award

John Quinney
Publisher and President

Picking up our mail on June 20, board member Meredith Moses was surprised to see a letter from the New England Newspaper Association (NENPA).

The Charlotte News had received a third-place award in the association’s 2022 New England Better Newspaper competition for local personality profile.

The award was for Scooter MacMillan’s May 19, 2022, story, “In spite of pain, Jaunich wins Fullbright Scholarship, headed to Vanderbilt.”

One of the judges wrote, “Inspiring story of a young man who overcame the odds — and the pain — of a rare condition. The reporter isn’t afraid to say it like it is (‘If anyone deserves a Fulbright Scholarship, it’s Kyle Jaunich.’) and that only enhances the reader’s appreciation for the story.”

MacMillan said he had talked to Lynne Jaunich several times when she was on the school board about her three children who all went to the Naval Academy. He was drawn to writing about them because his grandfather and great-grandfather went to the Academy.

His grandparents retired to Annapolis and MacMillan has visited the Naval Academy many times.

So, when Jaunich called to tell him about her son and his struggles with a rare condition known as complex regional pain syndrome that left him in constant pain, MacMillan said he was eager to write about how Kyle Jaunich had to leave the Naval Academy but was headed to Vanderbilt.

You can check out this award-winning story on our website at tinyurl.com/36eyzbxa.

The Charlotte News’ invitation to Thompson’s Point campers

Here at The Charlotte News, we want to forge stronger connections with Thompson’s Point campers, to learn more about the issues and concerns of this unique seasonal community.

To this end, we’re inviting Thompson’s Point residents to join Scooter MacMillan, editor of The Charlotte News, and me on the Thompson’s Point Clubhouse porch, on Thursday, Aug. 24, starting at 5 p.m.

We’ll answer any questions that come up about the paper, but mostly we want to listen, learn and ensure that the current interests and concerns, the history and the people of Thompson’s Point have a place in the pages of The Charlotte News.

Join us to chat with friends and enjoy light refreshments, with big thanks here to Catering by Dale, Philo Ridge and several board members.

If you’re living on Thompson’s Point this summer and would like to attend, let Gay Regan know, if possible, with a



Courtesy photo

Join representatives of The Charlotte News on the Thompson’s Point Clubhouse porch at 5 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 24.



The Charlotte News debuted its renovated website this week. Please visit it. And let us know what your think.

call to 802-318-5617 or with an email to gayregan@usa.net. Last-minute drop-ins are also most welcome.

In the past, we’ve experienced problems getting The Charlotte News delivered on Thompson’s Point but no longer. From now through mid-September, The Charlotte News is being delivered to everyone who gets their mail on Thompson’s Point. If you don’t have your mail delivered to your Thompson’s Point mailbox but want to get the newspaper, simply go into the Shelburne post office to let them know.

Hoping to see you on Aug. 24.

Check out the newspaper’s new and improved website

For the past few weeks, visitors to our website may have noticed some odd things.

First off, Anna Cyr, our production manager, appeared to be very prolific. Although she was shown as the author of dozens of stories on our website, she didn’t actually write them.

What’s more, while working in the backend of our website, Anna posted photos and images with every story, but they weren’t being displayed. You get the ... picture.

Our local website folks at bytes.co worked to solve the problems and kept needing additional time and money. It was starting to look like the proverbial bottomless money pit.

Our website was built in 2017, which makes it old. Phrases like “cross code incompatibility” were being thrown about.

So, on July 13, we decided to invest in a rebuilt website and Sarah Maines, Lilly Romano and Alister Marble at bytes.co got to work. They rearranged other projects in order to get our rebuilt site up and running as soon as possible. We are most grateful to them for this support.

In just 24 days, they got the job done, and our new website was launched this week on Monday, Aug. 7. We’re pleased with the results and hope that you are too.

Take a look at charlottenewsvt.org and let us know how it looks and works for you at john@thecharlottenews.org.

Commentary

Make haste slowly before changing to a town manager

Dennis Delaney
Contributor

Robert Frost was a farming Vermonter, and one of our country’s best known and beloved poets. From his pen flowed images of the goodness and simplicity of our small state many decades ago. My favorite Frost poem is “The Road Not Taken.”

“Two roads diverg’d in a yellow wood and sorry I could not travel both.” Picture us now, our town, at the start of those roads. And add “huge and unknown change” to the picture.

Right now, however, our small town hosts, well, not a debate but a clumsy argument — and sometimes a sly one — about that change and our path to a strong future. Robert Frost would not have stopped here.

An ad hoc group has gathered to push us, no questions asked, into the arms of a town manager. Any town manager. I used the word “sly” because the self-appointed town manager group commenced their “putsch” for a new town government, i.e., a town manager, by doing an end run around the town’s elected government, our selectboard.

The ad hoc group went out and gathered 200 petition signatures to jump start the formal town process to hire a manager. And one ad hoc member freely admitted that some of those signing may not have understood what they were signing. Sly? Yes. And once the selectboard was brought in, they, the board, were at times told the petition might be turned in to start the process if the selectpersons didn’t act in a timely way. Bluntly put, the board was threatened.

A town manager form of government is laid out at great length in our Vermont Statutes Annotated, Title 24, Ch.37. The description is long, and if there’s one major

point to wring out of it, it’s that moving to a town manager system will be a fundamental change in Charlotte’s town government. Yes, we will still elect women and men to our selectboard but, and it’s almost funny, the movers for change want the selectboard to go off and meditate on policy, abandoning what the board does now to serve its citizens.

I have this image of five selectboard members up on Mt. Philo talking policy and swatting mosquitoes.

Here’s an example of what our town government does so well for our people; some would call it “stuff.” I call it small-town Vermont.

Some weeks ago, I attended a selectboard meeting. On the action agenda was a couple

with a problem. They own a home near the town beach and picnic areas, and those areas often host large party gatherings that overflow to the neighbors’ property. Needing help, they brought the problem to the selectboard. I was stunned, pleasantly so, at the patience and courtesy of the chair and board shown to these Charlotte citizens. Who will handle our citizens’ problems if the selectboard’s new job is to go off and think about policy?

An event like this happened to the Delaneys, new arrivals in town many years ago. My reaction was: This is where I want to live.

Should the ad hoc group succeed in hiring a town manager our town government will be dancing on two left feet. We’ll fall behind

good government. Why? Governance. Countries across the world with democratic aspirations are welcoming the participation, the engagement of their citizens. More and more citizenry involved. Less reliance on leaders, even democratically elected ones. Maybe town managers less necessary?

At this point in time, we Charlotters, all of us, should do the unthinkable. We should, as friends and neighbors, talk to one another about the looming changes. And take our time. As the Italians like to say: Festina lente. Make haste slowly.

(Dennis Delaney of Charlotte is a former Republican state senator.)

The Charlotte newts

Photo by Lee Krohn

The weather we’ve been having isn’t just good for ducks; it’s also good for red eft or Eastern newts, who like the unseasonably cool and wet weather. These tiny animals are native salamanders who are born in water and use gills to breathe. The juveniles move to the land and develop lungs. As adults they move back to the water. Newts help reduce mosquitos because they feed on their larvae.



