

Your nonprofit community news source since 1958

The Charlotte News

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Minding his beeswax

Photo by Alexandra Z. Lazar

A bumblebee on a flower right outside door, gathering pollen or nectar from the center, enjoying the last bits of summer.

The Charlotte News

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Your nonprofit community news source since 1958

Vol. 66, No.06

Thanks for helping us reach goal

John Quinney
Publisher and President
Claudia Marshall
Chair, Fundraising Committee

With gifts still arriving in our mailbox, we’re thrilled and relieved to announce that we have reached the financial goal set for our summer fundraising campaign.

Beyond helping to keep the presses rolling, your gifts mean we’ll deliver at least 140 meals to Charlotte residents facing food insecurity, thanks to our partnership with Age Well. We feel good about that.

Maj Eisinger’s recent story in this newspaper, “Food insecurity and hunger often hiding in plain sight,” probably came as a surprise to many of us, living as we do in a wealthy town. Here are a few facts:

- The Charlotte Food Shelf serves 23-27 Charlotte and North Ferrisburgh families per month.
- The Charlotte Little Food Pantry at the Congregational Church is depleted daily.
- Through Meals on Wheels, Age Well delivers about 250 meals a year in Charlotte.

As Eisinger puts it: “Hunger is as real in this town as the efforts to assuage it.”

We’re proud to be playing a small role in supplying meals to those in need. And we couldn’t do it without you, the 140 generous readers who have given to our summer campaign. From all of us here at The Charlotte News, our heartfelt thanks.

If you’ve not yet made your donation, there’s still time. When it’s convenient for you, simply put your check in the mail to The Charlotte News, PO Box 251, Charlotte VT 05445, or visit our new website, credit card in hand, at charlottenewsvt.org. Every gift means one more meal for a Charlotter in need.

Each gift helps ensure the future of public service journalism in Charlotte.

Carpenter brings sculpture skills from D.C. to Charlotte

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Like so many days this summer, it was a rainy day. The kind of day we’re getting pretty used to around here.

After a drive up a steep and winding gravel road, it would be but a short dash from the car to Jay Carpenter’s home off Mt. Philo Road in East Charlotte. The wet weather is inconsequential to the waterlogged, which is what we all are. You turn off the car.

And suddenly, Carpenter is there, all smiles and enthusiasm. Even if it wasn’t raining, Carpenter’s cup runneth over with politeness. He’s carrying two unfurled umbrellas.

You gave up umbrellas two months ago as just not worth the bother, so it’s a bit awkward remastering an umbrella, and not anything like riding a bicycle.

As a high school student in the 1970s, Jay Carpenter got a summer job. That summer job lasted almost 50 years. Carpenter retired from his job as sculptor-in-residence at the Washington National Cathedral a year ago when he and his family moved into his in-laws’ house off Mt. Philo Road.

Carpenter, his wife Susan McCullough and 15-year-old daughter Fiona, have been coming for holidays and vacations for almost 20 years, but decided they would join Tim McCullough to help out after his wife and Susan’s mother died.

Fiona is a student at Champlain Valley Union High and, if her dad has it right, she’s liking it. Susan McCullough is in development for nonprofits.

Carpenter had been fascinated and fantasizing about the National Cathedral since he was a young child from driving by with his parents. He would think, “Someday ...” But he didn’t know what “someday” meant.

Although he spent a lot of his youth in art classes, it was hard for Carpenter to make the leap to seeing himself as an artist. And it was unthinkable to have an idea that one day he would be a sculptor at the Washington National Cathedral.

The National Cathedral had been under construction since 1907. It was finished in 1990 after 83 years of construction. And you thought trying to get something built in Charlotte took time.



Photo by Jay Carpenter
From left, Kermit is in an endless conversation with his creator Jim Henson at the Henson Memorial at the University of Maryland, where he graduated in 1960.

However, Carpenter ended up attending the St. Albans School, a college-prep school in Washington, D.C., on the grounds of the National Cathedral. At school, Carpenter had the opportunity to watch the stone carvers.

“They were carving gargoyles at the time and I was just absolutely enraptured,” he said.

When he was 17, he finally got up enough nerve to ask for a summer job, and

he was hired. So, he was running errands, sweeping floors, building crates and the like, but he was working for the sculptors of the National Cathedral.

Although the only jobs Carpenter had had were sweeping floors and delivering newspapers, he began to push his way into the creative process.

“I made a clay model of a gargoyle and brought it in with trembling knees and

SEE **CLAY** PAGE 2

Charlotte farmers closing out a brutal summer

Brett Yates
Contributor

Farmers in Charlotte had never seen a summer like 2023.

Vermont’s flooded river valleys made national headlines in the first half of July, but the rain didn’t stop after that. Fields far from the overflowing Lamoille or Winooski endured their own gradual inundation, one drop at a time. In southern Chittenden County, hilltop farms lost their crops, not all at once but day after day, as vegetables and berries turned to rot in the mud.

“You would look at the top of the carrot, and you would be like, ‘Well, that’s a big carrot,’” said Dave Quickel, the owner of Stony Loam Farm on Hinesburg Road. “You can sort of tell by the height of the greens. And then you pull it out of the ground and two thirds of it are just rotten.”

On Aug. 25, Quickel’s rain gauge had risen to 23.5 inches since June 12, when he’d last reset it. Summers in the area average fewer than four inches of precipitation per month.

“It’s unprecedented in my — what have I been farming now? Twenty-five years,”

“We’re probably around 40 percent off of our last three-year average on farm revenue. There’s not going to be a comeback story on this one, I’m sad to say.”

— Dave Quickel, owner of Stony Loam Farm on Hinesburg Road

Quickel said. “I’ve never seen anything like this, where it was just so prolonged and it just stayed wet for such a long amount of time.”

Quickel remembers Hurricane Irene in 2011, but for him, this year has been worse.

“That was a different thing because it came in a couple of big shots. And that was its own set of problems for a short window, but then it cleared off again, and we got back to dry,” he recalled.

In excessively moist conditions, weeds thrive. This summer, Quickel watched as they crowded out his crops on land too soggy to accommodate mechanized methods of weed removal.

“We’re an organic farm, so we can’t just go out and spray herbicide,”

Quickel noted. “And so, the crops that were out there and that were looking good slowly got overrun because we just don’t have the manpower to hand-weed everything.”

The bigger problem, though, was that, amid seemingly constant rain, Quickel didn’t have a chance to put many of his crops in the ground in the first place.

“It just never got to the point where we could consistently get a tractor in the field and get our tillage done to get things planted and seeded,” he lamented.

Quickel has used the eight greenhouses on his property to keep his CSA (community supported agriculture) customers happy. Shielded from the weather, his tomatoes and peppers are “doing great.” Still, he has taken a major financial hit, particularly from the

loss of his lettuces, and he doesn’t expect a potentially cooperative September or October to help much.

“We’re probably around 40 percent off of our last three-year average on farm revenue,” he said. “There’s not going to be a comeback story on this one, I’m sad to say.”

The federal Farm Service Agency’s Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program exists to reimburse small farmers in the wake of natural disasters, but according to Quickel, Charlotte’s farmlands don’t qualify on the basis of the summer’s rainfall.

“People down in the Intervale, people in the river bottoms that lost everything, that went underwater — yeah, that’s catastrophic,” he said. “They’re going to get a payout, which is going to not cover what they would’ve normally done, but it’s certainly going to be helpful.”

“But when I called the Farm Service Agency and tried to have a conversation about this, there’s really nothing,” he continued. “If you didn’t go underwater by a flooding body of water, there’s not going to

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CLAY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

showed it to the master carver. He liked it well enough to have it carved to put on the building,” Carpenter said.

It was the first sculpture Carpenter had ever made, and it was part of the National Cathedral. He would go on to do hundreds of sculptures there over the years.

In those days, Carpenter said there was a clear division between the sculptors and the carvers. For years there was a team of carvers working on statues, but most of the time, Carpenter was the only person working in clay, or making maquettes. A maquette is a scale model often made of clay, wood or wax of a proposed statue’s design.

“I was the only sculptor, so it was an amazing, incredibly fortuitous job experience,” Carpenter said.

Before becoming a sculptor, he’d never dreamed of the possibility of actually being one. “It seemed kind of highfalutin,” he said.

He took a gap year off after high school and worked at the National Cathedral. They had an overload of work and he was happy to help. When he went to college, he worked summers and weekends.

Carpenter also became a sculptor’s assistant to Frederick Hart, famous for sculpting Ex Nihilo at the Washington National Cathedral and The Three Servicemen at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

After college he was a freelance sculptor working out of a studio off the grounds, but eventually he became the sculptor-in-residence with his own sculpting shed on the National Cathedral campus.

Carpenter loves living and working in Charlotte, but the move to paradise comes with tradeoffs. He leaves behind a studio filled with northern light and 22-foot high ceilings.

A large basement is being converted into studios and an office. “It’s been an adjustment to be here and to try to set up a proper situation, but little by little we’ll get there,” he said.

The basement is already filled with fascinating people, probably looking much better than they did in life. Walls are lined with 7-foot likenesses that became statues of Frederick Douglas (courthouse, Talbot County, Maryland); Douglas Fairbanks (atop a fountain at the University of Southern California’s film school); Bishop Baraga, the Snowshoe Priest, a missionary to the Native Americans in the Upper



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

The white statue beyond Jay Carpenter’s hand is the Colbert Memorial, done to remember Stephen Colbert’s late sister-in-law. ‘She was very artistic, and she was particularly fond of the unfinished sculptures by Michelangelo,’ Carpenter said.

Peninsula (the Cathedral of St. Andrew in Grand Rapids, Mich.); Helen Claytor, who in 1967 became the first African American president of the YWCA; Katharine Drexel of Philadelphia, the patron saint of racial justice and of philanthropists, who was beatified as the second U.S.-born saint in 1988. It’s good they’re not speaking; it’s impossible to remember everybody’s name.

Since moving to Charlotte, Carpenter hasn’t noticed a slowdown in commissions, but he’d like to get more. And if the commissions were to slow down, he’s not worried. He’s got sketchbooks full of work he’d like to do.

