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# The Charlotte News

Thursday, October 19, 2023 | Volume 66 Number 9



## **Camoufrog**

Photo by Ansel Schwartzman

The 12-year-old photographer found this frog sleeping on his family's deck in a baby sunrose plant, perfectly camouflaged by the color of the plant ... except to a young man with artistic vision.



## Readers survey update

John Quinney  
Publisher & President

Starting with the Sept. 21 newspaper, we asked for your thoughts.

By the time we closed our readers survey on Oct. 15, almost 200 of you had told us how you feel about the newspaper and website and offered feedback on future directions. This is terrific news because it means that the results are “statistically significant.” So, thank you all for taking the time to complete our survey.

We had hoped to have a full report on the survey results for this issue of the newspaper. But we don’t. Instead, we’ll take another couple of weeks to review the data and consider what this means for the future of your local nonprofit community newspaper. Look for the story in our Nov. 2

newspaper.

For now, here are the five people who won prizes:

- Steve Wisbaum — a \$100 discount on a cord of firewood from R.H. Stowe Firewood
- Andrea Grayson — a \$30 gift certificate from Tenny’s Snack Bar & Bottle Redemption
- Susan Stuck — a \$250 gift certificate from Philo Ridge Farm
- Vera Simon-Nobes — a \$100 gift certificate from Fat Cow Farm
- Linda Gault Gilbert — a one-hour kayaking, cycling or cross-country ski clinic from Regan Outdoor Leadership.

Many thanks to these individuals for their generous donations in support of our readers survey — Dick Stowe, Richard Tenney, Diana McCargo, Peter Swift, Peter Trono and Bill Regan.

## Charlotte planning commission eyeing looser land-use regs

Meryl Hartmann  
Community News Service

Planning commission members in Charlotte are considering loosening land-use regulations after the outcry surrounding development on Thompson’s Point.

The overall consensus at the commission’s meeting Oct. 5 was that officials need to identify regulation changes that would allow “the landowners or lease-holders flexibility to modify and improve their structures while maintaining the look and feel of Thompson’s Point,” as emphasized by chair Charlie Pughe.

The commission plans to look at draft amendments to the regulations at its next meeting this Thursday, Oct. 19, based on ideas gleaned from the attendees last week.

Beth Humstone, a Thompson’s Point resident, believes there are certainly issues in the town permitting process. For one,

the requirement for conditional-use review for building improvements is costly. She has a leaking shed needing an update, she said, but she’d need to pay around \$800 to get the review done, more than the shed costs itself.

The process is full of “onerous restrictions” that need to change. Instead of a “blanket rule,” Humstone said, there should be a “case-by-case” process. People should be allowed to more easily update their properties to make them safe for residents from a “livability standpoint.”

Commission member Robert Bloch agreed. He pointed out that most structures at Thompson’s Point are “ramshackle, completely outdated, totally useless, obsolete structures” — drawing laughs from attendees. Current rules make

SEE **LAND-USE REGS** PAGE 3

## In for the season



Photo by Lee Krohn

Boats are in for the season after a summer of galivanting on the waters of Lake Champlain.

## New town administrator is New Yorker by birth, Vermonter by choice

Scooter MacMillan  
Editor

A week into his job as Charlotte’s town administrator and Nate Bareham exudes enthusiasm about his new position — or it may be that Bareham just exudes enthusiasm about life in general.

He has an almost constant smile, a firm but friendly handshake and is clearly excited about taking over for Dean Bloch.

Bloch announced around Halloween last year that he would be retiring from the town where he’s worked for 24 years at the end of October this year.

The selectboard began talking about his replacement right away, but got down to the serious work of finding a new town administrator around three months ago with the formation of a search committee made up of residents and two selectboard members to pare down the applicants.

Enthusiasm is a characteristic several selectboard members alluded to when describing Bareham after unanimously approving his hire on Sept. 11.

“I think we’re really lucky. We got a younger fellow coming in here who’s enthusiastic, intelligent and has got really good public relations skills,” chair Jim Faulkner said at the time.

Bareham, 30, grew up in the Finger Lakes area of New York State. He went to what he describes as small, “rinky dink” Southern Cayuga High. He thinks there were 69 kids



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Nate Bareham appreciates the honor system of selling produce at farmstands.

in his graduating class.

He went to college at nearby State University of New York Brockport where he got an undergraduate degree in history and military studies.

After college he spent several years as a substitute teacher while he figured out what he wanted to do with his life and earned his certification in paralegal studies. He decided

he would like to work in administration, so he went back to school and earned his master’s in public administration.

While going to graduate school he was also working for New York State Parks where he became a water safety coordinator. He found that work really enjoyable, despite being in that position when the COVID pandemic hit.

During the pandemic, he realized he had a knack for, and delight in, juggling lots of different issues and working with people.

“The state really wanted to try and maintain service levels. Even though we had all these new restrictions added on, there wasn’t a ton of guidance on how we should be operating things, so it was a good experience in that you really had to problem solve quite a bit,” Bareham said, sitting in the office he’s sharing with Bloch, while he shares his experience and expertise. Bloch has agreed to stay on the job for at least a month after his announced last day of Oct. 31.

In his position as a water safety coordinator, Bareham was working with 11 different regional management areas in nine counties with about 40 state parks and with about 40 other employees.