Charlotte farms participate in Open Farm Week

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

This summer is the ninth time that Open Farm Week has been celebrated in Vermont. It’s a great opportunity to not only enjoy our state’s agricultural treasures but this year it’s also a chance to give some love to a part of the economy that’s suffered some big hits this year.

Open Farm Week runs through this Saturday, Aug. 13, and some Charlotte farmers plan to observe the agricultural festivities.

One of those is Adam’s Berry Farm, which has scheduled different events for every day during the week.

The farm at 985 Bingham Brook Road plans to kick things off with an event to help farms impacted by flooding and other weather-related calamities this year.

On Thursday, 10 a.m.-noon, the farm will have Art for Kids with fun art projects inspired by the wonders of the farm, bees and — you guessed it — berries.

Come by the farm on Friday evening, 5-7 p.m., for S’mores Night with s’mores, drinks and food.

“We will have s’mores for roasting, berry-inspired cocktails from Adventure Dinner and barbacoa beef sandwiches from Grass Cattle Company,” the release said. “There will also be art projects for kids and adults alike. So, bring a picnic and come celebrate local farms with us.”

Saturday is Pie Day at Adam’s Berry Farm. It will run all day or until the pie runs out. Of course, there will be ice cream, too. The only cost is the price of pie and ice

cream, featuring blueberry and raspberry pie made by Sam LaCroix of Pastry Party and the Kitchen Table restaurant in Richmond.

The farm will close out Open Farm Week with GROW Kids Yoga at 10 a.m., Sunday, Aug. 13. A teacher from GROW Prenatal and Family Center will teach “fun-filled postures inspired by everything on the farm.”

On Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 12-13, Head Over Fields is opening its beloved walking trail to the public for the last weekend of Open Farm Week.

Owner Katie Rose Seward said the trail is behind its farm stand at 6035 Ethan Allen Highway, south of State Park Road. Please park behind the farm stand and leave parking at the farm stand to people who’ve come to shop. Signs will point the way to parking for the walk.

As you walk through the fields you will be able to see the farm’s new greenhouse and continue through hayfields almost to Mt. Philo Road. It’s about a 10-minute walk. From the top of the farm, you will have a great view of Lake Champlain and the Adirondack Mountains.

Feel free to bring a picnic or buy some snacks at the farm stand and hang out for a while.

On Wednesday, Aug. 9, Friday, Aug. 11, and Saturday, Aug. 12, Golden Apple Family Farm at 1052 Whalley Road is inviting people to take a self-guided tour of their farm and perennial gardens. Maps will be provided.

“While guests walk down the aisles of the apple orchard, they will see hives of pollinators, heritage chicken layers and their many-colored eggs. Cooling down in



Courtesy photo

Adam’s Berry Farm is having a different event for every day of Open Farm Week.

the mud, the Mangalitsa pigs will welcome everyone with snorts. The Finnsheep and lambs will be in the fields helping to regenerate the soil and clearing the grasses. In the perennial beds, there will be new colors at every turn,” according to Dig In Vermont.

Dig In Vermont’s website at diginvt.com has information about Open Farm Week events at farms in Charlotte and all over the state.

On Sunday, Aug. 13, Philo Ridge Farm is sponsoring farm activities from 2-4 p.m. This

free event is an opportunity to meet some farm animals, learn about the farm, play some games and tour a vegetable garden.

Afterward, 4-7 p.m., stay for Butcher’s Grill Night. This dinner is a ticketed event where farm staff will fire up the grill and cook burgers and sausages. There will be salads and sides. And live music.

Butcher’s Grill Night requires registering at tinyurl.com/2j87p6nk. The cost is \$45 for adults, \$25 for teens (13-17 years old), \$12 for children (12-3 years old) and children under 3 are free.

Recreation Department releases fall program sked

Fall soccer sign up

Early soccer registration fee is \$55 until Friday, Aug. 25. After Aug. 25 the fee will increase to \$65 per child.

We will be ordering dri-fit rec T-shirts this season. If your athlete needs a T-shirt, you can purchase one while you are registering for \$10.

Registration ends Friday, Sept. 1.

Charlotte Jamboree, Saturday, Sept. 23.

The season will start the week of Sept. 4. Soccer practices will be set by the coaches based on their availability. Please make a note if there are certain days or times your child is unavailable to practice.

Note: Volunteer coaches are needed.

Piano lessons

The recreation department is offering after-school piano lessons at Charlotte Central School this fall for students in second through eighth grade. Lessons will be taught by Julie Holmes on Tuesdays, Sept.5-Dec. 19, 3-5:30 p.m. and Wednesdays, Sept.6-Dec. 20, 2-5p.m.

Private lessons (30 minutes): \$378.

Safe Sitter courses

Safe Sitter prepares young people to be safe when they’re home alone, watching siblings or babysitting. The course offers four main content areas: safety skills, child care skills, first aid and rescue skills, and life and business skills. The lessons are filled with fun activities and role-playing exercises. Participants will practice choking rescue and diapering.

Register for the date that works best for your sixth-eighth grade child with the town offering the program then.

Class locations and information:

- Shelburne - Saturday, Nov. 4
- Hinesburg - Saturday, Dec. 2
- Williston - Saturday, March 9
- Charlotte - Wednesday, April 24.

Time: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Fee: \$60.

Tennis lessons

The tennis program is open to first-sixth graders. Tennis lessons will be held at the tennis courts at the Charlotte Town beach. Cost: \$85

Sept. 6-25, Mondays & Wednesdays
Mondays

First-third grade, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Fourth-sixth grade, 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Wednesdays

First-third grade, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Fourth-six grade, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Sept. 5-21, Tuesdays & Thursdays

First-third grade, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Fourth-six grade, 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Villari’s martial arts

Most children and teens will receive some benefit from Villari’s martial arts after training for just a few short months. But the real benefit comes from long-term training. There is something special that happens to a child who grows up in a Villari’s martial arts school. They are simply more confident, respectful, focused, healthy, hardworking and optimistic.

Kindergarten-eighth grade

Wednesdays, 1:45-2:45 p.m.

Session 1: Sept. 6-Nov. 29

Session 2: Dec. 6-March 6

Session 3: March 13-June 5

Location: Charlotte Central School

Fee: \$192 (12 classes per session)

Driver’s Education

The Charlotte Recreation Department is offering two driver education classes this fall and winter by the 802 Driving School. The education program will be taught by Joe Barch, who has over 15 years of experience teaching in the public schools.

Fall schedule: Please visit our website for exact dates and times.

Location: Charlotte Central School

Registration fee: \$900

Charlotte recreation basketball

The recreation department’s basketball program provides a venue for athletes to

learn and master basketball skills in a fun and positive environment. Winning is not the primary objective, but rather development of sportsmanship, teamwork, respect for others and discipline.

Practice and game information

The season starts the week of Dec. 4 and ends Feb. 10.

Practice will take place on weeknights 6-7:30 p.m. and/or Saturdays 8 a.m.-noon. Times will be posted as coaches determine their availability.

Mini Hoops (kindergarten-second grade)

– Teams will practice once a week.

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

Third-fifth grade – Teams will practice twice a week with games on Saturdays.

**All teams are dependent on roster size and volunteer coaches.

If your athlete needs a T-shirt, you can buy one while registering for \$10.