He feels the profession of sculpture is at an exciting time. Technology has made a lot of changes, and most of those have been for the better. His specific field of figurative sculpture is also alive and dynamic. There are lots of opportunities for sculptors but there’s more competition.

When Carpenter first started there were fewer figurative sculptors because academic schools had shifted to abstract work.

“I was able to get some very good training, but it was hard to find, and there wasn’t much call for it,” he said. “Now, the training is very easy to find, and the call for it is plentiful.”

He is also a poet with a recently published book of 36 sonnets, “Mount Fuji.” He’s written three other books of poetry, plays, musicals and children’s books. Carpenter said he is a poet because of things he can’t say through sculpting.



Photo by Jay Carpenter

Jay Carpenter created hundreds of sculptures for the Washington National Cathedral.

The two statues Carpenter is most proud of are the statue of Kermit and Jim Henson at the University of Maryland and the Revolutionary statute at the Leesburg Courthouse in Virginia. Carpenter’s statue depicts a farm family, walking into Leesburg — a mother, a son and the man who’s going to enlist in the militia. The statue “is on the very footprint of where the Declaration of Independence was read in Virginia for the first time,” Carpenter said.

Budget windfall helps town set lower tax rate

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Before any discussion of the town’s budget or the tax rate, selectboard chair Jim Faulkner wanted to get something straight, right off the bat.

At a special meeting of the selectboard on Aug. 22, Faulkner responded to suggestions he’d heard that the selectboard was going to add some amount to the budget.

“I just want to be clear,” Faulkner said. “We don’t have the authority to do that. Not only that, if we had the authority to do that, we would not be doing it. This is the taxpayers’ money.”

It is clear, he said, that the taxpayers have spoken and the selectboard must use the budget that was approved by voters: “They said, ‘No more, no less.’”

The selectboard set 0.1804 as a total municipal tax rate. Last year, the tax rate was 0.2421. So, it looks like this year’s taxes will be lower, right?

Not so fast: Just because the rate is lower, doesn’t mean your taxes are necessarily going down. Because of the property reappraisal, your property value may have gone up and with it your tax assessment.

Even though “the rate is low, don’t let that make you think you’re going to pay less because that’s not the case,” Faulkner said.



The municipal portion of the property tax on a property valued at \$500,000 will be \$902.00 (\$5,000 x \$0.1804), said town administrator Dean Bloch in an email.

Whereas last year the grand list, or 1 percent of the total taxable property value, in Charlotte was almost \$9.5 million, Faulkner said, this year, after the property reappraisal, the grand list had risen more than \$4 million to over \$13.7 million.

The budget had an eleventh-hour reprieve before the final setting of the tax rate — just that day the town had an \$88,000 paving grant come in. The grant was booked as a deferred grant liability,

town clerk Mary Mead said, but because it came in before Aug. 31, the town was able to “back it out” as a deferred liability and book it to revenue as a paving grant.

“We aren’t always able to budget grants as a revenue for the year that they actually come in,” Mead said.

The vote approving the tax rate was three votes for and one abstention. Board member Kelly Devine was absent and Louis Mudge joined late by phone from out of the country, hustling up a mountain to get reception. Mudge had missed most of the budget discussion, so he abstained from voting.



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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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- Minimize harm.
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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

Editorial Staff

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

Business Staff

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

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Letters to the Editor

Short-term rental can mean homeowner doesn’t lose property

To the Editor:

Often it is said that short-term rentals cause problems; noise, trash, inappropriate behavior that existing zoning regulations and ordinances have no jurisdiction over. And that it is unfair competition on hotels, etcetera which must follow stricter guidelines and regulations.

This seems to me to be patently incorrect: Zoning regulations and ordinances control trash, noise, occupancy, etcetera. Whether a property is owner-occupied, rented full- or part-time or being lived in by friends, the same rules apply. I have seen no credible information that issues with properties in short-term rental are demonstrably worse than other properties in the same neighborhood. To say otherwise is conjecture. We are all entitled to our own opinions, not our own facts.

My experience is that many of those who stay in short-term rentals are not people who would typically rent a hotel room. Therefore, the number of people visiting Vermont is increased and thus the benefits to the wider community is increased in terms of sales at local restaurants, stores, etcetera.

If there is a desire to control short-term rentals to gain taxable income at the local, let us call it that. If rentals occur in properties that meet local regulations, what other regulations should they be subject to, and why? Should Thompson’s Point properties be subject to any short-term rental control? Should a home occupied by a family friend be subject to regulation or control?

If the short-term rental occurs in an owner-occupied property rather than an exclusively income generating property, it is especially important that no changes should be made to regulations, or taxation. Meals and room taxes for short-term rentals are already paid to the state of Vermont by companies such as Airbnb. Sometimes the opportunity to have a short-term rental is the difference between a homeowner being able to stay in their property or lose it.

I understand wishing to control short-term rentals in an investment property; such rentals could take away opportunities for long-term rentals. However, restricting what someone can do in their primary residence, with regard to short-term rentals, is punitive and unnecessary. During times of economic constriction, layering extra burdens on a homeowner can create unnecessary hardship.

I have lived in Charlotte since 1999. I

have a feeling if I contacted local zoning representatives (and Shelburne Police) to get real facts on the most common cause of disturbance at a Charlotte property, short term rentals would not be high on the list. Now graduation parties — should they be banned?

It would be interesting to know how many people who comment negatively about short-term rentals in Charlotte have stayed in one while travelling.

Robin Pierce
Charlotte

Airbnbs detract from Charlotters’ tradition of standing up

To the Editor:

I was stunned by Mike Yantachka’s report on 100 Airbnbs in Charlotte. I live on a hill and don’t have to worry about noisy neighbors, but I sure do worry about what amounts to commercial enterprises in residential neighborhoods in our village.

There isn’t room here to enumerate all the reasons I’ve loved living in Charlotte for nearly three decades. But what comes to mind immediately is all the places where there’s an exchange of cheerful greetings, places where one can help out — and be helped.

Over the years, I’ve found town meeting to be better than any show on television. I’ll just mention when long-time residents got together in early March 2017 and persevered through nearly four hours of cheerful arguing and voting on everything from how much gravel to use on unpaved roads to the school budget. And then these residents stood up and adopted an advisory motion to call on our U.S. Congress to determine if sufficient grounds existed for the impeachment of Donald J. Trump (who had taken office 1 ½ months previously) for violations of the two Emoluments Clauses in the U. S. Constitution.

Voters had to stand up because the vote was close and the Town Meeting moderator could not make a judgment based on voice vote. In the end the vote made Charlotte the second municipality in the nation to pass this impeachment resolution, following Richmond, California.

I’m proud of that vote but the real point here is that however one voted, Charlotte is a place where we do stand up to be counted. And pay attention to the gravel on the roads, too. Let’s keep it this way and be very wary of come-and-go profiteers.

Susan Ohanian
Charlotte

(Among the many books Susan Ohanian has written are two concerning the former president, “Trump, Trump Trump: The March of Folly,” where rollicking verse is matched with news items of the day, and “The Little Red Book of Trump Quotations,” filled with things he actually said — with documentation.)

Changing to a town manager is radical, possibly costly

To the Editor:

I penned a commentary for The Charlotte News in the Aug. 10 issue. The subject was the movement, a feverish one I think, to hire a town manager to run our town. This is a radical change for our town and probably a costly one too.

Sharron and I have lived in Charlotte for nearly 50 years. By choice.

I hope we don’t lose what we have. I offer my thoughts, and I belong to no group on this issue. If we move to a town manager I will still love this little town, but I’ll worry.

Let me offer some brevity here. I’m counting on the major players in this debate to patiently, openly and honestly bring us together to understand what we may be forfeiting as well as gaining.

First, for this issue, let’s look at the basic differences between what we have right now — a small town executive government, elected by its citizens and sworn into office.

The election, the choice, is democratic. I love that word “democratic.” It gets kicked around a lot in modern American politics, but, like the flag in the national anthem, tattered yes, but it still flies. Here in small-town Charlotte, also.

The word harkens back to ancient Greece: demos — the people; kratia — power. What a jewel.

Before their service to the community, the newly elected selectboard members swear an oath. There are different versions but they all pretty much start out with “I do solemnly swear …”

If we Charlotters go to a town manager system the beginning will be less auspicious. For example: Selection is made of a candidate by a small committee, a contract is offered, and certainly one with a generous salary and benefits. We the people will pay. That’s it. Sign and go to work.

A comment I have read about pay for selectpersons runs “token or no salary.” If that doesn’t fit a description of “public service,” what does?

Now those who fancy a town manager form of government can be unclear at best. Selectpersons are the government, the executive. What happens in most town business flows from them.

Yet in the Aug. 24 issue of The Charlotte News a fervent proponent of a manager change says the selectboard, the citizens elected and sworn in government, will be enabled “to focus on policy and the future.”

Who, please tell us, is going to bring this about? The selectboard did a straw poll on the manager issue. All present voted no. Is the manager crowd proposing a revolution?

What our small town needs in the weeks and months before town meeting, and a vote on this issue, is a friendly, honest and open discussion on this issue and our future.

Dennis Delaney
Charlotte

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

Vermont must listen to its youth before it’s too late

To the Editor:

Last March, I spoke on the State House lawn for Outright Vermont. I told the people gathered that our state was facing a crisis. I told them that despite Vermont’s reputation, our trans and queer youth were still suffering.

I explained that we are more likely to suffer from abuse and that we are more likely to self-harm and attempt suicide. I told the adults gathered that far too many of us standing behind the microphone had lost loved ones and I asked them, people from all over the state and in so many positions of power, if they believed that they were doing enough to prevent this suffering — if they would bet the lives of their children on it.

After my speech, many adults came up to me and told me how it had moved them and how we were being heard. But every single one of them told me the same thing. “I am doing enough,” they said, “but here’s who isn’t.” No one took accountability. No one said they could be doing more. They pointed fingers in circles until I was dizzy and had almost forgotten the very question they were responding to.

Something needs to change. Because they were right. We are being heard. Yet still, nothing is happening. It is so easy for us to be heard and yet so difficult to be listened to.

This is because of the common and dangerous pitfall among adults in power of believing they know what’s best for youth because they know what it was like to be young. Every single adult knows what it was like to be young. None of them know what it is like to be young today. We live in an unprecedented and rapidly changing world. It is not the same as a decade ago, let alone generations ago.