A big part of his responsibility was making sure that recreational activities in those state parks were safe. He was overseeing training in that area of the state parks system, so he got certified as a Wilderness Remote First Aid, lifeguard, CPR and AED (automatic external defibrillator) instructor. And it wasn’t just water safety training that he was coordinating: Bareham ran or coordinated trainings on the safe operation of chainsaws and trainings for people doing surveys on endangered or threatened species and

SEE **BAREHAM** PAGE 3



# Vehicle crime spree hits Charlotte over weekend

Scooter MacMillan  
Editor

A rash of vehicle break-ins, vehicle thefts and stolen items from autos this past weekend has many Charlotte residents questioning how safe their possessions are in a town where they thought they didn’t need to lock up.

State police said they began to get reports about vehicle thefts and break-ins on Saturday, Oct. 14, according to a press release.

A number of residents also reported on social media the crime spree had touched their property. The incidents appear to have begun on Friday night and lasted through the early hours of Sunday.

At least one similar incident was reported in North Ferrisburgh, police said.

Four unknown male suspects used a stolen credit card from one of the vehicles at a Burlington convenience store. Police released photos of each of the suspects taken by a security camera there.

In the state police’s press release, the tally stood at four vehicles that were stolen between midnight and 2 a.m. on Oct. 14 and seven other vehicles that were broken into. The release said police expected those numbers to go up in Charlotte.

“There were at least two other attempted thefts of a motor vehicle that failed when the suspects attempting to steal the vehicles got stuck on the victims’ yards,” the release said.

A couple of people reported on social

“This is a pressing issue that the state police are working on daily.”

— Captain Matt Daley with the Vermont State Police

media vehicles that appeared to have been stolen that were abandoned in their yards.

Kyra Wegman said her vehicle was unlocked and the doors were wide open the next morning, but nothing was taken. It was disconcerting because she believes she was reading into the wee hours of the morning and awake when her vehicle was rummaged through.

As an ex-Brooklynite, Wegman said it was ironic because nothing bad ever happened to her while she was living there.

“That’s because we locked our doors all the time,” Wegman said. In Charlotte, she and her family have not been diligently locking up.

“We got sort of lulled into a sense of security. You know, the first thing we did in the morning was to go to the hardware store and buy deadbolts,” she said.

A .410 shotgun and a bright-orange flare

gun were among items that were stolen in addition to the vehicles, according to the police.

Captain Matt Daley with the Vermont State Police, who lives in Charlotte, said around 2018 there was a crime spree where people’s homes were being broken into and materials, whose price had gone up significantly, like copper, were stolen. This was the biggest crime spree he’d heard about in town since then.

Among locations reported on social media where vehicles were broken into, stolen or abandoned were homes on One Mile Road, Spear Street, Ashe Road, Split Rock Road, Mt. Philo Road, Pease Mountain Road, Vineyard View Drive, Wildwood West, Westin Road in Ferrisburgh and at least three on Greenbush Road.

Daley said the unknown culprits did not get to his home or vehicles. From the wide range of the incidents around town, it was difficult for him to determine a pattern in the thieves’ movements.

“This is a pressing issue that the state police are working on daily,” he said.

The state police reminded people to lock up and to not leave valuable belongings in their vehicles, even if parked at their homes.

Police also asked that anyone who recognizes the four suspects call Trooper Nate Quealy at 802-878-7111. Tips can be made anonymously by texting “VTIPS” to 274637 or at the state police website at <https://tinyurl.com/27wppvwb>.



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# Canceling Charlotte Tractor Parade the right decision

Scooter MacMillan  
Editor

In contradiction of the old song lyrics’ insistence to not rain on her parade, the weather chose to not cooperate. But Carrie Spear is choosing to see a bright side to last Sunday’s rained-out tractor parade and considering it instead as a rehearsal for next year’s parade, which she’s confident will be bigger and better than ever.

The Charlotte Tractor Parade, scheduled for this Sunday, Oct. 8, was canceled three days before, with weather reports predicting 1-2 inches of rain for Saturday and Sunday before the parade began.

For once the meteorologists got it right. The rainfall was at least as heavy as forecast and probably heavier.

Concerns about spectators’ vehicles getting stuck were a primary factor that influenced Spear’s decision, and the field where parking was planned turned out to be soaked.

The parade happened without a problem for 19 years. Last year was a gap year, Spear said, with the parade not being held.

This year was the first time the tractor parade has been canceled, although Spear prefers to think of it as the parade being “postponed” until next year on Oct. 13,

2024. The Charlotte Tractor Parade is traditionally held on the second Sunday in October.

She made the decision to call off this year’s parade on Thursday morning, just before the portapotties and hot dog buns were delivered. Spear was happy she and her volunteers did not have all of that on their hands to deal with when it would have inevitably proved impossible to hold the parade this year.

Still, Spear was disappointed. She’d expected there would be at least 80 tractors. In recent years, the tractor parade has drawn thousands of people, she said.

Spear was hoping for a smaller parade this year, giving the organizers a test year to see how a new staging area for the parade worked. The plan was for the staging area to move from Spear’s Country Store at the corner of Hinesburg Road and Spear Street about a half mile south to the Green Mountain Hay farm at

3238 Spear Street. All the festivities would have been in the vicinity of Green Mountain Hay. Spear and her team volunteers are expecting to use this same plan next year.

Parking was planned, and currently is planned, to be in a field across the street from the farm, instead of in a field in the northwest corner of the Hinesburg Road and Spear Street intersection where it had been previously.

Spear said she has some big ideas for the annual tractor parade in the future. Nothing is definite, but she is contemplating the possibility of turning the event into a whole weekend of activities.

“We’re feeling very good, very optimistic for next year,” Spear said.

She’s planning to start working on next year’s celebration of farmers and Charlotte’s agricultural roots in June.