Early registration: \$75 (Sept. 11-Nov. 17)

Late Registration: \$90 (after Nov. 17)

Registration deadline: Dec. 1

Adult programs

Adult pickleball

Pickleball in Charlotte will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning at 5:30 p.m. through the summer and early fall. Contact the recreation department to be placed on an e-mail distribution list.

Intro to pickleball

Free pickleball instruction on Saturday mornings at 10 a.m. at the Charlotte Beach Courts. Contact the recreation department to be placed on an e-mail distribution list.

Pick-up basketball

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

Adult volleyball

Charlotte recreation will be offering adult volleyball on Thursday evenings starting in early September from 7-9 p.m. at Charlotte Central School.

Full and partial scholarships are available for all youth recreation activities.

To register visit charlottetrec.com.

Questions? Contact Nicole Conley by email at recreation@townofcharlotte.com.

CHARLOTTE PROPERTY TRANSFERS: JUNE 2023

June 1 April Thanouser to Mary Claire Walsh & Lynn Wolfe, 17 Common Way with dwelling .11 acres \$529,000

June 20 Candis Perreault Kjelleren Living Trust to Dillon Machavern Trust, 5880 Mt. Philo Road 5.51 acres land only \$440,000

June 21 Donald E. Hammond to Connor Timmons & Nelly Jennings, 2885 Mt. Philo Road with dwelling 6.22 acres \$550,000

June 26 Daniel Rivest & Linda St. Pierre to Albert S. Toto III & Kathleen Toto 2757 Greenbush Road 1.85 acres with dwelling \$1,500,000

June 28 Dawn Arnold to Owen Arnold & Heather Morse, 6054 Ethan Allen Highway with dwelling 44.0 acres \$700,000

June 28 Lawrence & Brigit Robinson to Lincoln & Kiona Heath, 299 Meadowside Drive .001 acres \$866

June 28 Lincoln & Kiona Heath to Lawrence & Brigit Robinson 231 Meadowside Drive .001 acres \$479

This information was supplied by Jay Strausser of Four Seasons Sothebys International Real Estate.



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Stronger Together

Let legislators know how you feel about Farm Bill

Linda Hamilton
Contributor

The Farm Bill is a massive omnibus bill which sets policy and funding levels for a wide range of programs under the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In 1933, the first program sought to help farmers during the Great Depression by paying them subsidies to reduce production of certain commercial crops, with the aim of raising crop prices in general. Over time many more issues have been recognized, so the scope has expanded to include not only production agriculture, but also soil conservation, crop insurance, wetland and forest protections, nutrition assistance and more, including the first steps toward addressing climate change.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s five-year review and re-authorization is underway right now. Given the complexity of the bill, it is tempting to sit back and simply trust that our congressional representatives will work for a package which addresses Vermont’s needs and opportunities. The stakes are high — the 2018 Farm Bill was authorized with a budget of \$867.2 billion.

Fortunately, many public-interest groups work to understand and inform both the public and lawmakers about the ramifications of these policy and funding decisions from the perspective of impacts on the well-being and resilience of people, communities and the ecological systems we depend on. Their lobbying on our behalf provides an alternative to the entrenched, but false, concept that what’s good for large corporations is good for everyone.

A core component, which will likely continue. is a competitive grants program which seeks to advance science and its application in six areas:

- Agriculture economics and rural communities
- Agriculture systems and technology
- Animal health and production and animal products
- Bio-energy, natural resources and environment
- Food safety, nutrition and health
- Plant health, production and plant products.

That sounds reasonably good, until you evaluate what has for many years been promoted and what has been suppressed in those categories.

Reputable public advocacy groups — National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Northeast Organic Farming Association, Union of Concerned Scientists and the

Conservation Law Foundation, to name only a few — point out how the last 50 years of U.S. Department of Agriculture policies have enabled a handful of large agribusinesses to dominate almost every aspect of the production and processing of our food. This concentration of influence makes our national food system inherently unstable, and it is certainly unfair to farmers, consumers and communities.

While maximum profits are gleaned by the influential multinational corporations, the prices farmers must pay for equipment, seeds and other inputs inflates, commodity prices are driven down, and the ability of farmers and ranchers to compete in the marketplace is restricted to the point where today they receive on average less than 15 cents of every dollar that consumers spend on food.

The bill’s farm safety net’s goal was to provide farmers some degree of protection against unpredictable disasters or sudden price declines, so they can stay in business. However, by making crop insurance an open-ended subsidy program only for larger operations and particular crops, it has encouraged land price inflation, soil-depleting farming practices, farm consolidation and declining farming opportunities while leaving medium-sized and small farms on their own to face challenges.

Consumers today seem to be offered many products, but few real choices, in terms of healthy food. Sadly, the priority of processed food means healthy profits for the corporations, and not healthy people, animals or the environment.

Farming communities are subject to outside business forces they have little or no control over, which deplete their livelihoods and natural resources. Food deserts, where access to healthy food is very limited, have become common in both rural and urban communities.

It’s not a good situation. And it does not position us well to take care of ourselves as weather changes.

Even if we seek out regionally grown food or grow some of our own, most of us regularly shop at supermarkets. We rarely stop to think about what was involved in bringing those products to the shelf. There are very large systems of production, handling, processing, transporting, pricing and marketing behind almost everything available in a supermarket, because almost everything in a store today is the product of industrialized agriculture, thanks in large part to U.S. Department of Agriculture policy.

So, there is a lot at stake for all of us



Courtesy photo

Vermont farmers need the 2023 Farm Bill to address Vermont’s agricultural needs and opportunities.

because of the Farm Bill’s tremendous influence on farming livelihoods, how food is grown and what kinds of food are available. Shouldn’t we insist that the investment of so much taxpayer money results in healthy food, healthy farms and food-secure communities?

A key shift is needed to level the playing field for small and medium-sized farms so local food is more available and our overall food systems can be more resilient and equitable. This shift can start with supporting beginning and diverse farmers’ access to land and capital; fixing the flawed safety net system; improving access to it for small- and medium-sized farms; addressing corporate

consolidation through antitrust laws; and restoring fair competition.

There are revisions proposed which would shift the Farm Bill agenda in this healthier direction. But not surprisingly, entrenched and powerful interests are pushing back hard against them.

If you care about these issues, Sens. Welch and Sanders and Rep. Balint need to hear from you. Their telephone numbers are:

- Senator Peter Welch 800-642-3193 or 202-224-4242
- Senator Bernie Sanders 800-339-9834 or 202-224-5141
- Representative Becca Balint 802-652-2450 or 202-225-4115.

Report from the Legislature

Public safety net is more of a safety spinning platform

Chea Waters Evans
State Representative

I’ve been thinking a lot about the major challenges Vermont is facing these days: incessant rain and flooding, an unhoused population set adrift, mental health issues for kids who just came out of a pandemic, a housing shortage, a workforce shortage, taxes and inflation, and holy moly I want to get back in bed.

One conversation I have with people a lot these days is: Where do we start if we want to make things better without spending everyone’s hard-earned money?

When I was a kid and playgrounds were danger traps of splinters, lead paint and burning hot metal, a popular feature (or death hazard) was a round wooden platform with handles, and you would basically sit on it and hang on for dear life while another kid tried to murder you by holding one of the handles and then running around as fast as they could, trying their best to get everyone to lose their grip and go flying off the spinning platform into the dust and rocks.