Vermont is facing many crises, not just the one I spoke about in March. Our youth are leaving in droves. Our climate is changing, every new year a record-breaking disaster. People are going houseless and hungry. Vermont’s youth will inherit the state and with it these crises. If we are to solve the issues that will most heavily impact our youth, we need to listen to the only people who know what it is like to be young today.

Act 109 was an important recognition of this fact. The act, signed into law in 2022, created the Vermont State Youth Council to advise the Governor and the General Assembly on issues pertaining to young people in Vermont. In the coming years, I believe the State Youth Council can become the powerful vehicle for change that it was created to be. But for that to happen, Vermont must listen. You must listen.

Jasper Lorien
East Berlin

(Jasper Lorien is the chair of the Vermont State Youth Council. They can be reached at jasper.lorien@vtstateyouthcouncil.org.)



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Town

Selectboard reverses development review board and may reverse itself

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

It appears now that the town may not have reached a settlement on a case that would allow construction on Barbara Russ and Dean Williams’ camp on Thompson’s Point.

So, if you felt you’d missed your chance to weigh in on whether Russ and Williams should get approval for tearing down a camp that was built in 1940 and replacing it with a two-story structure that’s more than twice as big, show up for the Charlotte Selectboard meeting on Sept. 11.

It looked like the approval process was finished on Aug. 28, when the board voted 3-1 to approve a settlement deal negotiated between the town attorney and Russ and Williams. Their original application had been denied by the development review board and Russ and Williams appealed the case to the Environmental Division of Superior Court.

As it usually does in such cases, the environmental court encouraged the parties to see if they could negotiate an agreement.

Once a case is appealed, it is no longer a development review board decision and moves on to the selectboard to decide.

After reaching its decision on Aug. 28, the selectboard realized it had not given either members of the development review



Barbara Russ and Dean Williams’ camp on Thompson’s Point was built in the 1940s. Today a camp wouldn’t be allowed to build this close

board or of the conservation commission the opportunity to comment, as had been promised at the selectboard meeting on May 1, town administrator Dean Bloch said.

So, the selectboard will revisit the issue at its meeting at 6:30 p.m. this Monday.

Before the selectboard went into closed session to consider the details of the proposed settlement on Aug. 28, it opened the floor to comments about the issue.

Claudia Mucklow of the conservation

commission criticized the proposal to replace a just over 700 square-foot camp with a structure that’s almost 1,770.

Built before there were construction restrictions, the camp is too close to the lake. The application proposes to move the camp back 8 feet, but Mucklow said, this would move the camp structure into another slope that’s steeper than 25 degrees.

“The land-use regulation is very clear. You can not construct into a steep slope of 25 percent or more. There is no ifs or buts,” Mucklow said. “That steep slope represents a rare natural community called a limestone bluff, cedar pine forest.”

This rare type of forest should be protected, but the application proposes cutting down 16 trees, 10 of which have diameters greater than 2 feet and are probably more than 100-years-old, old-growth trees, she said.

Furthermore, Mucklow said, “The lease does not allow for any replacement of the camp unless it is through a catastrophic event, like a fire or storm.”

Carol Conard, who lives next door to Williams and Russ’ camp, said the application process was “incredibly opaque” and detailed the trouble she had getting information about it.

Just prior to the board going into a closed session to discuss the proposed settlement, Conard said she wanted to know what the

specific finding was that would cause the board to go into executive session.

Neither the board nor the attorney revealed the specific reason for the executive session. Attorney David Rugh recited how the premature “general public knowledge of the discussion in an executive session could disclose confidential attorney-client privileged information and the town’s negotiating strategy.”

After the selectboard returned from executive session, Frank Tenney made a motion to approve the proposed resolution of the Russ and Williams’ appeal of the development review board denial and this was approved with three votes in favor of the agreement. Louise McCarren cast the lone selectboard vote against the agreement. Kelley Divine was absent.

Rugh said that the approval of the motion did not deny anyone of their rights, that interested parties still have the right to participate before the environmental court. (And as it turned out, at the selectboard meeting this Monday, Sept. 11.)

JD Herlihy said the board should have released to the public what the stipulations are in the negotiated agreement, but Rugh disagreed, saying he was not aware of any law requiring the release of contents of an executive session, “particularly when it’s all attorney-client privileged conversation.”

Wflcome?



Photo by John Quinney

This sign on Mount Philo Road ‘wflcomes’ visitors to Charlotte. Probably due to the worn paint, the ‘E’ is missing a bottom line to make an ‘F.’

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Katie Devoid
Charlotte Grange

As about 30 excited kids and adults find their seats in the Charlotte Grange Hall on a beautiful June evening, the group’s president lowers the gavel to begin our important meeting:

“I call this meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Vice-President Sadie will now lead us in the 4H Pledge.”

The club chose to open this last meeting of the school year to our community, and I look around with awe at the Grange Hall transformed with student projects, delicious foods, and community members quietly smiling through the business meeting. It’s always inspiring to see the efficiency and confidence of our 11-year-old president and her fellow officers. As one of the volunteer leaders, I worried about whether it might be too much to expect these elementary students to lead a meeting in front of a room full of people, many of them unfamiliar faces from the community, but they rise to the occasion yet again and press on as though they do this every day. Even our 5-year-olds watch with quiet admiration and not too much wiggling.

“Committee reports,” the president announces, “No. 1: Horse project.”

While they share this month’s horse project activities (They got to play “Simon Says” and “Red Light, Green Light” on horses.), I glance over at the Jeopardy board the members helped create to stump their families and friends.

Of course, they choose the easy ones for younger members or siblings (“What animal in the horse family has black and white stripes?”), while they delight in sharing and proudly answering the tougher ones with parents and grandparents who came to support them (“Who is the person who trims and shoes your horse’s feet?”).

Not all kids come to this project with riding experience, but they do all come with an enthusiasm to spend time with these beautiful animals and words of

encouragement for a fellow member experiencing that terrifying chore of picking a pony’s feet for the first time. By the end of the year though, they are all experts at it, thanks largely to the support of their friends.

“No. 2: Photography project.”

My eyes stray to the sunlit corner by the hall’s large windows where the favorite photos they took this year are on display. A family vacation to an aquarium. A visit to the Shelburne Museum winter lights display. The photo walk we took on Pease Mountain.

Admittedly, there might have been more laughing and running around than photography going on. A joyful side effect of an afternoon spent in the great outdoors.

“No. 3: Local foods project.”

For this report, you can hear the pride in the announcement that our refreshments for the evening were provided by our young localvores. After visiting Yates Family Orchard in the fall, we decided to experiment with substitutions.

The 4H slogan is: “Learn by doing.” In that spirit, our members made applesauce from scratch and used it as a substitution for oil in a chocolate chip pumpkin muffin recipe. Of course, you have to make one batch with all oil, one with half oil/half applesauce, and one with all applesauce for a proper scientific experiment.

We diligently tasted all three batches during the meeting to determine the best recipe. We might have needed a second taste for comparison. For science.

“I adjourn this meeting at 6:45 p.m.”

With the final bang of the gavel, the members jump up and excitedly run to their families to share the tabletop exhibits they created for the local and state fairs while our visitors gush over them and sample the refreshments.

(Did I mention the dandelion cookies that taste like honey and sunshine?) Once again, I marvel at the turnout of our community in support of these young people. I chat with several former 4H-ers who were curious to



Courtesy photo

4H-ers plucking off dandelion petals for making honey dandelion cookies.

see how the next generation is embracing the connection between our agrarian roots and the modern communities we live in.

We also have a few new faces drawn by the promise of crafts. Tonight it is the inexplicably fascinating and always popular marshmallow-toothpick-building competition.

4H is a long-standing network of local leadership development clubs sponsored by Cooperative Extension and led by volunteers. Participants “pledge head, heart, hands and health” to build stronger communities and to improve themselves through applied learning.

We welcome all kids who want to learn by doing, are aged 5-18 or will be by Jan. 1, 2024.

Our first meeting of the 2023-24 4H year will be Wednesday, Sept. 13, 6-7 p.m., in the Charlotte Grange Hall (2858 Spear Street). If you are interested in joining or in finding out more about our program, please contact me at katie_devoid@hotmail.com.

Education

The transformation from construction zone to classrooms is amazing

Naomi Strada
Condensed by Tom Scatchard

The professional staff has been in curriculum planning workshops with educators from around the district who teach similar content as the district solidifies a coordinated curriculum and assessment system to better serve students.

The transformation that has taken place in the school over the last two weeks has been amazing, morphing from a first-floor

construction zone to classrooms set up and ready to receive learners. Two spaces (the library and the cafeteria bathroom) are still getting some finishing touches, but will be ready to share at Open House on Sept. 21.

Students are engaging in fun social activities, exploring their math and literacy materials and taking opportunities to be creative problem solvers. Capturing these special moments to share is a priority. Photos of the happenings from each week are available at tinyurl.com/2vyzf8b2.

com/2vyzf8b2. More images will continually be added to the presentation so the community can see the evolution of learning that takes place at Charlotte Central School.

The heart of the staff’s intentions this week was to make connections and develop routines. Connections are being made through social-emotional learning activities, conversations, team-building and opportunities for exploration and collaboration. Teachers and students solidify routines and expectations for learning activities, play times and transition times. Students are making sense of what they will do as readers, writers and mathematicians, and very importantly, what friends and classmates do to take care of themselves, each other and our school.

Last year, the school looked for opportunities to bring the whole student



The Charlotte News file photo.

body together. Once a month, Charlotte Central School holds school-wide assemblies that different grade levels host. The hosting team creates a greeting, a share, a celebration of learning and a positive message to send the students off feeling connected and empowered. Look for more information about these meetings in the future.

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Sports & Education

Bulldogs clip Redhawks

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

After an unbeaten season and Champlain Valley Union High’s first state football championship last year, hopes were high among Redhawk faithful for another unblemished season this year. The season didn’t begin the way the faithful had hoped.

On Saturday, Sept. 2, the Redhawks met a Burr and Burton Academy team that was only too happy to exact a measure of revenge for one of its only two losses the previous year. Although the Redhawks won that game, it was a contest that coach Rahn Fleming categorized as “a slobberknocker.”