## It’s fall y’all



Photo by Ansel Schwartzman

Ansel Schwartzman, a sixth grader at Charlotte Central School, really enjoys photography, especially taking nature scenes around town. He was taken by the red color of the trees along Bean Road. We are, too.

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# Vote on two articles on Nov. 7; information hearing on Oct. 30

Scooter MacMillan  
Editor

Fall is all up in our faces, which means Halloween is knocking at the door. And that means November is coming up the steps.

With November almost at the threshold, an election is imminent. That’s right, on Tuesday, Nov. 7, there will be an election in Charlotte.

With just two articles, it will be a sparse ballot. There is nothing on the state or national level to vote on in Vermont this November.

So, when you mark your Australian ballot, you will just be casting your vote for those two town articles.

One of the articles is to authorize the town to install solar panels on the roof of the new town garage. That project is not to cost more than \$282,510 and be financed by a bond that is not to take longer than 10 years to pay off.

The voters have already voted to fund the building of the Charlotte Town Garage, but the solar panels were not included in that vote.

The second article is to approve (or not) land-use amendments related to commercial cannabis businesses and are intended to give guidelines to the zoning administrator and the development review board in regulating and granting permits for cannabis businesses in Charlotte.

There are already four cannabis businesses in Charlotte. Although all four are licensed by the state of Vermont, only two are operating with local licenses.

If these land-use amendments are approved by voters on Nov. 7, it would give the town tools for regulating such businesses, according to the planning commission which put in a year working on these amendments.

The development review board was close to having the amendments to land-use regulations ready for selectboard approval in May, but then the legislature made changes to its statutes. The development review board took some time to consider how those changes affected a town’s authority to regulate cannabis businesses and incorporate the changes into its proposed amendments.

When the articles came before the selectboard for its approval, town administrator Dean Bloch pointed out that state statutes now allow a selectboard to adopt amendments or a

board can put amendments before the town voters.

Some of the selectboard members said they weren’t comfortable with having the board make the decision. They wanted the public to weigh in on the amendments.

“I don’t like that kind of authority,” chair Jim Faulkner said. “It’s a town issue, and town voters should be making it.”

The development review board felt this was an opportunity for the town to make sure that these new businesses conduct themselves “in a way that is in keeping with our local standards,” town planner Larry Lewack said.

Although towns are limited by state statutes in how much they can regulate commercial cannabis operations, particularly in regards to their being agricultural enterprises, they do have more leeway in regulating them as businesses. This position has been confirmed by the town attorney and the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, Lewack said.

If the articles are confusing to you or you would like to hear more about them, there is a public information hearing at 6:30 p.m., Monday, Oct. 30, at the town hall. Town officials will be present to explain the two articles and answer questions.

Here’s the wording of the two articles:

- Article 1 Shall the voters authorize the acquisition of solar energy equipment and its installation on the roof of the Town garage in an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Eighty-two Thousand Five Hundred Ten and 00/100 Dollars (\$282,510) to be financed with debt instruments other than bonds over a period not to exceed ten (10) years (the “Solar Project”)?

- Article 2 Shall the Town amend the Town of Charlotte Land Use Regulations at Sections 2.4 (Commercial/ Light Industrial District definitions of Permitted and Conditional Uses), 2.5 (Rural District definition of Conditional Uses), 3.12 A) 3) and 6) (Performance Standards), 4.3 (Adaptive Reuse of an Existing Structure), 4.17 (Temporary Structures), 4.20 (Cannabis Establishment) and 10.2 (Definitions) for the purposes of defining “cannabis establishment”?

Here’s a link for more information — <https://tinyurl.com/5n8hd43z>.

Charlotte Conservation Commission, suggested officials shouldn’t touch the land-use regulations at all. Ecological preservation advocates have worked hard to put the rules in place, she said, and revisions could easily undermine those protections.

And Maggie Citarella, conservation commission chair, said it seems “slanted” to “undue regulatory burdens or processes” when they have specially been put in place to preserve the environment.

Sharon Mount, also of the conservation commission, argues Thompson’s Point is “not a plain, it’s a forest,” meaning developments would likely involve cutting trees and altering the “look” of the land.

Humstone, the Thompson’s Point resident, said residents want to preserve the historic feel and “modest appearance” of the community there, too.

*(Meryl Hartmann reported this story on assignment for The Charlotte News. The Community News Service is a program in which University of Vermont students work with professional editors to provide content for local news outlets at no cost.)*

## BAREHAM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

critical habitat.

“I was happy that throughout COVID, we maintained our service level for that entire two years,” Bareham said. “And, we were fortunate that not one person came down with COVID.”

Besides being able to figure out ways to continue delivering services and helping people through that difficult time, Bareham was also able to revel in his love of the big lakes.

Ithaca is at the southern end of 39-mile-long Cayuga Lake, one of 11 narrow north-south running lakes in the Finger Lakes region of New York. Not a bad area to be cutting one’s teeth in water safety coordination work.

Also, a great area to set him up for working in a town on the banks of Lake Champlain.

“It’s probably the reason why I love it around here. I always joke, you could blindfold me and stick me in a field, and I wouldn’t be able to tell the difference between a field here and a field back in New York,” Bareham said.

And he is no stranger to Vermont’s charms. While working and studying public administration, he had begun to think of working “on the municipal side of things,” and a good understanding of law seemed like an asset for that kind of work. So, Bareham moved to Vermont for two years to attend Vermont Law School.

In law school he found himself discussing all sorts of different issues, ranging from wildlife management to affordable housing, and his thoughts came back to the idea of his working in a community.