Ahhhh, childhood memories.
If you had so much fun getting all the skin removed from your knees that you wanted to get back on, often your best chance was to leap while it was still spinning. That’s how I see the cycle and circle of our challenges here in Vermont.

I think we just need to find a spot, focus and then jump, hoping that once we get in there, we’ll have momentum and motion to keep us going.

I think our childcare bill from this last session was a good start; supporting families in this way means more people can work because they have a safe and secure place for their kids during the day, which hopefully leads to solving other problems just by nature of that one significant change.

I think health care should be our next flying leap. It’s complicated, it’s confusing, there are a lot of systems in place that make money for many people but don’t actually provide adequate care. (For instance, did you know that Medicare doesn’t cover an annual physical? There’s a wellness exam, but that’s a hi-how-are-you-are-you-still-alive-OK-great kind of thing, as opposed to a checkup. Seniors deserve more than that.)

I moved back to Vermont 13 years ago, and in that time, the monthly health insurance premiums for my family have more than doubled. Because my employment hasn’t been traditional, I haven’t worked anywhere that’s provided benefits, which means that I’m currently paying, for myself and three kids, more than \$1,700 a month for health insurance. And there’s still a deductible and copays. I’m lucky I can afford this, even though I



don’t want to, and it’s mind-boggling that there are so many people who can’t but who also don’t qualify for help from the state. And I just read that Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont plans to raise monthly rates as much as 18 percent next year.

Also, we need more health-care professionals; we need to have housing available so the hospitals can spend their money on permanent solutions rather than wildly expensive travel nurses; we need to provide avenues for care that might not involve a physician since we don’t have enough of them to go around. If you’re in pain, and you need a series

of appointments to figure out what the problem is, and it takes a month to even get into a doctor’s office, you can suffer for a year before you even solve the problem.

If you have a kid who needs therapy, good luck finding someone. There’s a serious lack of mental health care for everyone in Vermont, but especially for kids — and these kids have really been through it these last few years. (Imagine spending two years of high school at home with your mother 24 hours a day? Torture.) If they get the support they need now, then when they’re older they’re going to be less likely to suffer from substance misuse and depression and domestic violence and everything else that goes along with it. Plus, the stress of the recent flooding: people have lost everything, and the ripples of that will be affecting mental health for a long time to come.

And here we go around again with the spinning. I think we have to just take a deep breath, jump on the speeding circle of doom, and just pick a place to start. I’m not so naive as to think I can solve the problem myself, but I do think there are a lot of creative, knowledgeable, smart and motivated people both in the State House and in our community who can work together to make it happen.

If you have any ideas, as always, be in touch at cevans@leg.state.vt.us or 917-887-8231.

Rock with a view



Although this rock has often been associated with meditation, it’s also a good place for lunching.

Photo by Bill Fraser-Harris

Hi! Neighbor

Changing Uganda children’s lives and their own

Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

Peter Brady’s first trip to Africa was in 2007 to see his daughter who was in Kenya at the time. Little did he know that he and his wife Colleen would be making annual trips to the continent for years to come.

The Bradys were friends with the Koerner family and Peter Brady said that in 2006, between graduating from Champlain Valley Union High and starting college, Jagger Koerner had used a small nest egg he inherited from his grandmother to start a charitable foundation called 52 Kids. The goal of the foundation was to help 52 children from the village of Kamuli, Uganda, attain the highest level of education they desired.

While Koerner was attending Cornell, his father became the U.S. director of the foundation and Koerner journeyed with him to Kamuli in 2007 to check out the foundation’s work. He was impressed and a few years later, Colleen joined the group, and the couple began taking kids from CVU to help out.

“We immediately fell in love with the people,” Colleen Brady said. She and Peter have made over a dozen trips to Uganda.

Initially, much of the work was physical, including making bricks, cutting thatches for roofs, building kitchens, planting trees and creating plate stands so families could dry their dishes in the sun in a sanitary manner. The couple also planted vegetable gardens for residents.

While in Uganda, they held Skype

sessions with CVU classrooms. As the years progressed, the visits became more about connecting and less about physical labor.

“Our goal has been to see as many of the 52 kids as we can,” Peter Brady said. “The connection is incredibly powerful, not just for the kids but for us. The relationship is very strong, and we’ve come to realize that people are less interested in building a plate stand than in sitting down and having a cup of tea with us.”

Colleen Brady described their role as ambassadors of hope.

She has plenty of experience working with kids, having spent 35 years teaching first and second graders at Charlotte Central School.

“The joy of that work was seeing the world through the optimistic and hopeful eyes of the kids,” she said, “and also developing lasting relationships with them.”

Colleen Brady retired three years ago but her husband is still working as a contractor. For the last 10 years, he has mostly done residential renovations. Like most contractors, Peter’s bills have a breakdown of materials and labor, but he also adds a 1 percent surcharge for the 52 Kids Foundation. Having that line on the bills has led to a number of conversations and resulted in some regular donors to the foundation.

Roughly 25 CVU kids have travelled to Uganda and Colleen enjoyed seeing how much they learned from the trips. Most of the students were between their junior and senior years and for many it was such a powerful experience that it changed



Courtesy photo
Colleen and Peter Brady cherish the time they’ve spent in Kamuli, Uganda.

their thoughts about what they wanted to study in college.

“There is not one aspect of what goes on in a day over there that isn’t drastically different from our lives, so it’s an amazing experience,” Colleen Brady said. “It could be a real paradigm shift,” she said.

Of late, the foundation has shifted its mission. Only six of the original 52 Ugandan kids are still in school, so the group is funding a micro-savings program to provide the former students with access to capital with low interest rates so they can start a business or pay for their own children to attend school.

Many of their former students’ kids have finished university level programs.

One is in architectural school and may follow her degree with an internship in the U.S. Others are attending vocational schools for plumbing, hairdressing, building and electrical work.

Peter Brady believes he and his wife will continue to have a connection with the people they’ve met through the program for the rest of their lives.

“It’s been incredibly life-changing in terms of our perspective, our gratitude for what we have, and our understanding of the inequities in the world,” Colleen Brady said. “I don’t think there’s a single time I turn the faucet on that I don’t appreciate the fact that we have running water.”

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Into the Woods

Reimagining forest management with a more expansive vision

Ethan Tapper
Contributor

When I walk in the woods with people, I often invite them to reimagine the forest.

Whether you are a forester or a forest-lover, we all tend to focus on trees. While there is no question that trees are a vital component of forests, they aren't everything. Reimagining forests means broadening our definition of "the forest" from "a bunch of trees" to a dynamic and diverse community of trees, plants, animals, insects, fungi and more.

When we allow ourselves to reimagine the forest, we can see that the way that the trees in a forest are growing is as vital as the trees themselves. We can see the importance of the composition (different species of trees) and structure (different sizes and ages of trees) of the trees in the forest, the importance of having some big trees (including big trees which are declining, dying, hollow and full of cavities), dead-standing trees ("snags"), lots of dead wood on the forest floor and healthy soils.

Each of these conditions is vital to the function of the forest community, its resilience and adaptability, the natural processes that make it work and the way that it changes over time. Each is a condition to which the tens of thousands of species that comprise the reimagined forest have adapted for millennia, and each is underrepresented in our modern forests.