This year’s contest began with two CVU turnovers early in the game, turnovers that the Bulldogs capitalized on for scores to go up 14-0 early. Receivers Brian Rutherford and Dylan Frere had the ball forced loose on those possessions and before the first quarter was over the Redhawks were down by two scores.

Coach Rahn Fleming said, although he wasn’t happy his team fumbled, he was pleased that both Rutherford and Frere were fighting for a little extra when the ball came out. His recipe for his receivers: Retain the spirit of “get every single yard you can on every single play” blended with a heaping helping of “protect the rock.”

He said he didn’t think that the Redhawks were overconfident. Burr and Burton was just a good team. At home. With payback on its mind.

In spite of being down 14-0, CVU fought back. The CVU coach appreciated how, when the Bulldogs got out ahead, his Redhawks continued to scrape back.

With 1:06 left in the first half, the Redhawks tied the game up at 14-all.

But on the ensuing possession, the Bulldogs came roaring back, taking five plays to regain the lead at 21-14 with 10 seconds left.

Although the Bulldogs added to their lead in the second half, with the energy of a battery-powered Sisyphian bunny, CVU continued to come back. When Burr and Burton stretched its lead to 31-14 by early in the fourth quarter, Rutherford snatched a 22-yard pass in great coverage to make it a not insurmountable 31-21.

But when the Bulldogs recovered an onside kick attempt by the Redhawks to go up 38-21 with just minutes left, there just wasn’t enough track for CVU to win this horse race.

Still, CVU didn’t lie down. Quarterback Ollie Cheer led an 80-yard drive that ended with him diving into the end zone for a touchdown.

Not until there was less than two minutes remaining and the score was 38-



28 did his Redhawks concede they might not start this season undefeated, Fleming said.

Getting back on the winning track, the coach said, is “just a matter of cohesion, execution and correcting a couple of mistakes.”

Fleming is pleased with quarterback Ollie Cheer’s progress, proclaiming, “He’s the real deal.”

The coach likes to see how Cheer has been growing into himself and his role since taking over as starting quarterback late last season when Max Destito was injured.

Besides Rutherford’s play at receiver (seven catches for 152 yards and two touchdowns), Fleming was pleased with receiver Jacob Armstrong, who pulled in a long catch for the Redhawks’ first score of the game — and of the season.

Fleming praised Orion Yates, a freshman who “did a terrific job at outside linebacker” and who shows a ton of promise, and for Lucas Almena-Lee, a junior inside linebacker who “was flying all over the field, tackling as if he’d been playing this game for his whole life — and not just for the last four weeks.”

That’s right, junior Almena-Lee came out for the football team for the first time this year after having been a futbol goalie.

Fleming expressed a lot of respect for Burr and Burton quarterback Jack McCoy, who ended up with 282 yards and four touchdowns. He is the third of three brothers who’ve played quarterback at Burr and Burton Academy, all for their father, coach Tom McCoy.

“There’s a real family tradition, and you know, historically, the last one is always the best one. He showed that on Saturday,” Fleming said.

For their next game, the Redhawks travel to St. Albans to face Bellows Free Academy this Saturday, Sept. 9, at 7 p.m.

Whereas the Burr and Burton game was more of a sort of finesse west coast, wide-open style offense, Fleming expects to see a more smashmouth football team this week.

“They’re gonna come right at you and see if you can handle it,” the coach said. “That’s a fun style of football to play, and we’re looking forward to facing it.”

Back in the saddle



Courtesy photo

For a second year, Champlain Valley Union High School is welcoming the Flynn’s community project called Playing Fields, a free multimedia event 6-8 p.m., this Thursday, Sept. 7. The back-to-school party is for students, teachers, staff, administrators, families, friends, neighbors and anyone else in the community. The Compagnie Des Quidam from Bresse Vallons, France, will light up the celebration with its 12-foot tall, luminous horses, jousting, dancing and playing with the audience.

Bennington College Young Writers Awards announced

Contributor

Bennington College is accepting submissions from high school students around the world for its 2023-24 Young Writers Awards at bennington.edu/events/young-writers-awards.

This annual competition, which accepts entries in poetry, fiction and nonfiction, is free and open to all ninth-twelfth graders. A first-, second- and third-place winner is selected in each of the categories, with cash prizes up to \$1,000 awarded.

Young Writers Award finalists

and winners are also eligible for undergraduate scholarships at Bennington. Young Writers Awards finalists who enroll at Bennington will receive a \$10,000 scholarship every year for four years, for a total of \$40,000. Young Writers Awards winners who enroll at Bennington will receive a \$15,000 scholarship every year for four years, for a total of \$60,000.

Submissions for the 2023-24 Young Writers Awards will be accepted through Nov. 1. Winners will be announced in spring 2024.

Around Town

Congratulations

Fourteen Champlain Valley Union High students received academic honors from the College Board National Recognition Programs, which celebrate and highlight students’ hard work and academic performance for rural area, Black, Indigenous, and/or Latino students for colleges and scholarship programs seeking diverse talent.

Abby Niquette, Ava Bouchard, Brendan Fellows, Charles Sprigg, Charles Simons, Elias Leventhal, George Fidler, Hannah Kuhlmeier, Jacqueline Goldsmith, Kaylee Bliss, Kyle Stewart, Lily O’Brien and Veronica Miskavage received the National Rural and Small Town Award.

Zorah Ngu received the National African American Recognition Award.

Outdoors

Wrapping up the water quality stewardship field season

Kate Kelly and Portia Butrym
Lewis Creek Association

For yet another summer, volunteers of all ages hopped in kayaks and canoes to remove European frogbit, a non-native invasive plant species that spreads rapidly in bays and wetlands if given the opportunity.

In 2007, Lewis Creek Association initiated the “Water Quality Stewardship Program” and has since worked annually to manage the invasive plants and water quality of the rivers and streams that drain directly into Lake Champlain. The volunteer-driven frogbit project is the result of cooperation between many individuals and groups, including Lewis Creek Association, the towns of Charlotte, Shelburne and Hinesburg, Shelburne Bay Boat Club, and a supportive Charlotte property owner.

European frogbit, a common aquarium plant, spread to the United States via the St. Lawrence River after it was introduced to arboretum ponds in Ottawa in 1932.

It is now considered an aquatic invasive species because it dominates native species in the competition for sunlight, nutrients and surface area. Lewis Creek Association’s volunteer efforts have proven highly successful since friends of Lewis Creek Association discovered frogbit covering 50 percent of Town Farm Bay in 2007. Annual paddling and weeding trips, with a side of bird- and turtle-watching, have reduced the coverage of frogbit to just under 4 percent cover.

In contrast, when frogbit was discovered in the wetlands of the LaPlatte Natural Area, it had a much lower percentage cover; this gave Lewis Creek Association’s program and volunteers the opportunity for “early

detection, rapid response.” Though the invasive plant will never be eradicated in either location, maintaining this low population allows native plants and animals to thrive.

This summer, volunteers spent 189 hours removing 600 pounds of frogbit from Town Farm Bay, nearly half the amount harvested in the summer of 2022. Volunteers spent nine hours harvesting 60 pounds of frogbit, twice the amount from last year, in the LaPlatte River wetlands. Overall, the presence of frogbit was significantly less than the previous summer.

Lots of rain throughout the month of July brought the Lake Champlain water level up, greatly increasing the amount harvested by volunteers. Frogbit became more visible to volunteers at both Town Farm Bay and the LaPlatte River wetlands because the higher water levels submerged the native lily pads (Nymphaea odorata), which cover much of the water surface area.

High water levels also allowed volunteers at the LaPlatte River wetlands to paddle into a previously inaccessible area to boaters. This area produced the majority of frogbit harvested at this location. Though water levels increased visibility and access to frogbit during July 2023, the overall poundage of frogbit harvested was around 40 percent less than the amount harvested last summer.

Lewis Creek Association’s Water Quality Stewardship Program also includes the annual monitoring of water quality in the LaPlatte River, Patrick Brook, McCabe’s Brook, Thorp Brook, Kimball Brook and Lewis Creek, by volunteers for South Chittenden River Watch. Volunteers collect water samples which are then analyzed by



Photos by Portia Butrym

Volunteers remove European frogbit in Town Farm Bay.

the Vermont Agricultural and Environmental Laboratory and interpreted by Lewis Creek Association technical consultants.

The sampling season has recently wrapped up and included sampling for nutrients (phosphorus, nitrogen) and chloride, in order to understand sources of nutrient loading to Lake Champlain while informing water quality improvement project plans. 2023 results will be available on Lewis Creek Association’s website (lewiscreek.org) in the spring of 2024; to see the last two years’ results, visit bit.ly/LCA-WaterQuality. Check out more information on water quality and what you can do to improve it on Lewis Creek Association’s YouTube channel at bit.ly/LCA-youtube.

This water quality stewardship program

is important for maintaining productive, functioning and scenic waters, and also allows residents of Charlotte, Shelburne and Hinesburg to become advocates for water quality. Volunteers in each town help share this information with neighbors and friends, helping improve water quality in the future.

This program being funded through your town budget is crucial, since it allows the whole community to take ownership of local water quality and natural resources that are extremely important to protect. This will result in healthier ecosystems that all citizens can enjoy. If you are interested in assisting with water quality monitoring or invasive plant removal in 2024, call Kate Kelly, Lewis Creek Association program manager, at lewiscreekorg@gmail.com or 802-488-5203.

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Sacred Hunter

Once in a while, a goose will land among decoys

Bradley Carleton
Contributor

Labor Day weekend has slipped past, and the summer is reluctant to give up her grasp, bearing down on us with another round of high temperatures, not unlike earlier this June. The rains have had the spotlight this summer. How has this affected our communities? It has been both devastating and rewarding. It brought out the state’s spirit of community and caring for our neighbors.