He earned a degree in environmental law and policy in May. Bareham found that he liked the Green Mountain State and began to look for ways to stay. Back home in New York after graduation, he submitted a bunch of applications for municipal government positions, and Charlotte popped up.

*Celebrating 65 years!*

The prospect of working here motivated Bareham to make the over five-hour drive twice to meet with town officials. He appreciated the opportunity to make the trip. It confirmed what he’d seen during law school when he made it a point to spend as much of his down time from studying driving around, trying to see as much of Vermont as possible. From his travels he was familiar with Charlotte and had been favorably impressed, an impression he found confirmed on his two visits.

“It was a really great opportunity to meet the board, get to meet the folks here. It seemed like a really good group of people,” Bareham said. It’s a job and a group of people he sees as affording him a great opportunity to work in municipal government.

He said he doesn’t have a strong opinion about whether Charlotte switches to a town manager system of municipal government or sticks with a town administrator, either way it will be the job he is happy to have.

“If a town manager is what folks want to have, that’s fine. And if they want to have a town administrator, that’s also fine,” Bareham said. “As far as I’m concerned, it’s up to the voters.”

Although he’s spent the majority of his life in northwestern New York, when asked where he considers home, Bareham’s response comes without delay, faster than a Jeopardy contestant buzzing in, but his answer does not come in the form of a question — Vermont.

“I love it,” Bareham said. “There’s something about the folks around here.”

During his law school explorations, he was particularly taken with the farm stands in smaller Vermont towns like Charlotte.

“I remember driving up this dirt road and finding three farm stands, stocked to the brim with chickens and beef and all different kinds of vegetables and whatnot. And there’s no one there,” he said, clearly pleased to be living some place where produce is still sold on the honor system.



## Pumpkins on Parade

At the Charlotte Library - Saturday, 10/28, 10AM - 2PM

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Town

Frequently asked questions about town garage solar project

Dean Bloch and Nathaniel Bareham  
Contributors

What is the purpose of the solar project at the Town Garage?

The solar project will provide 100 percent of the electricity used by the town garage, and approximately 93 percent of the electricity used by the town hall, library, senior center and the fire and rescue station (which the town pays via the annual allocation to Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service).

What will the solar project cost?

The town received two bids. The lower bid was from SunCommon, which has a project cost of \$282,510. If Article 1 is approved by voters, the town will contract with SunCommon for this project.

Has mounting solar panels always been planned for the roof of the new town garage?

Yes, from very early on, based on input from the energy committee and others who helped in designing the town garage, it has been planned that the garage would be “fossil fuel free.” The building will be heated with a geothermal system and heat pumps. The electricity used by these systems will be offset by the roof-mounted solar system. However, the solar project was always considered a separate project because it benefits more than the town garage, and it was not included in the bond for the town garage approved by voters on Aug. 9, 2022.

Will the solar panels power the town buildings directly?

No. The town will receive credits from Green Mountain Power for the power generated by the panels; this credit will partially offset the cost of electricity used by

the town buildings.

Will the solar panels still provide power when the grid goes down?

No, they won’t. If the grid goes down, a portable generator will be used to power the town garage. The town hall, senior center and the fire and rescue station each have their own generators.

How will the project be funded and financed?

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 allows municipalities to receive a rebate of 25-30 percent of the cost for solar projects producing less than 1 megawatt. For the remainder of the cost, the town discussed preliminary terms with the Vermont Bond Bank that includes a below-market rate and 10-year term. The loan is subject to credit review and approval by the Vermont Bond Bank. The bond bank has stated that the rebated amount will be applied directly to principal upon receipt, and the interest charged will be based on the remaining principal.

What is the expected timeline for the project?

Construction will start in early 2024, and the system should be fully operational by the end of April 2024.

What maintenance will be required for the solar panels?

SunCommon recommends that the town have a service contract for monitoring the panels and making repairs. SunCommon has provided the estimated cost for this service, and for replacing inverters in year 15. These maintenance costs are shown in the spreadsheets on the town’s website at <https://tinyurl.com/3fwf6bch>.

What is the lifespan of the solar panels;



Photo by John Quinney

The new town garage under construction and nearing completion.

how much will they degrade, in terms of energy production, over their lifespan; how will the panels be disposed of at the end of their lifespan; what is the cost of disposal?

SunCommon has indicated the panels typically produce energy for 35-40 years. During the warrantied period of 25 years, their productivity is estimated to degrade by approximately a quarter of 1 percent to one half of 1 percent per year. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 75 percent of solar panel components (by weight) can be recycled. This includes glass, copper wiring, aluminum framing and plastic junction boxes. It’s difficult to estimate the cost for disposal in 40 years — but efforts are being made to increase the percentage of panel components that can be recycled.

Why not use ground-mounted panels that can face directly south, which would

capture more solar energy?

Ground-mounted panels would take up space which could otherwise be available for other purposes. The available space near the Town Garage is limited and may not be sufficient for the 8,000 square feet that the roof provides due to the wetland, the wetland buffer and the septic system. Preserving the space near the garage for future municipal needs seems prudent. Also, the permitting process for a ground-mounted system would be more complicated and lengthier, and the installation costs for ground-mounted panels are typically more expensive than roof-mounted systems due to higher permitting and material costs.

What is the break-even for this project?

If the rebate is 30 percent, the break-even point would be in 7.5 years. If the rebate is 25 percent, the break-even point would be in 10.5 years.

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## Report from the Legislature

# Capitalism vs. nicotine: No real winner in this debate

Chea Waters Evans  
State Representative

I don’t drink vodka straight up. This is because I don’t find the flavor that pleasant on its own. Throw in some olive juice, vermouth and an olive or three, and I’m delighted; a martini tastes good.