As we reimagine what forests are, we also need to reimagine what it means to take care of them. Reimagining forest management means understanding that my job as a forester is to care for the reimagined forest in its entirety — not just its trees. My success should be measured not by my ability to keep every tree in the forest alive, but by my ability to support and enrich the forest community.

While forest management includes many different tools and techniques, one of the most powerful ways I can help the reimagined forest recover from the wounds of the past, endure the challenges of the present and move into an uncertain future is through the thoughtful and strategic cutting of trees.

If we think of forests as "a bunch of trees," the cutting of the tree is a loss. If we reimagine forests, we can see that the cutting of a tree — as part of a holistic forest management approach — can be as profound a gift to the forest as its life. Following forest management, gaps in the forest's canopy will become foraging habitat for birds and bats; the understory will bloom with a diverse mix of plants, shrubs and young trees; the trees and treetops on the forest floor will become rich communities of mosses, invertebrates and fungi which will benefit soil hydrology and help build richer soils. In the reimagined forest, the death of trees can help young forests become more like old growth forests, can help create habitat for species which are declining and under threat, and can help us actively respond to the many threats



Photo by Gary Sturgis

When a forest is managed holistically, the forest's canopy can become foraging habitat for birds like the yellow warbler.

that our forests face.

If we reimagine forest management as a means to care for this reimagined forest (as it is often applied in Vermont today), the fact that forest management can be commercial is one of its greatest assets, and the mills, markets, foresters, loggers and truckers that make commercial forest management possible are vital to forests' biodiversity, their integrity, their resilience.

Forest management is the only form of ecosystem restoration that can pay for itself and can even generate income that landowners can use to pay property taxes and other costs associated with keeping forests intact and healthy. As such, it can be applied on a much larger scale than any other form of restoration. In a world of non-local, non-renewable resources that cause harm to peoples and ecosystems across the globe, forest management is also the only form of ecosystem restoration that generates local, renewable resources.

Reimagining forests and forest management means forming a more holistic and expansive vision of what forests are and what it means to truly care for them. Doing what is necessary to protect forests, and all their pieces and parts, will often require us to make compromises as bittersweet as cutting a tree to enrich a reimagined forest.

(Ethan Tapper is the Chittenden County Forester for the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. See what he's been up to, check out his YouTube channel, sign up for his eNews and read articles he's written at linktr.ee/chittendencountyforester.)

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Sacred Hunter

Connection, wonder — What more does one need?

Bradley Carleton
Contributor

August reluctantly releases her grip of the hottest days of summer, and once a week, a brief wisp of a breeze squeezes into the bedroom window at night, blowing sweet cool northern air from Canada. The sunsets are earlier each day, and as shadows grow from the tree lines into the field edges, deer tiptoe into the moistening grasses.

A doe gracefully turns her head back toward the shelter of the woods behind her, signaling to her adolescent progeny, who has just recently lost his spots and is now carrying a strange velvety crown between his twitching ears. The doe looks back and signals the young buck that it is safe to step out into the field of succulent greens.

In the distance the sound of Canada geese is calling to the flock to join them in the evening feed before the sun sets over the mountains in a fiery display of beauty. The flock slides over the top of the trees to the west, circles once, seeking the high point of the field for its safety, and with one low guttural cluck, the lead bird drops his feet and cups his muscular wings in an arch to begin his descent. The flock follows the lead bird and, as if in perfectly choreographed grace, sets their wings and drops their large black-booted feet. As they hover above the green field, their majestic wings backpedal powerfully until the last pinion strains against the light breeze, touching down as if they owned both earth and sky.

In the tree line behind the doe and

young buck a scolding “chip-chip-chip” pierces the quiet. A gray squirrel makes a dramatic leap from a scrawny branch to the deep-ridged bark of a large oak. He looks down at the field of geese and deer and announces dinner time to anyone who will listen.

As the sun sets and shadows grow long, the sweet sound of singing cicadas creates a symphony of buzzing harmony not unlike a Tibetan singing bowl lulling me into a transcendental state. From up on the ridge to the south, a pileated woodpecker calls and, as if it were expected, a turkey shock gobbles from its roost in a pine tree.

I am surrounded by life. I am immersed in a world that, if I am quiet and aware, embraces me as one who belongs here.

A chill begins to rise from the cooling earth. Dew begins to settle on the grass, the last reflection of the setting sun shining its golden light through the tiny water drops on the top of the blades.

Suddenly, all attention is focused on the far end of the field. Sentry geese stretch their dark black heads to focus on movement. The doe and young buck lift their heads and breathe in deeply, snorting at the air currents. Everyone is looking attentively at the distant edge. And that is when he steps out of the hedgerow.

The first thing we see is a massive set of bone structured symmetrically above his head, tines reaching 10 inches above his square head, wrapping around in a large semi-circle. Such a crown is worn only by kings. As his broad shoulders thrust through the brush, he stamps



Courtesy photo

August geese add so much to this wonder-filled, wonderful world.

his right hoof powerfully and snorts, acknowledging his court for their fealty. The geese, doe and young buck bow their heads. The woodpecker sounds off again in recognition of his majesty. The turkey sounds off his regal thundering gobble and, for one brief moment, the cicadas stop their song in reverence.

The sky begins to show its dying colors of dark purple and sage green hanging over the mountains to the west blanketing us all in darkness. The geese get up noisily and fly toward the waning

light, guiding them back to the bay. After the honking fades in the distance, the silence is all that remains. It is the sound of connection. Connection to all that matters. Here. Now. Wonder. What more does one need?

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

Monarch making



Photo by Lee Krohn

A monarch caterpillar chowing down on milkweed leaves in preparation for building a chrysalis where it will hang around for about two weeks before emerging as a monarch butterfly and heading south.

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Calendar of Events

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

**New plays in Middlebury
Friday-Sunday, Aug. 11-13**

Justin Aaron Halle’s script “Cowgirl” kicks off American Dreaming: A New Play Festival presented by the Middlebury Acting Company. On Saturday, Aug. 12, the festival also includes, “Until the Day Is Done” by Jared Michael Delaney at 2 p.m.; “Lessons” by Matthew Chong at 7 p.m.; and on Sunday, Aug. 13, at 2 p.m. “StoryProv Time,” an audience-participation improv event with Andrew Ritter. Go to the tent at the Swift House Inn, Middlebury. \$15 per play, \$40 for all three; free for “StoryProv Time.” For more: middleburyactors.org.

**Annual Pie & Ice Cream Social
Sunday, Aug. 13, 1-4 p.m.**

Rokeby Museum will hold its Annual Pie & Ice Cream Social on Sunday, Aug. 13. Join the museum for homemade pie, ice cream, live music from Bob Recupero and Young Tradition Vermont, raffle baskets and a chance to explore Rokeby’s historic home, grounds and exhibits. Bring your family and friends to this community favorite.



**Banned Book Reading Tour
Sunday, Aug. 13, 2 p.m.**

Lieutenant Governor David Zuckerman is hosting another in the series of book readings from banned books at local bookstores and libraries around the state at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 13, at Bridgeside Books in Waterbury. These readings and discussions are in response to the seven states that have even passed laws imposing legal penalties, including prison time, on librarians who provide “sexually explicit” or “harmful” materials to young readers, all under the pretense that those terms apply to exposure to writings or history of the LGBTQ+ community or people of color. There will be another banned book reading at 6 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 6, in Phoenix Books in Essex Junction.