It is one thing to see the piles of ruined household debris and people shoveling silt and mud from their houses and stores, but what has it done to the political divisiveness that we were all so fired up about? When the torrents of water ripped through towns like Jeffersonville, Montpelier and Johnson, I did not hear of anyone saying, “Save the liberals” or “Save only the right-wingers.” No. What I saw was everyone working to save each other from danger, and in the spirit of the Green Mountain state, I witnessed a tremendous outpouring of care and thoughtfulness. Heck! Even duck hunters and fishermen were using their shallow watercraft to pull people out of their damaged homes and businesses. As we begin to clean up and heal from this most difficult summer, let’s take the time to recognize that we are all “just walking each other home.”

As this week’s scorching heat begins to fade into memory, and fall slides the gentle north breezes into our valley, let’s take a moment to feel gratitude that, although the weather is mercurial and unpredictable, the sun still rises over the mountains. Farmers are finally getting to cut their hay, and the geese have begun congregating in a most gregarious gaggle. Every dawn and every dusk, if you listen long enough, you can hear the magical calls from above.

I have always been strongly sentimental about the call of the goose. When I was a young boy, my father would recite a poem about the “call of the wild goose.” Lonely. Proud. Searching. Something about the mysti-

cal, magical spirit of the wild goose captivated my adolescent mind and drove my spirit north from Pittsburgh to greener pastures here in what my soul knows to be “home.”

Many people believe that geese “mate for life.” This is true to an extent. But if a mate should die by natural causes or be harvested for a meal, the widow or widower does, in fact, find a new mate.

This presents an existential conundrum for the goose hunter with a sense of remorse paired with a feeling of connection. I think we can all accept Einstein’s theory that energy does not die. It only changes form. So, if we were to look at the “energy” of a goose, what do we see? Responsibility? Grace? Majesty in flight? Communication? Did you know that the Canada goose has more than 105 recorded vocalizations? So, I posit that if the spirit of the goose contains these energies, and is harvested for consumption, where does that energy go? Is it contained, at least partially, in the flesh that is consumed?

I believe that whatever we choose to consume, be it organic vegetables, wild foraged asparagus, mushrooms, fiddleheads or ramps, they all contain energy and replenish our bodies, so that the energy now becomes a part of our condition.

As I lay in my heavily camouflaged layout blind in a field of winter wheat sprouts and hear that long, lonesome sound of birds coming from their water roost, I prepare myself and my compatriots for the miracle of communicating with the lead bird. I repeat what he says in the same intonation, inflection and meaning. The dialogue changes tones and tempo several times.

If I can mimic his desire to feed, plead with him to have his flock join “us” on the ground plucking the succulent green sprouts, he may. Or he may not. Maybe he will see the shine of the early morning sun on the dew on the backs of the decoys and turn his flock away to safety. Perhaps he notices that the “geese” on the ground aren’t moving enough and flares away, refusing to land in the artificial flock. Or as happens sometimes, he might notice



Courtesy photo
Eric Champney, of Fairfax, and Trevor Coles, a University of Vermont medical intern, found opening day of 2023 to be fruitful.

that the birds on the ground are pronouncing their invitation to join them properly. After all, these are Canadian geese and if we’re speaking in an American dialect, or using the wrong vernacular, the refusal can be very abrupt.

Once in a while, when the sun is in the right place and the shadows cover the dew, when the psychology of the plastic flock demonstrates proper placement in the hierarchy, or a simple turn of phrase that agrees with the lead bird’s dialogue, he will cup his powerful pinions, rearing his head back, lowering his large black feet, and backpedal into the wind’s direction, to land gracefully amid the decoy spread.

In the moment that he hangs perilously close to terra firma, I feel that we have joined hearts. The Great Spirit has presented this animal to us to harvest and imbibe the spirit of the wild goose.

If reincarnation is really a thing, I’d like to come back as a goose. I would lead my flock on our annual journey for many decades, because I would know exactly what all the decoys, layout blinds and camouflage look like.

(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.)

Gardening

Houseplants for dorm rooms



Photo by Deb Heleba

Houseplants can brighten up a dorm room as they add a touch of color and improve the mood of even the drabbest space.

Deborah J. Benoit
University of Vermont Extension

Plants may not be the first consideration in adding a personal touch to a dorm room, but they will add a touch of color and improve the mood of even the drabbest space.

What makes a plant suitable for growing in a dorm room? Easy care and low maintenance top the list, as well as slow growth or compact size.

The snake plant (*Dracaena trifasciata*, formerly known as *Sansevieria trifasciata*), is sometimes called mother-in-law’s tongue or Saint George’s sword. Variegated, stiff, spear-shaped leaves grow straight up from a rosette-shaped base.

Don’t worry if space is limited. This plant grows slowly. Snake plant will tolerate low light conditions and irregular watering.

It grows a bit faster with brighter light. Beware of watering too much or the roots will rot. Allow it to dry out between watering and water sparingly.

In contrast, the peace lily (*Spathiphyllum*) sports single white flowers (called spaths) above dark green foliage. It prefers moist, but not wet, soil. If you forget to water, this plant will remind you when its leaves droop.

Give it a good watering, being sure to empty any water accumulated in the saucer. Let the soil dry a bit between waterings. Peace lilies grow in medium to low light, such as a north-facing window. Avoid bright, direct sun.

Are you looking for a bit of visual fun?

Lucky bamboo (*Dracaena sanderiana*) can be found trained into spirals, even woven into decorative designs. Contrary to its common name, lucky bamboo isn’t really bamboo. This easy-to-care-for plant prefers bright, indirect, filtered light. Avoid direct sunlight. It’s often grown with no soil in a container of pebbles and water.

When watering, use tap water that has been sitting at room temperature for at least a day to allow chlorine to evaporate, or use bottled water. Change water periodically, and don’t let the water level get below an inch. If grown in soil, be sure it’s well drained, not soggy.

Pothos (*Epipremnum aureum*) and heartleaf philodendron (*Philodendron hederaceum*) are equally suitable for the desktop, trailing from the top of a bookcase or a hanging basket. These vining houseplants are easy to care for, requiring indirect light and watering about once a week. Allow soil to dry a bit between waterings.

Aloe vera (*Aloe barbadensis miller*) and other succulents are good alternatives



Photo by Deborah Benoit

Low-maintenance plants such as (left to right) heartleaf philodendron, snake plant and peace lily are ideal choices for most college dorm rooms.

for bright spaces. They prefer six hours of bright, indirect light a day.

Be sure the potting mix drains well, as excess water will result in rot. In general, water every few weeks. Aloe vera sports thick, fleshy leaves with serrated edges, but succulents come in many sizes and shapes.

If you already have a favorite plant that requires bright light but room conditions are medium to low light, single-plant grow lights are available.

If conditions are dry but your plant likes humidity, mist daily and place on a tray of pebbles filled with water. Be sure to keep any drainage hole in the pot above the water level.

What if there’s absolutely no room for a plant?

Consider an air plant (*Tillandsia*). In nature, air plants grow on other plants and have no need for soil. They require little care and can be placed anywhere there is bright, indirect light.

Water air plants by misting with a spritz of water a few times a week and periodically by submerging in water for 30 minutes. Let dry, then return to its usual location.

No matter what the conditions, there’s always room for a bit of nature in a dorm room, and there’s a plant that will grow there.

For more information and to view the Houseplant Hero video series, visit the University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener resources website at go.uvm.edu/gardenresources and click on the “Houseplants” tab.

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

Hi! Neighbor

Matthew Daley: Betting on Christmases yet to come

Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

Matt Daley is a master of delayed gratification. He and his wife Lauren purchased their Charlotte land in 2016 with the goal of opening a tree farm. He started planting that year, and although he has been selling trees grown elsewhere, Split Rock Tree Farm will not be a cut-your-own operation until 2024. Daley is sure it will be worth the wait.

Daley doesn’t have an agricultural background, but he did his homework. The family was living on North Greenbush Road, just south of Horsford, when Daley began looking at soil maps for his prospective farm. Acreage further south on Greenbush came on the market, and he saw that the soil was rocky loam and not clay. “We loved living in Charlotte, and this was great soil for trees,” he said. “It all came together.”

To make sure he knew what to do, Daley contacted Werner Tree Farm in Middlebury and asked if he could come and help out. “David and Cheryl and their kids were awesome,” Daley said. “I did some planting and shearing, and they imparted their knowledge.” Daley has gone to several seminars on tree farming and has been impressed with the community. “Everyone is super friendly,” he said, “and people aren’t shy about sharing information.” Daley believes many established tree farms are going out of business because the younger generation isn’t willing to take over when their parents retire. “Younger families coming into this business are really being welcomed,” he said.

In the case of the Daleys, the younger generation is already involved. Owen, 13,

and Griffin, 11, help with mowing in the summer. Greta, who has just turned 9, is starting to assist as well. The boys have helped with planting, as has Daley’s wife Lauren. They also staff the register during the selling season and help customers with parking.

It’s crucial to have the family help because Daley has a full-time day job. He has worked for the Vermont State Police for 18 years and cherishes the friendships he has made and the variety of work he has engaged in there.

Daley said there is an absence of cut-your-own Christmas tree farms in the Charlotte area, so he is excited about the opportunity to fully open his farm to the public next winter. Most of the trees he has planted are balsam firs but there are also some Fraser firs. Last year, the farm sold roughly 100 pre-cut trees between 5-7 feet tall. This year, they will be purchasing 150-200 trees from a farm in Williamstown.

Many people don’t realize that tree farms are a year-round endeavor. Daley has been buying 1,200 transplants each year for his farm. Starting in mid to late May, he plants 1,000, saving the extra 200 to replace those that don’t make it. From the end of June through August, the area around the trees has to be mowed, and the trees have to be sheared.

This year, mowing has been exceptionally challenging because of all the rain. In September and October, Daley makes improvements to the field and takes down some old trees to make room for new plantings.

The fun starts the day after Thanksgiving when the selling season begins. Daley concedes that some of the 6-8 feet trees he has could be sold, but for the second year,



Courtesy photo
Working at the farm is a family affair. Left to right, Owen, Matt, Lauren and Griffin Daley with Greta in front.

he’ll stick to pre-cut trees and wreaths. Daley buys plain wreaths from a farm in Glover and the family decorates them with bows and other ornaments. Last year, three local businesses — Elli Parr, the Gilded Elephant, and Safe Haven Honey — joined the family at the farmstand.

Daley is committed to not using pesticides on the farm despite having some issues with aphids which suck on the sap of new growth, making the needles curl. He notes that this isn’t dangerous to the tree, but it does make

them a little less desirable.