Sometimes, too, on a summer day when I’m mowing the lawn and working on my tan and age spots, I’ll have one of those cocktails in a can, or a High Noon, or some other fruity alcohol item. These are also delicious. They’re also not for children, or teenagers, or anyone under 21. And I’d be sad if they were against the law.

I don’t vape nicotine, but I imagine it doesn’t taste very good. I bet the fruit-flavored and menthol ones taste a lot better. Maybe delicious wouldn’t quite be the word for it, but this is where I’m going: those flavors make something addictive more palatable. Adding flavors to alcohol also makes something addictive more palatable. People under 21 are prohibited by law from having both alcohol and nicotine products, so I’m feeling a little unsettled about a bill coming from the Senate into the House this coming session. I’m not sure how I want to vote.

S.18 (the S in front means it was introduced in the Senate) is an act relating to banning flavored tobacco products and e-liquids, the liquids used in vaping. This not only applies to fruity stuff, but also to menthol flavors as well. The driving factors behind wanting to ban these products are healthcare costs to taxpayers, the addiction and health issues they cause in legal users, and their popularity among teens and young people who use them proportionally more than they do non-flavored tobacco products. Teens don’t smoke cigarettes

that much anymore, but many of them use e-cigarettes, also known as vapes.

I don’t think anyone under 21 should be allowed to purchase these, just as I don’t think anyone under 21 should be allowed to purchase alcohol. The public health and safety issues associated with younger people using these products are significant. Nicotine addiction is tough to beat, and their brains and bodies are developing so rapidly into adulthood in their teen years that adding any chemical or dependency into their systems is really, really bad.

And yet ... capitalism. The slippery slope of banning things makes me uncomfortable. Like, you know what else is bad for me? Cheetos. But I love them, and I don’t want them to be banned, even though I almost never buy them. I still want to know they’re out there if I need them. Just as it’s the Cheeto Cheetah’s right to be a cartoon character selling iridescent orange snacks, it’s the legal right of vape companies to make and sell those products. (For the record, I don’t think at all that cartoon characters should be able to sell nicotine.)

On the other hand, I have three teenagers. They’re angels and are perfectly behaved at all times, but should they decide to dabble in flavored tobacco products, or God forbid get addicted to nicotine, I would be really, really worried and stressed. And I wouldn’t want them to be able to get their hands on those items. Excluding my children, of course, teens aren’t always well known for their impulse control or decision-making skills, so if those products weren’t available to them and their peers in the stores, then it would most likely lead to lower consumption rates and better health and safety outcomes for those kids who need guidance and



Adobe Stock photo

protection.

Teens and tweens are under so much pressure right now and the potential to use addictive and harmful forces in their lives is strong; even social media has its addictive properties and can cause mental and physical health challenges. The last thing we need are yummy tobacco products that will further impact their mental and physical health with all of the side effects that come along with addiction.

Statutes already exist that impose fines on people who sell tobacco products to underage consumers. Tobacco licenses can be suspended or revoked from establishments that break those laws. Age identification is required for purchases, and fines and community service penalties

apply to people under the age of 21 who attempt to use fake IDs to buy tobacco or alcohol. If these statutes aren’t working, then perhaps they should be more rigorously enforced or changed to make the consequences more significant.

It’s hard for me to justify believing in banning one thing but not all the other things, even when that one thing is bad for anyone who uses it. Who’s to decide where the line is? I guess it’s your state and federal governments’ collective jobs to decide. After I just argued with myself for eight paragraphs, I’m really wondering: What do you think? I’m happy to hear from you any time via text or phone call at 917-887-8231 or email at [cevans@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:cevans@leg.state.vt.us).

Commentary

VT students need better access to period products in school

Grace Marroquin  
Contributor

As a high school senior, I understand the many challenges that being a girl in high school holds. Hard classes, first jobs, complex social dynamics and college applications. The stress of it all is hard enough without the added stress of periods. I know I'm not the only one who has bled through her pants or not been able to find a tampon when I really needed one. After advocating for period products to three different principals over three different years, free product dispensers were finally installed in my own school just this fall. Without strong legislation to enforce easy access to products, many schools have forgotten the importance of providing female bathrooms with these products.

Most girls begin to menstruate before high school, in middle or even elementary school. This means that almost all the girls entering high school are menstruating regularly and they will continue to do so until age 45 or 50. Most girls experience irregular period cycles for the first couple of years, varying in length, regularity and severity. As a taboo subject in our society, menstruation can seem daunting, especially when it is still new. When girls lack the necessary products to take care of themselves and their bodies, it can result in them missing out on their education. Throughout my years in middle and high school, I've known girls to miss between half a class and multiple school days because they feel uncomfortable or don't have easy access to what they need, namely hygiene products. Even girls who usually

provide their own products can forget to bring a tampon or pad on the days that they will need it, or start their period during a school day.

While most schools keep pads and tampons in the nurse's office, some girls feel uncomfortable asking for products. It is important to acknowledge young women who consider menstruation a private issue and to respect their privacy by not making them ask each time they need a tampon or pad. Even for those who have the courage to ask, it takes time out of class for them to walk to the nurse, ask for a product, use the restroom and return to class. Periods are normal and young women shouldn't feel embarrassed or have to miss out on their education, even if it's just one class, because of them. No one should miss more than five minutes of class to use the restrooms; menstruating should be no different, especially due to lack of access to hygiene products.