**Learn to make land wildlife friendly
Wednesday, Aug 16, 5-6:30 p.m.**

Mark Labar, a conservation biologist with Audubon Vermont, will lead a walk at the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge. He will discuss efforts made by the park oversight committee to combat invasives and restore habitat health. Maggie Cittarella, chair of the Charlotte Conservation Commission, will be on hand to answer questions. Mark Dillenbeck, town tree warden, will

also share information including his experiences dealing with invasives. For more information: Cathy Hunter 802-355-0439 or sustainablecharlottevt.org

Growing young gardeners

Thursday, Aug. 17, 10 a.m.-noon
Every Thursday, young people are invited to participate in a free gardening program at the Vermont Garden Park on Dorset Street in South Burlington. A program of the Burlington Garden Club, kids and their accompanying adults learn about different subjects related to gardening. It is not required to attend each week. Best for ages 4-10 with a grown-up (or two). Each session is free; snack time and a craft project is included. To read more and see what to bring, see bgcvt.org/events.html and scroll down a bit.



**Sensory Friendly Friday
Friday, Aug. 18, 8:30-10 a.m.**

On the third Friday of every month, through October, Shelburne Museum invites the community into the museum before regular opening hours to view special exhibitions in a light-and-sound-adjusted environment. Created in consultation with Inclusive Arts Vermont, this program for children, teens and adults alike is designed to offer a positive museum-going experience for visitors with varying sensory processing differences at the Pizzagalli Center for Art and Education. Free pre-registration is required by contacting 802-985-0924 or events@shelburnemuseum.org.

**Writing historic fiction
Sunday, Aug. 20, 2 p.m.**

Local author Angela Moody provides insight into how one begins to write historic fiction at the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum. This is ideal for anyone considering writing historic fiction or just wondering how one does this. Admission is free but donations are appreciated.

CHARLOTTE

**For Thompson’s Point campers
Thursday, Aug. 24, 5 p.m.**

Meet on the clubhouse porch with Scooter MacMillan and John Quinney from The Charlotte News to talk about topics of interest and stories you’d like to see in the newspaper. Light refreshments will be served. If you’d like to attend, let Gay Regan know with a call to 802-318-5617 or an email to gayregan@usa.net. Last minute drop-ins also welcome.

**Vergennes Day
Saturday, Aug. 26, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.**
Head to the Vergennes City Park for the

41st annual Vergennes Day on Saturday, Aug. 26. With over 60 vendor booths in city park, there is fun for all ages. Come check out live music on the bandstand, pancake breakfast and bubble pit at the fire station, horse and wagon rides, Little City Road Race, Lions Club chicken barbecue, merchant sales and more.



**Tour de Farms
Sunday, Sept. 17, 8:30 a.m.**

Registration is open for the Tour de Farms, one of Vermont’s oldest cycling farm tours, returning to Shoreham for its 15th year of celebrating local food. The revenue raised supports Addison County Relocalization Network’s new food hub that facilitates the distribution of locally produced foods. The day of tasting products finishes at 4:30 p.m. at the Shoreham Apple Fest. The tour features a 30-mile route, as well as a family-friendly 10-mile route. Riders start at Shoreham Green 42 miles south of Burlington, off Route 22A. The terrain includes rolling hills with a mix of paved and dirt roads, so a mountain bike or road bike with wide tires is recommended. Register at tinyurl.com/2ytechcz.

**Heritage, Harvest & Horse Festival
Saturday, Sept. 30, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.**

Bring the family to the Heritage, Harvest & Horse Festival at Fort Ticonderoga for a day of autumn fun in the midst of the King’s Garden heirloom apple trees and the beautiful Adirondack landscape. Discover the importance of horses and other working animals throughout history during demonstrations. Meet farm animals, stroll through our farmers market featuring local food, beverages and crafts; participate in family fun activities; and tackle the 6-acre corn maze.



Do you love the calendar of events?

Of course, you do. You are reading this calendar, so you must find it useful in keeping up with what is happening in and around Charlotte.

Mary Landon has been producing it for nearly a year and a half. Now, she’s moved on, and we need a volunteer (or two) to take over.

This is a labor of love, and a good match for someone who is adventurous, curious about all the many happenings in Charlotte and beyond — and is up for a chance to give back to your community.

Mary Landon has kindly offered to pass along what she’s learned and how she gathers and organizes the events calendar (every two weeks).

To find out more, please contact Scooter MacMillan at 802-881-4728 or scooter@thecharlottenews.org.



Town of Charlotte

MEETINGS
Visit charlottevt.org for more information.

Selectboard
Monday, August 14, 6:30 p.m.

**Bennington Battle Day
(Town Office closed)**
Wednesday, August 16,

**Planning Commission:
Regular meeting.**
Thursday, August 17, 7-9 p.m.

Sneak peek



Photo by Lee Krohn

The sun makes a brief appearance on Friday over Charlotte Beach in between evening storms.

Community Roundup

Vermont Flood Response and Recovery Fund gives over \$1 million to help homes, businesses

It’s difficult to make one’s way around the state without coming across scenes of communities still working to clean out homes and businesses, remove debris, and take stock of the full extent of the damage, said the Vermont Community Foundation in a release.

The foundation’s Vermont Flood Response and Recovery Fund 2023 awarded its second round of grants last week — more than \$670,000 to organizations around the state. This brings the total grants awarded so far to over \$1 million.

These grants will support nonprofits that are helping residents of flooded mobile home parks and assisting towns as they rent dumpsters to haul away immense piles of flood-related trash and debris. The money will cover emergency home repairs and transitional housing; and help farmers who lost an entire season of corn, berries, cut flowers and other products to a wave of water and mud.

All told, approximately \$4.4 million (\$2.8 million in gifts and \$1.6 million in pledges) has come into the Vermont Flood Response and Recovery Fund 2023 since it opened for donations.

If you would like to speak with a member of the Vermont Community Foundation staff about how to make a gift, contact Stacie Fagan at sfagan@vermontcf.org or 802-388-3355 extension 252. Or you can go here: tinyurl.com/nedw5s8x.

Help nominate Vermont’s next poet laureate

The Vermont Arts Council along with its partners, Vermont Humanities, Poetry Society of Vermont and Sundog Poetry invite you to submit nominations for the appointment of a new Vermont Poet Laureate.

Serving as Vermont’s ambassador for the art of poetry, the poet laureate is not only honored for their own work and accomplishments but can raise awareness and a greater appreciation of the reading and writing of poetry.

All nominations are welcome, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, cultural heritage, socio-economic background, physical ability or poetic sub-genre in the pursuit of the poet laureate being representative of the rich and diverse cultures of poetry in the state of Vermont. Self-nominations are also eligible.

Nomination deadline is Oct. 30. For more information about the Vermont Poet Laureate position, criteria

and selection process, and the online nomination form, visit the Vermont Poet Laureate webpage at tinyurl.com/bdhkxjp5.