Even with his full-time job, Daley is happy to have his time on the farm. Part of that stems from the fact that he gets to work with his wife and kids but part of it can be traced to his love of being outdoors.

“I’d be very bored if I didn’t have something else to do,” he said. “This keeps me moving and keeps the kids engaged. I’m trying to instill in them the same desire I have to be outside.”

New guide released for eastern hemlock management

Ali Kosiba
University of Vermont Extension

The eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) is a keystone tree species in northern forests with ecological, economic and cultural significance.

Hemlock stands provide both important wildlife habitat, including shade to cool trout streams, as well as a place for camping, hiking, hunting and other recreational activities. In addition, this softwood species, while lower in sawtimber value than many other species, is harvested commercially for pulpwood, bark mulch and construction and landscape timber.

However, hemlock is vulnerable to a number of threats to its survival, among them the impact of climate change and the spread of invasive species, including the hemlock woolly adelgid and elongate hemlock scale. Hemlocks are considered a foundational species, helping to create favorable conditions for other plants and

animals, so any decline or loss in hemlock will have a ripple effect.

To help landowners, forest managers and foresters conserve and protect the eastern hemlock, the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation; University of Vermont Extension; Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Atowi project collaborated on developing the Management Guide for Eastern Hemlock Conservation in Vermont. This recently released guide offers comprehensive and sustainable strategies for maintaining hemlock stands in Vermont’s forests.

The guide covers the biology and importance of hemlock; identification of potential threats, including native and non-native insect and fungal stressors; and the long-range impact of hemlock decline and mortality. It also describes the state’s efforts to monitor public lands for hemlock woolly adelgid and elongate hemlock scale infestations and how the public can scout for these invasive pests on private land.

Other sections deal with management and controls, which range from taking an integrated pest management approach to the use of biological or chemical controls, cultural methods and active and passive silvicultural techniques. The guide also includes information on the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation’s work to preserve hemlock genetic material and U. S. Department of Agriculture programs and funding opportunities for the management and treatment of hemlock on private lands.

To view the guide, go to go.uvm.edu/hemlock.



Photo by Ali Kosiba
The appearance of cottony or woolly masses on the underside of the foliage at the base of a hemlock’s needles indicates the presence of the hemlock woolly adelgid, an invasive forest pest.

Report from the Legislature

Popular opinions — Or at least opinions popular with me

Chea Waters Evans
State Representative

I’m not going to get involved in the town-manager-versus-town-administrator debate. I mean, I’m already involved to the extent that, should it get to this point, I will cheerfully and enthusiastically work on drafting a town charter bill and getting it through the legislative process. I respect that this issue is one that’s going to be left to the voters.

I like leaving the decisions in the hands of towns whenever possible — like, Dillon’s Rule gives the state the authority to ultimately decide on towns’ behalf. (Remember that? It’s my favorite rule other than: If you dirty the dish, you clean the dish, which applies both at home and in the State House.)

But if the voters in a town decide they want something, for the most part we really do make every attempt in the Government Operations and Military Affairs Committee to move it as far as we can.

The couple of town charter bills that weren’t unanimous came out of committee with votes along party lines. Those were a Burlington charter wanting non-citizens to vote and a Brattleboro charter allowing youth voters in local elections.

Speaking for myself, of course, I think that if the voters of a town want it, and it’s not against the law, then they should get it. In the case of the Charlotte town administrator, I’m confident that people will do their research and vote what they think is best.

Sometimes, things are a little more controversial ...

Which brings me to the shooting range. Here’s where my unpopular opinion comes in. I know the selectboard has discussed creating a noise ordinance specific to that section of town. I believe this is known as “spot zoning,” and I do believe that in the past, the town has very carefully tried to avoid spot zoning. These things can go both ways, of course — if we create a noise ordinance that only applies to one part of town, then can we create, say, just for example, a food truck ordinance that only applies to one part of town to prohibit only certain establishments from having food trucks? I don’t love that slippery selective slope.

The planning commission works hard to ensure that our town’s future development is consistent and fair; the development review board works hard to make sure that the laws and land-use regulations as they apply them are consistent and fair. The shooting range has been through decades of time

and expense defending their right to have that shooting range and keep it running; in 2018, the Vermont Supreme Court upheld their right to exist without applying Act 250 jurisdiction. People have been shooting at the range there for more than 70 years.

I sympathize with the people who are frustrated with the noise, and I agree with selectboard member Louise McCarren’s comment that all the neighbors need to get together and work it out as best they can. I also do believe that if you’re going to buy property near a shooting range, you know what to expect: shooting. (I used to live across the street from the shooting range in Lake Placid, so I know what I’m talking about here.)

I live next door to cows, and though they don’t always rank in the top 10 of smells and sometimes the midnight bellowing is unsettling, I’m used to them and have grown

to love and appreciate them as part of my olfactory and aural landscape. I also knew they were here when I moved in, and accepted that it’s part of the deal.

These paragraphs can also apply to

my thoughts on cannabis grow operations: smelly, not ideal for some people, but also totally not against the law and therefore, whether we like it or not, they’re allowed to exist. And the town isn’t allowed to specifically create land-use regulations that apply only to that one industry or operation.

Another hot topic that I shouldn’t weigh in on but am about to is short-term rentals. I’m always a little suspicious when people say that outsiders will disrupt the character of their neighborhood. What are the outsiders doing, holding a Satanic ritual that involves burning roadkill in the middle of the night without a burn permit?

Many towns are trying to institute rental registries in order to figure out how much available housing there is, and how much of that is being co-opted by short-term rental units. I don’t think this is the issue in Charlotte. I’m pretty sure the people who don’t want short-term rentals are concerned, not because they want more long-term renters to have access to Charlotte housing, but because they don’t want the bother that comes along with their neighbors renting out their homes. In towns with more density and cities, it makes complete sense to register and regulate short-term housing, especially when we’re in the midst of a housing crisis. Here, in my opinion, not so much.

I’d prefer you’re not mad at me, but if you are, I welcome your opinion. If you agree with me, or have a point I haven’t considered, I welcome your opinions, too. You can always contact me at cevans@leg.state.vt.us or 917-887-8231.



NEXT PUBLICATION DATES

Sept. 21

Copy Deadline: Friday, Sept. 15
Ads Deadline: Friday, Sept. 15

October 5

Copy Deadline: Friday, Sept. 29
Ads Deadline: Friday, Sept. 29

TO ADVERTISE CONTACT:

ads@thecharlottenews.org

SEND YOUR CHARLOTTE NEWS TO:

news@thecharlottenews.org

Calendar of Events

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

Book launch

Thursday, Sept. 7, 6:30 p.m.

A public book launch for “Attic of Dreams: A Memoir” by Marilyn Webb Neagley will be held Thursday, Sept. 7, at 6:30 p.m. at the Pierson Library in Shelburne, with books for sale by The Flying Pig Bookstore. Neagley, one of the formative leaders of Shelburne Farms, is the author of two previous books and co-editor of another. She has been a Vermont Public Radio commentator and lives with her husband in Shelburne.

Benefit piano concert

Friday, Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m.

The Capital City Concerts in Montpelier opens its season with a performance by pianist Jeffrey Chappell on Friday, Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. at the Barre Opera House. Ticket proceeds will be donated to flood relief. The concert will include Mozart’s Fantasy and Fugue in C Major, Beethoven’s Opus 109 Sonata, Chopin’s Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise Brillante, and Samuel Barber’s Piano Sonata. A seasoned veteran of the concert stage, Chappell has performed in Europe, Latin America, Asia and throughout the United States in recital and with major symphony orchestras. All ticket proceeds will go to Montpelier Alive and Capstone Community Action to help families, individuals and businesses affected by the flooding. Tickets start at \$5. Go to capitalcityconcerts.org to reserve seats and learn more.

Free student September Saturdays

Saturdays, Sept. 9, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Shelburne Museum welcomes college students Saturdays in September with free Saturday admissions continuing on Sept. 16, 23 and 30, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Free admission with valid student ID.

Moonlight in Milton

Saturday, Sept. 9, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Moonlight Body Mind Spirit Expo returns to Milton at the newly renovated Milton Grange Hall. Vendors, readers, healers, speakers, workshops and more to nurture and uplift the body, mind and spirit. For more info: call the Moonlight Gift Shoppe at 802-893-9966 or email moonlightgiftshoppe@yahoo.com.

Stone labyrinth walk

Sunday, Sept. 10, 1-4 p.m.

Art on Main in Bristol takes art outdoors for an afternoon devoted to a recently completed stone labyrinth designed for walking meditation at the property of Art on Main board member Anne Majusiak. Tickets for the labyrinth walk are \$35 and should be purchased in advance as numbers are limited. They may be purchased at Art on Main, 25 Main Street Bristol, by calling the gallery at 802-453-4032 or under events at artonmainvt.com.

CHARLOTTE

Veggie Swap and Share

Tuesday, Sept. 12, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Bring surplus garden harvest to share and swap with neighbors to the Grange at 2858 Spear Street. Enjoy a food preservation and fermentation demonstration by Sobremesa. Any remaining items will be distributed by the Charlotte Food Shelf.

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte Walks: Williams Woods

Thursday Sept. 14, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

Join a walk at Williams Woods at the parking lot of Williams Woods Natural Area at 1489 Greenbush Road. The trail is a 1-mile loop through the “best remaining mature valley clayplain forest in the Champlain Valley” and is owned by the Nature Conservancy. Charlotte Walks happen at 8:30 a.m. every second Thursday at a different trailhead. Walks will generally last about an hour and will be led at an adult walking pace.

Golf Ball Drop

Friday, Sept. 15, 4-6 p.m.

The Golf Ball Drop in Shelburne is back. The Rotary Club of Charlotte-Shelburne-Hinesburg will be holding the Golf Ball Drop,

a fund-raising event from 4-6 p.m., Friday, Sept. 15, at the Kwini Club Driving Range at 5353 Spear Street. The funds raised will support the fire and rescue services of Charlotte, Hinesburg and Shelburne. In 2022 this event raised more than \$8,000 for these vital community services. More than \$2,000 in prizes will be awarded and only 1,500 golf balls will be sold. There will also be a long-drive competition. Golf balls can be obtained at tinyurl.com/bdza8zcv.