Period poverty, the lack of resources, financial or otherwise, used for menstrual hygiene, is a very real phenomenon. When schools fail to provide adequate resources for their students, they are only contributing to the problem. Furthermore, students who experience period poverty outside of school can find solace in schools that provide sufficient feminine products during school hours. Additionally, all across the country, we see young girls not knowing how their bodies work and how to take care of them. Making sure that we are providing products, as well as education about periods, is an important step towards accounting for the health and safety of all our students.



for so long weren't welcome. We need to make sure that our young women feel supported and comfortable. Middle and high school are very formative times for all adolescents. Using this time to make sure that young girls feel supported is an important way to make sure they can be confident and successful for the rest of their lives. That starts with making sure they aren't afraid or uncomfortable in educational settings. When schools don't provide these products, our education system is no longer equal opportunity like it claims to be; it favors those who don't menstruate, namely boys, who will never miss class because they couldn't find a tampon, or bled through their pants.

Investing in period products isn't just an investment in pads and tampons, it's an investment in the education, knowledge and lives of our young people. Students like me shouldn't have to advocate for our right to period products. Schools providing them should be the rule, not the exception. I recently contacted two dozen Vermont legislators hoping to bring this issue to their attention. Out of the 24 I contacted, only two responded. Many of our legislators have been busy with the unfortunate flooding many of our communities experienced over the summer. However, that doesn't minimize the things young women in our schools experience every single day. This has gone on for decades across the country, and it is time that we rectify the situation.


Please do what you can to support these initiatives in your communities and across our state. Make sure the young women in your communities have access to what they need in their middle and high schools. Urge your legislators to support changes to the statutes that currently leave too much wiggle room for schools and districts to avoid putting resources toward pads and tampons for their students.

Finally, find ways to open up conversations with your daughters and other young women about periods and what kind of access they have to menstrual products at school. Make sure that they know they don't have to feel uncomfortable and can advocate for themselves. The more we talk about these topics, the less stigma they carry, leading more young women to be able to advocate for what they need, and more teachers, administrators and parents to begin to realize what we need.

A school's job is to uphold the dignity of each student who walks through the doors. For so long, schools have been failing their young women in this way. Students should never be embarrassed or worried about going to school, especially due to a normal, biological process. When schools provide students with everything they need to be successful during their day at school, they help students realize their full potential. If our young women are missing out on parts of their education due to a lack of period products, then they are prohibited from living up to their full potential.

Additionally, their male counterparts will never miss class or school for this reason. The more school young women miss because of their periods, the more disadvantaged they are compared to young men in their classes. These types of gender inequities should be accounted for, especially in education where women

(Grace Marroquin of South Burlington is a senior at Rice Memorial High School.)



**CVSD**  
**COMMUNITY**  
**BUDGET**  
**FORUM**

Join us!  
Wednesday,  
October 25,  
6:00 pm at CVU

See the full schedule of upcoming budget-related board meetings on the website.  
<https://www.cvsdvt.org/budget>

The Champlain Valley School District welcomes input from ALL members of the CVSD community as we embark on the budget development process for the 2024-2025 budget!



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# Community Roundup

## Blood and platelet donations up but Red Cross needs more

Since announcing a national blood and platelet shortage a month ago, thousands of donors across the country have rolled up a sleeve to help rebuild the American Red Cross blood and platelet supply. As that generosity continues, the Red Cross is working around the clock to ensure patients have access to lifesaving transfusions and must collect 10,000 additional blood and platelet donations – over and above expectations – each week over the next month to sufficiently meet hospital needs. Donors of all blood types are urged to book a time to give now, especially those with type O blood or those giving platelets.

Don’t wait – patients are counting on critical care this fall. To make an appointment, use the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 800-733-2767.

To encourage more blood and platelet donations, the Red Cross is offering incentives to donors over the next month. All who come to give Oct. 21-Nov. 9 will receive a \$10 gift card to a restaurant of their choice to enjoy lunch on the Red Cross. They’ll also be automatically entered to win a \$5,000 gift card. There will be three lucky winners — one chosen at random each week. Details are available at RedCrossBlood.org/Lunch.

As cold and flu season approaches, the Red Cross is reminding donors that they can still give blood and platelet after receiving a flu vaccine, so long as they are feeling healthy and well on the day of their donation. Likewise, there is no deferral or wait time for those receiving the updated COVID-19 vaccine.

### Upcoming blood donation opportunities nearby:

- **Vergennes**  
Oct. 24, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Victory Baptist Church, 862 US-7
- **Burlington**  
Oct. 20, 11:30 a.m.-5 p.m., University of Vermont Waterman Building, 85 So. Prospect St.  
Oct. 28, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., CrossFit Burlington, 39 Birchcliff Pkwy.
- **Essex Junction**  
Oct. 20, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m., The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 73 Essex Way
- **Hinesburg**  
Nov. 9, 1 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., United Church of Hinesburg, 10580 Route 116.

## Age Well offering Grab & Go meal & Thanksgiving luncheon

Age Well and St. Catherine of Siena in Shelburne are teaming up to provide a meal-to-go for anyone age 60 and older on Tuesday, Nov. 14.

The meal will be available for pick up in the parking lot at 72 Church Street 11 a.m.-noon. These meals are available for all 60 or older. These meals are nutritious and delicious. A \$5 donation is suggested.

The menu is: roast turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, stuffing, carrots, cranberry sauce, wheat roll, pumpkin pie with cream, and milk.

A \$5 donation is suggested, but not required.

To order a meal contact Kathleen by Wednesday, Nov. 8, by email (preferred) [agewellscath@gmail.com](mailto:agewellscath@gmail.com) or phone: 802-503-1107. If this is a first-time order, please provide: name, address, phone number and date of birth.