Vermont Historical Society creating flood of 2023 archive

The Vermont Historical Society has created a new initiative to preserve images and documents pertaining to the historic floods that severely impacted the state in July 2023. Members of the public are invited to submit their photographs, audio and video recordings, written memories, and other relevant documents to the flood of 2023 archive on the society’s website (floodof2023.digitalvermont.org), which will preserve them for future Vermonters and scholars.

The Vermont Historical Society holds a considerable number of records of past floods in its collection, including images and video from the Flood of 1927, the Montpelier flood of 1992 and of Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. These records are used by researchers, journalists and members of the public to recall and understand those events.

As part of this initiative, the society has also begun to expand the media collection for the Flood of 1927 on its archival portal, Digital Vermont, uploading dozens of photographs and scans of documents from VHS’s collection for the first time, making them more widely available to the public than ever before. The 1927 Flood in Vermont Collection can be found on at tinyurl.com/2yuzu35p.

Librarian Kate Phillips says, “This flood will drastically change the landscape of Vermont in ways we do not yet know. It is essential that we document the experiences of individuals and small businesses, as well as new directions in conversations about climate change and housing. We hope that careful documentation of this moment can help inform future decision-making.”

The Vermont Historical Society invites the public to submit their photographs, audio files, video recordings and other related documents to this crowdsourced archive, in order to preserve the memories of this tragic event for the future.

To submit files and view the full terms and conditions, visit floodof2023.digitalvermont.org.

For information on physical items that the Vermont Historical Society is interested in adding to the library and museum collection visit: floodof2023.digitalvermont.org/collecting.

For questions or troubleshooting, contact the society at info@vermonthistory.org.

Library News

Need dehumidifiers, generators, plastic bins, etc. for flood relief

Margaret Woodruff
Director

The Charlotte Library is serving as a drop-off spot for flood-relief supplies. Bring donations during library hours, and the library will pass along to the distribution effort. Supplies needed at this time: dehumidifiers, generators, plastic bins, mold inhibitors, extension cords, toiletries, personal protective equipment (PPE), yard tools and wheelbarrows. Kesha Ram Hinsdale and Chea Waters Evans helped to coordinate this opportunity to help fellow Vermonters.

Children’s programs

School is starting up this month. If you are, or you know someone who is, starting kindergarten, join the annual Kindergarten Library Card Party, Monday, Aug. 21, 5:30 p.m. Email youth@charlottepubliclibrary.org to register.

Preschool story time Tuesdays in August, 10 a.m.

Join the Charlotte Library for preschool stories, crafts and activities. No registration required. Age 2 and over.

Preschool play time Wednesdays in August, 10 a.m.

Play in the preschool years enables children to explore and make sense of the world around them, as well as to use and develop their imagination and creativity. Exploring the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks or Play-Doh — these are a few of the open-ended projects planned for Wednesday morning play-based learning at the Charlotte Library. Stay tuned for details about upcoming fall programs!

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, library director Margaret Woodruff selects a theme and highlights related titles from the library collection. No registration necessary.

Garden Circle Wednesdays, 4:30-6 p.m.

Join the Garden Circle of volunteers who will tend the educational gardens around the library this year. Contact garden stewards Karen Tuininga and Linda Hamilton at seed@charlottepubliclibrary.org to sign up and join in the merry work sessions this growing season.

Crochet & Knit Night Wednesdays, 5:30-7 p.m.

Claudia Marshall is your host for a casual weekly session of crocheting and chatting, knitting and catching up. Bring your project or start a new one with yarn and needles available at the library, along with plenty of books to instruct and inspire. For teens and adults.

Eco-printing with summer flowers Wednesday, Aug. 16, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Create colorful bandanas with flowers from the library garden and natural dyeing techniques. Advance registration is appreciated by emailing susanna@charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Mystery book group: Monday, Aug. 21, 10 a.m.

Join discussion of “The Nine Tailors” by Dorothy Sayers, a classic whodunit



Courtesy photo

Find out about how to use flowers to create colorful bandanas and natural dyeing techniques at the eco-printing workshop on Wednesday, Aug. 16.

featuring Lord Peter Wimsey. Copies available at the library circulation desk.

Better Together book club Wednesday, Aug. 23, 7 p.m.

Better Together is an open book group that discusses books related to parenting, including “Amateur Hour” by Kimberly Herrington, an “emotionally honest, arresting and funny collection of essays about motherhood and adulthood.” Copies available at the library circulation desk.

Tomato day Friday, Aug. 25, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

The taste of summer is local tomatoes. Ever tried Aunt Ruby’s German green, yellow Lillian or orange banana paste tomatoes? Come sample these and other

heirloom varieties available from our seed library or other local seed savers. You might discover a new favorite.

Library contact information:

Margaret Woodruff, director
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian
Susanna Kahn, tech librarian
Phone: 802-425-3864
Email: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org
The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets regularly on the first Thursday of the month. The next meeting takes place on Thursday, Sept. 7, at 6 p.m. online and in person. Please contact the library or visit the library website (charlottepubliclibrary.org) for more information.

Write Ingredients

Senior center is safe from ‘weird’ recipes like black olive cake

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

The July 31 New Yorker food newsletter’s “Serious Italian food with a sense of humor” describes a slice of crumbly olive-oil cake whose dark marble swirl is made up, not of chocolate, but of pureed black olive. Under a dollop of whipped cream and blood-red cherries. The New Yorker writer notes, “It was salty, undeniably weird.”

The Charlotte Senior Center kitchen is filled with laughter but, rest assured, people volunteering there don’t go for “weird.” Pureed black olives in the middle of your next dessert offering just isn’t likely. But from pasta salad to pizza, there’s plenty of tasty food coming up in the rest of August.

The Monday Munch, Aug. 14, goes international. For starters there’s muhammara, which is Arabic for “reddened,” a dip made of walnuts, red bell peppers and molasses. This tasty blend is associated with Aleppo but is also found in Turkey and in Western Armenian cuisine.

Senior center diners will have naan with which to enjoy the dip flavors. In short, naan or n’n is Persian for “bread.” For the interesting etymology as this flatbread traveled through the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, take a look in Wikipedia.

Wikipedia also has a fascinating entry on the walnut, part of that Monday Munch dip mix. There we learn that in the Byzantine era this edible was known as “the royal nut.”

Walnut trees come in many varieties, and the botanical name for the walnut tree genus is Juglans, which translates to “Jupiter’s nut.”

From 1878 to 1880, during the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes, hundreds of trees were planted at the White House, beginning the tradition of each president planting a commemorative tree there. I didn’t find the walnut tree among the great variety of these presidential choices.

I don’t know who dug the hole for the memorial tree the Nixons planted commemorating the first Arbor Day, but you can see Pat Nixon filling in the hole at tinyurl.com/5f98jzun.

For an even more unique photo, take a look at then-President Trump shoveling some actual dirt (as contrasted with the metaphorical kind) for the gift tree from French President Emmanuel Macron here tinyurl.com/8yrtfzsv. This tree tale has a real twist, quite fitting for Trumpian politics.

Meanwhile, back with the walnuts. Although neither Wikipedia nor my 922-page “Oxford Companion to Food” sees fit to mention nut idioms, from “nutcase” to “in a nutshell,” the Charlotte Senior Center would like to remind you that those who would eat the harvest must crack the nut. Volunteers are needed. Please don’t say, “Nuts to that!” Come give it a try.