John Doyle & Mick McAuley

Friday, Sept. 15, 7 p.m.

John Doyle and Mick McAuley will perform at the Elley Long Music Center in Colchester. The concert is presented with support from the Burlington Irish Heritage Festival as part of a continuing series of performances by influential Irish musicians from Ireland and North America. Suggested donation is \$25. Reservations and more information at mark.sustic@gmail.com or 802-233-5293.

Tour de Farms

Sunday, Sept. 17, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.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/2yteczhz.

The Whole Chicken

Tuesday, Sept. 19, 6-8 p.m.

Philo Ridge Farm is holding another in its series of butcher workshops that include dinner. This one is called “The Whole Chicken” and the farm’s in-house butcher team will talk about the field-to-table life cycle of heritage breed chickens at Philo Ridge Farm. There will be small bites from the kitchen during the class followed by a sit-down dinner including buttermilk fried chicken, dirty rice with chicken livers and Creole spices, braised kale, Nitty Gritty cornbread with maple butter, marinated tomatoes with garden herbs, spinach salad with crispy chicken skin and strawberry rhubarb jam cookie. Tickets at tinyurl.com/3zhrr76d.

Helvetica

Wednesday, Sept. 20, 6:30 p.m.

The documentary “Helvetica” will be shown in the Contois Auditorium on Wednesday, Sept. 20, at 6:30 p.m. It’s free to see this documentary about typography, graphic design and global visual culture that looks at the proliferation of one typeface and invites us to consider the thousands of words we see every day.



Courtesy photo

Art on Main in Bristol is holding a stone labyrinth walk 1-4 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 10, The stone labyrinth is designed for walking meditation. The walk is \$35 and should be purchased in advance, as numbers are limited, at Art on Main, 25 Main Street Bristol, or by calling the gallery at 802-453-4032 or under events at artonmainvt.com.

Family art

Saturday, Sept. 23, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Get your whole creative crew together for some outdoor art-making at Family Art Saturday in Burlington’ City Hall Park. Drop in and create your very own colorful character portraits of yourself or your family reimagined as fantastic creatures.

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. More info at tinyurl.com/y7mzn6xp.

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte Walks: Pease Mountain

Thursday Oct. 12, 8:30-10 a.m.

Join a walk at Pease Mountain at the rear of the bus parking lot of Charlotte Central School (to the far west of the school by

the skating rink). David Ziegelman of the Charlotte Trails Committee will guide our group up Pease Mountain. We expect this month’s walk to take more than an hour. Charlotte Walks happen every second Thursday, meeting at a different trailhead at 8:30 a.m.

Youth Environmental Summit

Friday, Oct. 27, 8:30 a.m.-2:15 p.m.

You must register by Oct. 16 for the Youth Environmental Summit, an annual conference for middle and high school students to learn about environmental issues and get involved in local communities. Through hands-on workshops, action-inspiring discussions, networking with environmental professionals and like-minded peers, the mission of the event is to prepare youth for leadership on environmental issues. For sixth grade through seniors, the program is free and at the Barre Civic Center. Register at tinyurl.com/yeyrvvn4.

TALK TO US

AND WIN BIG PRIZES!



Our reader survey launches on September 21 and we want to hear from you. In return for a few minutes of your time, we are offering a chance to win:

- Dinner for four at Philo Ridge,
- A one-hour kayaking, cycling or cross-country skiing clinic, and
- More prizes, to be announced shortly.

Your nonprofit community news source since 1958



Town of Charlotte

MEETINGS

Visit charlottetxt.org for more information.

Planning Commission:
Regular meeting.

Thursday, Sept. 7, 7-9 p.m.

Selectboard

Monday, Sept. 11, 6:30 p.m.

Shade Tree Preservation Plan
Public hearing

Tuesday, Sept. 12, 7 p.m.

Development Review Board
Regular Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 13, 7-9:30 p.m.

Planning Commission:
Regular meeting

Thursday, Sept. 21, 7-9 p.m.

Library News

September: Great month to remember to get library card

Margaret Woodruff
Director

September is a busy month at the library. Library card sign-up and emergency preparedness are two reasons why.

Since 1987, Library Card Sign-up Month has been held each September to mark the beginning of the school year. During the month, the American Library Association and libraries unite in a national effort to ensure every child signs up for their own library card. For more information about Library Card Sign-up Month visit tinyurl.com/35mhmkaa.

From free access to science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (or STEAM) programs, activities, educational apps, in-person and virtual homework help, technology workshops to the expertise of librarians, a library card is one of the most cost-effective back-to-school supplies available.

Throughout the school year, library staff help parents and caregivers with saving hundreds of dollars on educational resources and services for students. Sign yourself and your family up for a library card anytime.

National Preparedness Month focuses on the needs and concerns of older adults and their caregivers. This year’s theme, “Take Control in 1, 2, 3,” encourages everyone, especially older adults, to become more prepared in three simple steps:

- Assess your needs.
- Make a plan.
- Engage your support network.

More information about getting ready can be found on the FEMA website at tinyurl.com/3b5rzpce.

The library has resources and information from the Town Emergency Management Team. Its Emergency Preparedness Guide for Charlotte Residents is available at tinyurl.com/45cadwcc. There are also emergency preparation tips from Communities Responding to Extreme Weather. The library is a Communities Responding to Extreme Weather Resilience Hub.

Children’s programs

Preschool story time
Tuesdays, September, 10 a.m.

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

Preschool play time
Wednesdays, September, 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.

Kindergarten-first grade story time
Tuesdays, Sept. 26, 3 p.m.

Extend the kindergarten and first-grade day with story time fun at the Charlotte Library. Students can ride the blue school bus from Charlotte Central School. They will be met at the bus stop and escorted across the street to the library. Limited availability. Registration required email youth@charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Coding club
Wednesdays, Sept. 13, 2:15-3:30 p.m.

Hack Club, a global organization helping teenagers to code, is hosting a six-week coding club at the Charlotte Library. The club will run 2:15-3:30 p.m. every Wednesday. Snacks will be provided. Any child between the seventh-twelfth grade is welcome, no prior experience is required. If this sounds interesting to you, email nila@hackclub.com and include the name of your child, their grade and whether they’ve had any coding experience.

Programs for adults

“Sweet Tooth Dilemma” book talk
Tuesday, Sept. 12, 7 p.m.

Join Andrea Grayson for a discussion of her new book “The Sweet Tooth Dilemma,” which describes the why, what and how of quitting sugar. Grayson is a behavior change communications consultant who teaches about public health communications and behavior change in the master of public health program in the Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont. Her life changed in 2016 when she suddenly realized that she had been concealing a lifelong dependence on sugar and carbs beneath a web of denial (“It’s just a sweet tooth”) and rationalization (“I’ve been good so deserve a treat”). Copies of the book will be available for purchase through the Flying Pig Bookstore.

Better Together Book Club: “The Push”
Wednesday, Sept. 13, 7 p.m.

Join this open group that discusses books related to parenthood to talk about “The Push” by Ashley Audrain. “This is a clever concept novel that manipulates and exploits the fears and insecurities almost every mother has, however happy her own childhood: the fear of otherness, and the illusion of motherhood as a great, beaming, muffin-baking club from which one is excluded. It shows the way the birth of a child can break down the bonds of love between adults as well as strengthen them; how the memories of childhood, forgotten or buried, return at the moment of one’s own maternal crisis,” said the Los Angeles Times. Copies are available at the library circulation desk. Registration is appreciated by emailing

susanna@charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Book discussion
“Finding the Mother Tree”
Monday, Sept. 18, 7 p.m.

A hybrid discussion of “Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest” with in-person registration at bit.ly/45zrf9P and online registration at tinyurl.com/4aza4xnv. In addition to writing about the fascinating life of trees, Suzanne Simard writes of her own life, growing up in the rainforests of British Columbia and how she came to love and respect the trees. She helps us understand how deeply human scientific inquiry exists beyond data and technology, that it is about understanding who we are and our place in the world.

Comics workshop
Wednesday, Sept. 20, 7 p.m.

Join award-winning cartoonist and educator Marek Bennett for a closer look at the Vermont Reads 2022 book, “The Most Costly Journey” (copies available at the library). Marek presents some of the many comics documenting human migrations and struggles throughout the ages, and leads a hands-on demo to show how you can cartoon the stories of your own family, neighborhood and wider world. (No prior art experience needed — everybody can create comics.) For more about Marek’s work, see marekbennett.com. For all ages. Contact rachel@carpentercarse.org to sign up or to attend via Zoom. This program will take place at Carpenter-Carse Library in Hinesburg.

Stephen Kiernan book talk
Sunday, Sept. 24, 4:30 p.m.

Join us for an informal discussion of and reading from “The Glass Chateau,” the newest work from Stephen Kiernan of Charlotte. Copies available to purchase through the Flying Pig Bookstore.

Weather forecasting
Tuesday, Sept. 26, 5:30 p.m.

Ever wonder what it’s like to be a weather forecaster? Join the weather-curious for a presentation by the National Weather Service of Burlington to learn about what these meteorologists do every day to keep you safe. A family program for kids, parents and anyone interested in weather.

“The Most Costly Journey”
Wednesday, Sept. 27, 7 p.m.

Much of the work on Vermont dairy farms is done by people from Latin America. Over a thousand migrant laborers milk cows, fix tractors, shovel manure and take care of calves in our state. Julia Grand Doucet from the Open Door Clinic will also discuss “The Most Costly Journey,” providing insight into the lives and experiences of the workers whose labor supports the continued viability of dairy farming in Vermont, as well as an overview of the goals of the El Viaje Más Caro Project and its approach. This discussion will take place at the Charlotte



Library.

Recurring programs

Don’t miss these fun events that appear regularly on our calendar.

Book chat
Wednesdays, 3 p.m.

Meet each week to discuss new books, old books and books we might have missed. Each week, 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. Contact garden stewards Karen Tuininga and Linda Hamilton at seed@charlottepubliclibrary.org to join the merry work sessions.

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.

Mystery book group
Monday, Sept. 18, 10 a.m.