If you haven’t yet filled out a 2024 congregate meal registration, please bring a completed registration form with you or send one to: Age Well; 875 Roosevelt Highway, Ste. 210; Colchester, VT. 05446. Or there will be forms at meal pick up.

An Age Well representative will also be available to obtain the suggested \$5 donation for restaurant tickets to dine at one of the participating restaurants. More information on this program is on the Age Well site at [agewellvt.org](http://agewellvt.org).

St. Catherine of Siena and Age Well are also offering a Thanksgiving turkey luncheon on Thursday, Nov. 16, in the St. Catherine of Siena Parish Hall.

The check-in time for the Thanksgiving luncheon is 11:30 a.m. and the meal will be served at noon. There is a \$5 suggested donation. The menu is roast turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, stuffing, carrots, cranberry sauce, wheat roll, pumpkin pie with cream and milk. There will be a raffle and entertainment. You must register by Nov. 10 by contacting Kerry Batres, nutrition coordinator, at 802-662-5283 or [kbatres@agewellvt.org](mailto:kbatres@agewellvt.org).

## Design a robot, dig rain garden, explore making astronauts safe

Whether you want to design a robot to go for Olympic gold, dig into rain gardens or explore ways to make astronauts safe in space, STEM Showcase 5.0 offers all this and more for youths, ages 8-14.

The STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) event takes place on Nov. 4, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., at the University of Vermont in Burlington.

Attendance is free, but registration is required at [go.uvm.edu/stem5](http://go.uvm.edu/stem5). Registrations will be accepted until Nov. 1 or until all spaces are filled. Registered participants will receive a confirmation email that includes the event location and parking details.

Participants may sign up for two of the five hands-on workshops. Options include the Magic of Rain Gardens: Design a Water Wonderland!; What Floats your Boat?: Civil Engineering; Crossroads of Mechanical and Biomedical Engineering: Strength and Materials; Let’s Go for Gold: Robot Olympics; and Dressing for the Stars: Galactic Garb.

To request language interpretation, translation assistance or a disability-related accommodation to participate, contact 4-H educator Margaret Coan at 802-656-7634 or [margaret.coan@uvm.edu](mailto:margaret.coan@uvm.edu) by Oct. 20.



Education

Use different college rankings for different goals

Margo Bartsch  
College Essay Coach

Numbers contain lots of information, but it is important to discern which numbers are most valuable to you when making a decision.

The 2024 college rankings of two top publications completely revised their criteria to focus on different goals. U.S. News and World Report highlights many points to consider when applying to college. Whereas, The Wall Street Journal focuses on the outcomes after graduating from college.

These opposite approaches come to life in reviewing the rankings of two popular local schools: Dartmouth College, a national university, compared to Middlebury College, a liberal arts school. Both colleges are popular with Vermont applicants.

U.S. News continues to separate national universities from liberal arts colleges, each with their own ranking. Thus, Dartmouth is 18 and Middlebury is 11; however, these schools are not compared against each other since they are not listed in the same category.

Prior rankings have been under fire due to questionable data provided to U.S. News by some colleges. This year, they shifted their reliance to national data from the U.S. Department of Education and other statistical sources. Changes in their methodology include dropping some factors, changing the weights of several criteria and introducing new variables.

The new U.S. News formula includes 19 criteria. They added earning outcomes allocated at 5 percent, contrasted to The Wall Street Journal at 70 percent. This is



the earnings boost from attending college compared to a high school graduate’s salary from the same state where the college is located.

The largest factor is 20 percent toward peer assessment, defined as the academic reputation. U.S. News gathers survey data collected from college presidents, provosts and deans of admissions. This assessment can factor in the college’s selectivity index, which is the number of applicants who are admitted compared to the total applicant pool.

The next top criteria for U.S. News are graduation rates at 16 percent and graduation rate performance at 10 percent.

The contrasting ranking is from The Wall Street Journal, which combines national universities and liberal arts colleges into one list. In this case, all schools are compared to one another. Dartmouth remains near the top at 21; however, Middlebury falls to 131.

The Wall Street Journal has only three criteria: 70 percent student outcomes, 20 percent learning environment and 10

percent diversity of faculty and students. The statistical analysis is entirely from government data and independent student surveys.

This outcome-focused analysis includes graduation rates and graduate salaries. These measurements include calculating the cost of attendance against student performance.

The Wall Street Journal methodology starts with the average net price to attend college. These factors include the average annual cost of attendance, tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and any grants or scholarships.

The estimated total net price for four years of attending the college is divided by the median salary of its graduates compared to the high school graduate in the state where the college is located. The final calculation explains the salary differential in attending that college compared to its cost.

However, these outcomes are based on salary averages that do not report varying college majors. For example, Forbes

reports computer science majors at Purdue University (ranked 300) earn \$124,000 compared to English literature majors from Yale (ranked third) earning \$64,000, four years after graduation.

Not all ranking criteria are created equal. Each publication has different variables with distinct focuses. Each list has detailed definitions and weights: it can be like comparing apples to oranges. Each family should focus on specific data components that match their priorities, whether it be a great college experience or a great post-college salary.

Using data to create a college list is not a one-size-fits-all approach. For example, both rankings do not include athletic recruitment information for students who may want to play a sport in college.

Division 1 schools, like Dartmouth, are typically national universities that may have more competitive overall criteria. This could sway a student to consider a Division 3 college, like Middlebury, that has a different athletic profile. For example, the 2023 NCAA skiing championships listed Dartmouth fifth and Middlebury tenth.