You can find lots of quotes on the web about the virtues and benefits of volunteering. I’d just add that after years of relishing my role as a Monday Munch cook, health prevented me from continuing. The hole this left provoked me into looking for other ways I could help out, and this column was born. You volunteer what you can.

August Monday Munches take us from Byzantine royal nuts to an American favorite: the brownie. As the story goes, it was invented in Chicago when in 1893 a prominent socialite whose husband owned the Palmer House Hotel asked a pastry chef for a dessert suitable for ladies attending the Chicago World’s Fair. There’s considerable dispute over who published the first recipe, but the brownie appeared in the Sears Roebuck catalog, billed as selling everything from hubcaps to homes, in 1898. Whoever invented it, everyone agrees that the brownie is as American as apple pie.

The Aug. 21 pizza, of course, brings us back to a disc of flat bread, surely a third



Adobe Stock image

cousin to that bread featured on Aug. 14. But here, of course, that bread won’t be used for dipping but as a source of toppings.

Italians seem to worry a lot about whether or not a pizza is authentic. Members of the Associazione Vera Pizza Napoletana pledge to uphold statutes that define ingredients, making the dough and cooking the product. Part of the requirement of being authentic means cooking in a special wood-fired brick oven heated to 750 degrees.

The Charlotte Senior Center won’t be using a wood-fired oven, but fear not: They know how to deliver a very fine pizza.

Monday Munch Aug. 14, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Pasta salad, muhammara (roasted red pepper and walnut dip), naan, green salad and homemade dessert.

Monday Munch Aug. 21, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Pizza, side of salad and brownies with ice cream.

Needless to say, it’s not recommended for someone my age wanting to close with a song to look up “songs about nuts” on the Internet. Instead, thinking about the Charlotte Senior Center’s need for volunteers, here are the Beatles with “I Get By with a Little Help from My Friends” youtu.be/0C58ttB2-Qg.

Speaking of which, we get books with a little help from our friends, namely the Friends of the Charlotte Senior Center and the Flying Pig, which have helped with new books for the Little Free Library for Kids at the Charlotte Grange, including graphic novels — and “The Benefits of Being an Octopus.” So of course we’ve got to include “Octopus’ Garden” tinyurl.com/yuaswy93.

Senior Center News

Mark your calendar, give blood at next blood drive

Lori York
Director

Last Thursday, a steady flow of people of all ages were at the Charlotte Senior Center for the Red Cross Blood Drive.

Held every two months, the drive provides an opportunity to connect with neighbors and friends while helping support the critical need for blood. Mark your calendars for the next blood drive on Thursday, Oct. 5, 2-7 p.m.

The senior center offers a variety of programming for seniors 50 and over, whether it be the Age Well weekly Grab & Go meals, the Locally Yours community supported agriculture (CSA) free produce, Bone Builders or the September senior art show.

However, the center also provides meeting space for nonprofits, a rental space for life’s celebrations, a place to drop off plastics to be recycled through Planet People and a collection place for eyeglasses through the local chapter of the Lions Club.

The center provides a back-up rain location for library, Grange and recreation departments events.

Outdoor Activities

Recreational paddling trip Wednesday, Aug. 16, 9:30 a.m.

Join Karen and Dean Tuininga for a paddling trip, Wednesday morning, Aug. 16, on the Indian Brook Reservoir in Essex. The group will meet at 9:30 a.m. and will spend a couple of hours on the water. Open to everyone 18 and older, but limited to 10 boats plus leaders, so be sure to sign up early. Questions? Contact Dean Tuininga at dean.tuininga@gmail.com. Registration required. Free. Details will be sent to registered paddlers the evening before the trip.

Birding expeditions Wednesday, Aug. 23, 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. Group size is limited to 20 participants. Cost: Free. Registration required.

Women’s kayak trips Second & fourth Friday mornings

These kayak trips are for active women who share a love for exploring the many local lakes, ponds and rivers. Details about the trip will be sent out the week prior. For questions, please contact Susan Hyde at susanfosterhyde@gmail.com. Registration is required through the Charlotte Senior Center Database or by calling the Senior Center. Free.

Community Programs

Alzheimer’s Caregivers support group Thursday, Aug. 10, 5-6 p.m.

Are you caring for someone with Alzheimer’s? Do you know someone who is? Please join us for the monthly caregiver support group on the second Thursday of each month from 5-6 p.m. The meetings provide a safe place for caregivers, family and friends of persons with dementia to meet and develop a mutual support system. For additional information or questions please contact Susan Cartwright: scartwrightas@gmail.com.

Senior art show

Now accepting submissions for the Charlotte Senior Center art show. Open to all artists and skill levels, ages 50 and older. Entry deadline is Friday, Aug. 18. Registration forms are available at the Senior Center and can be downloaded at charlotteseniorcentervt.org. For questions contact Judy Tuttle by email at jtuttle@gmavt.net or by telephone at 802-425-2864.

Locally Yours CSA program Thursdays, 10-11 a.m.

The Senior Center is participating in

the “Locally Yours” program, sponsored by Senator Sanders 2023 Earmark Grant. Produce from Full Moon Farm in Hinesburg will be dropped at the senior center weekly and participants (age 60 and over) will have access to fresh fruit and vegetables at no charge. The program is a first come, first serve situation, with the intention that one or two people do not take all of the delivered produce each week and that people only take what they will use. No registration required. Cost: Free.

Weekly Age Well Grab & Go meals

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

Programs & activities

Backgammon League Tuesdays, 6-8:30 p.m.

Backgammon is a tactical table game with a 5,000-year history. Open to all adults, not just seniors. If you are interested in joining the Tuesday evening Backgammon League, please contact Jonathan at jonathanhart1@gmail.com.

Drawing for Those Who Think They Can’t Draw Friday, Aug. 11, 12:30-2 p.m.

Learn that you CAN draw if you simply look at things differently. Open to all who will try to prove me wrong! Bring yourself and plan to have fun sharing in this supportive, nonjudgmental class experience. Local artist Mickey Davis enjoys bringing out the innate hidden artist in others. Registration required. Cost: By donation.

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

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

Samba Tuesdays & Fridays, 12:30 p.m.

Samba is a variation of canasta. Players form five clean canastas, one dirty canasta (with a wild card), a canasta of wild cards, a canasta of sevens and at least one samba, which is a run of seven cards in a sequence of the same suite. If you are interested in joining this group contact Mary Mazur by phone at 802-373-1074 or email at memazur@comcast.net.

Shanghai Mahjong Tuesdays, 12:45-3:45 p.m.

New to or experienced in the Shanghai style of Mahjong, you are welcome to join this informal get-together. For questions email Nan Mason: anne.mason@uvm.edu.

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

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

Meals

Menus are posted on the website: charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday Lunches

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



Photo by Lori York

Polly Price with baked goods at the August Blood Drive. Senior center volunteers bake treats for the blood drives as a ‘thank you’ to those who donate blood.



Photo by Lori York

The Monday Munch is always popular at the senior center. Most weeks volunteers serve 50-60 meals.

If you haven’t been to the senior center, please stop by and visit. The senior center offers programs for adults 50 and older from Charlotte and surrounding communities. Priority is given to seniors, but programs are 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 programs for the upcoming week.

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.



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