Join the discussion of the holiday-themed country-house mystery “Tied Up in Tinsel” by Ngaio Marsh featuring intrepid detective Roderick Allyn. Copies available at the library circulation desk.

Men’s book group
Wednesday, Sept. 20, 7:30 p.m.

“Norwegian By Night” is an extraordinary debut, featuring a memorable hero. It’s the story of the last adventure of a man still trying to come to terms with the tragedies of his life. Compelling and sophisticated, it is both a chase-through-the-woods thriller and an emotionally haunting novel about aging and regret. This is a hybrid event. Join us at the library or on Zoom at tinyurl.com/45z6vfhu.

Library book discussion series
Thursday, Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m.

The regular book group is back. Join each month to discuss celebrated titles both old and new. Check the library website for title information. Copies available at the library circulation desk.

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. Contact the library or visit the library website (charlottepubliclibrary.org) for more information.

Senior Center News

Learn a new language or brush up on your conversation skills

Lori York
Director

Trying to brush up on your language conversation skills?

A conversation group is a great way to practice and build a community of people interested in learning a language. At the senior center, conversation groups include French, German, Italian and Spanish.

The senior center continues to provide services ranging from weekly meals, complimentary hearing tests and hearing aid cleanings, the Alzheimer’s Caregivers Support Group and fresh vegetables from Full Moon Farm.

And save the date for local author Marilyn Webb Neagley who will lead a discussion around her latest memoir.

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.

Languages

French conversation Mondays, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Parlez-vous français? This is a group of intermediate group of French speakers who meet weekly for French conversation. As the group grows, there may be opportunities to split according to skill levels. Questions? Contact Roberta Whitmore at robertawhitmore27@gmail.com. Free. No registration required.

Spanish conversation Tuesdays, 10-11 a.m.

¿Habras español? This group meets weekly. At each session one member of the group will announce the topic of conversation for the following week. Come join the group for conversation in Spanish. Questions? Contact Bernice Wesseling at Bernice.Wesseling@uvm.edu. Free. No registration required.

German conversation Thursdays, 3-4 p.m.

Möchtest du dein Deutsch üben? Come join this group to meet other German speakers and practice your German. No agenda, just a casual conversation. All experience levels are welcome. Questions? Contact Dan York at dyork@Lodestar2.com. Free. No registration required.

Italian conversation Fridays, 11 a.m.-noon

Ciao amici! Do you have a passion for all things Italian? Are you eager to brush up on your Italian language skills and to meet others who share your love for the Italian language and lifestyle? This self-led conversation group welcomes Italian language enthusiasts at all levels and provides an opportunity to practice conversational Italian in a relaxed environment. Feel free to spread the word and invite others who might be interested. Free. No registration required.

Community programs

Alzheimer’s Caregivers Support Group Thursday, Sept. 14, 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: scartwrightasg@gmail.com.

Hearing loss presentation with free hearing test & hearing aid cleaning Tuesday, Sept. 20, 1 p.m.

Join Julie Bier, audiologist at Better Living Audiology, for a short presentation about the first signs of hearing loss and dealing with tinnitus and balance issues to help prevent falls. One in three people over age 60 have hearing loss and only about 13 percent of physicians routinely screen for hearing loss during a physical, so it can go untreated. The presentation will last about 15 minutes and be followed by a complimentary hearing screening with free cleanings of hearing aids. Registration required.

Author discussion: Marilyn Webb Neagley Thursday, Sept. 28, 7 p.m.

Join local non-fiction author Marilyn Webb Neagley for a discussion about her newest book “Attic of Dreams: A Memoir.” Neagley has spent most of her life in Shelburne. Starting her career as an architectural interior designer, Neagley veered toward environmental stewardship and became president of Shelburne Farms. She has been a commentator for Vermont Public Radio and written essays for her local newspaper. She previously wrote “Walking through the Seasons,” which won an award for best Northeastern non-fiction. Registration recommended. Free.

Free local produce and fruit Thursdays, 10-11 a.m.

The senior center is participating in the Locally Yours community supported agriculture program, and produce from Full Moon Farm in Hinesburg is dropped at the senior center weekly free for participants 60 and over. It’s first-come, first-served with the intention that one or two people won’t take all the produce, instead taking only what they will use. No registration required.

Weekly Age Well Grab & Go meals

Pick up on Thursdays 10-11 a.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, email jonathanhart1@gmail.com. No registration required. Cost: \$3.

Birding expedition Wednesday, Sept. 13, 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. Free. Registration required.

Glorious fall watercolor class Tuesdays, Sept. 26, Oct. 3, 10 & 17 9 a.m.-noon

This four-week session with Lynn Cummings will explore color mixing and color choices for fall paintings, creating texture, getting more light into paintings and painting fall-themed still lifes and landscapes. Some experience with watercolor is helpful. Supply list will be emailed a week before class begins. Questions? Please email: Lynn.Cummings@uvm.edu. Cost: \$165.



Photo by Lori York

From left, Cheryl Sloan, Sean Moran and Ruth Whitaker stand with some of the produce from Full Moon Farm that is given away weekly at the senior center to those who are over 60 years old as part of the Locally Yours program.



Photo by Karen Tuininga

Boats wait for paddlers at the Try Out A Boat outing to Ferrisburgh Town Beach. This was the fourth time the event was scheduled and the first time it wasn’t rained out.



Photo by Lori York

From left, Judy Tuttle, Katie Franko and John Hammer hang artwork for the Senior Art Show at the Charlotte Senior Center.

Registration and payment required to reserve a space.

Meals

Menus are posted on the website at charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday lunches

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

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](https://www.facebook.com/charlotteseniorcentervt).

Write Ingredients

Senior center not celebrating National TV Dinner Day

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

Happily we bask in this warm September sun, which illuminates all creatures.
— Henry David Thoreau

At press time, volunteer cooks for Monday Munch on Sept. 11 and 18 were still deciding on menus, but it is safe to assume there will be no celebrations of National TV Dinner Day (which occurs every year on Sept. 10). The term “TV dinner” was coined in 1954 by C.A. Swanson & Sons, a food delivery business based in Omaha, Nebraska.

Carl Anton Svensson, born in Karlskrona, Sweden, came to the United States in 1896 at the age of 17. He arrived with a tag around his neck: “Carl Swanson, Swedish. Send me to Omaha. I speak no English.” Omaha was then a community of immigrant Swedish-Americans. Svensson died in 1949 and his sons took over the company.

That first TV dinner revolutionized the frozen food business. People who paid 98 cents for this item received turkey, gravy, cornbread stuffing, sweet potatoes and peas packaged in a foil-covered segmented aluminum tray contained in a cardboard box designed to look like a television set, complete with screen and knobs.

Linking this new food offering to TV was especially apt for the times because television, relatively new, was experiencing a surge in popularity.

One of the original trays designed for the first TV dinners is part of the pop culture artifacts collection in the National Museum of American History, along with Archie Bunker’s chair and Fonzie’s leather jacket.

These days, the Lowes Regency Hotel offers a \$30 TV dinner: pot roast braised in Burgundian pinot noir. Andrew Rubin, the executive chef, calls it comfort food that we can turn upscale. “These days comfort food is this hip, cool thing.”

For this hip, cool crowd, the partitioned trays are made of porcelain, and other food choices include free range fried chicken and macaroni and cheese made of cheddar asiago with a Parmesan crust.

But all that is small potatoes compared to the British service that brings a special TV dinner to your front door, delivered in a bespoke aluminum case, handcuffed to a security guard. Inside, you’ll find salmon, scallops, turbot, oysters and lobster tails poached in Dom Pérignon; white Alba truffles; Beluga caviar. There’s 24-carat

gold leaf crumb to garnish (because parsley is for peasants). The whole thing costs £314, or \$514. Read more at tinyurl.com/45fhcubz.

There is no charge for Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center. A \$5 donation is appreciated.

Age Well Meal pickup Thursday, Sept.14, 10-11 a.m.

Swedish steak w/mushroom sauce, seasoned penne pasta, chopped broccoli, wheat bread, vanilla fluff with blueberries and strawberries. Suggested Age Well donation is \$5, but it is not required to receive a meal. Pay what you can, when you can. Remember: Registration is required by the prior Monday.

Age Well Meal Pickup Thursday, Sept. 21, 10-11 a.m.

Turkey Tetrazzini, Scandinavian vegetables, wheat dinner roll and a fruit cookie.

The Thursday, Sept. 21, Age Well Pickup Meal comes with an interesting story. Turkey Tetrazzini, the main course, is named after Luisa Tetrazzini. The claim that this turkey and pasta casserole originated with this famed singer’s own recipe is debatable. But there is no myth in the declaration that this Italian opera star was legendary at the turn of the 20th century. Generous as well as flamboyant, she gained fame for her love affairs as well as her financial disputes. Her co-stars included Caruso when she sang in the world’s opera houses, and there’s a famous story involving her singing for free on city streets.

In 1910, involved in a contract dispute with Oscar Hammerstein, who wanted her to sing in New York, Luisa Tetrazzini gave a free outdoor Christmas Eve concert in San Francisco, saying it was a gift to the city she loved.

The San Francisco Chronicle offered a very colorful description of the event, including the info that Tetrazzini usually drank a quart of red wine with dinner before she sang. For the night of this concert the San Francisco police halted all traffic in the area of the event. The streetcars stopped running on Market Street, service on the Geary Street cable cars was halted and automobiles were forbidden downtown. sfgate.com/news/article/Luisa-Tetrazzini-s-gift-ends-S-F-era-on-high-note-2452300.php.

Reminder: School’s back in session, and



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even though students can enjoy a spectacular library at Charlotte Central School, they still need books to call their own. Be sure the kids you know take a look at the great collection at the Little Free Library for Kids, located at the Grange. This library is brought to kids with the help of the Friends of the Charlotte Senior Center and the Flying Pig, where the clerks are very knowledgeable and eager to help kids find books they will love.

And remember this: Rain or shine, grab your coat, and get your hat. Leave your worry on the doorstep. Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center is always “On the Sunny Side of the Street.”

Here’s Louis Armstrong at youtube.com/watch?v=Nn3soYbSpS4.

Benny Goodman and Peggy Lee at youtube.com/watch?v=INekniIlgjCk.

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