Each student should consider their unique objectives for their college experience. Some may focus on the close-knit community, rather than salary outcomes. To develop a personal ranking, there can be an overlap between ranking criteria combining various elements. Identifying goals enables using rankings to your advantage.

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

Reading and building connections at Charlotte Central

Naomi Strada  
(Condensed by Tom Scatchard)

Kindergarten-fourth grade students are participating in the Global Read Aloud community of world-wide readers over the next six weeks during their library classes. Kindergarten-third graders are studying author Jacqueline Woodson, and fourth graders are studying the first book in the adventure-fantasy series “Future Hero.”

**How to hook a student on books**

The school library team of Heidi Heustis, Genevieve Trono and Carol Blanshine, and the literacy teachers Matt Lutz and Julia Beerworth, have been offering “book buffets” to students in Omega seventh-eighth grades.

Students are given time to browse groupings of books from several genres

and hear descriptions of the books. Then the students each record the books they may be interested in on a bookmark. Since the start of this collaboration a year ago, there has been a 60-percent increase in book checkouts by Omega students.

**Building connections within the school staff**

Weekly staff meetings start with a few moments designed to bring the group together as an exercise in connecting and belonging. Staff are asked to share with each other important news, to celebrate personal successes and to express gratitude to a colleague. This tradition has created a web of relationships and a foundation of strength. Actions that may have gone unnoticed are brought to light. The support one member of the staff provided to another is celebrated. Milestones of children, grandchildren and loved ones are shared to remind everyone of the

commitment to balance between school and home.

If anyone in the community cares to join in this tradition, contact someone at Charlotte Central School to share, to celebrate, to acknowledge and to connect.

**Hazing, harassment and bullying roadshow for 5th-8th grades**

The school is committed to fostering a safe and supportive learning environment where every student in our community is treated with respect. For the next few weeks the staff will be providing middle level students with education focusing on a collaborative understanding of bullying and harassment.

Staff proactively works with students to understand examples of the behavior, as well as strategies for responding to and reporting incidents of alleged misconduct. The goal is to empower students with knowledge and tools for becoming allies



The Charlotte News file photo. Charlotte Central School

in building a strong and safe school community.

**Art teacher seeking jewelry supplies**

Jewelry Making Club is one of many clubs offered during the middle school project block time on Wednesdays.

Students have been working on friendship bracelets, beaded necklaces, earrings and other wearable masterpieces. Art teacher Erika Norris is looking for supplies, including but not limited to:

- Earring pins and wires
- Spring rings (of all sizes)
- Clasps for bracelets and necklaces
- Thin wire
- Thin stretchy cord
- Beads.

If you have any of these materials you’re willing to part with (or others that you think would be fun for jewelry making) the school would happily accept any and all contributions.

**School district community budget forum**

The Champlain Valley School District welcomes input from all members of the school district as it embarks on the budget development process for the 2024-25 budget.

The first meeting will be 6 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 25, at Champlain Valley High School.



Sports

Redhawks to close out season with Middlebury rematch

Scooter MacMillan  
Editor

Since losing its opening game of the season to Burr and Burton 38-28, the Champlain Valley Union football team has gone on a tear, outscoring and shutting down opponents over the next six games 242-21.

The last two games fit into the pattern established in the previous four games with the Redhawks’ same offensive and defensive domination; and with coach Rahn Fleming preaching the same insistence for his players to not get swept up in those numbers.

“None of that means anything come 7 p.m. in Middlebury this Friday night. What we’ve done so far is already in the rearview mirror,” said Fleming. “Everything other than that is just exuberant conversation.”

On Friday, Oct. 20, CVU travels to Middlebury Union High (5-2) to face the Tigers on their home field for the final game of the regular season. This is a rematch for the teams that faced each other in the state-title game last season, a game the Redhawks won 24-19 to take their first state football championship in school history.

Both teams have lost to Burr and Burton this year. The Tigers’ only other loss came against unbeaten No. 1 Hartford, a team the Redhawks don’t face in the regular season this year.

CVU 33, Rutland 0

On Oct. 7, Champlain Valley entertained Rutland in a game that Fleming characterized as “a glorious, messy mud bowl,” played in constant heavy rain. It was a game that was not hospitable for the visitors and barely tolerable for CVU’s celebration of Senior Day.



“It was rainy and muddy enough that, in our mind, everywhere on the field was four-down territory, meaning unless we were backed up flush against our own end zone, we were running plays on all four downs,” Fleming said.

The opening kickoff went to Rutland, and then the Redhawks’ defense went to work, forcing the visitors’ opening drive to stall after three downs.

CVU took just a handful of plays to score, with Jacob Bose bursting through the line and cruising over 40 yards down the left sideline to the end zone.

The Redhawks’ second possession ended after the normally sure-handed Jacob Armstrong had two slippery passes slide through his hands, and Rutland took over inside their own 20. CVU’s turnover on downs didn’t matter because a couple of plays later Rutland coughed up the ball.

On CVU’s ensuing possession, quarterback Ollie Cheer found George Taylor of Charlotte in the end zone for his first high school touchdown.

The rest of the game proved to be more of the same with both teams getting too many penalties, interceptions and fumbles in the muddy cold and, most significantly, slippery



Champlain Valley Union High School Photo contributed

conditions.  
Cheer accounted for two scores, throwing a 12-yard touchdown pass and running it in from a yard out.  
Anderson McEnaney notched two rushing touchdowns, one a 55-yarder and another from four yards out.

CVU 49, Colchester 7

Colchester started the game looking like it might have found a path to a different destination than other opponents of late have reached against the Redhawks when the Champs scoring on their opening drive.

But Colchester’s first possession was the last time the team scored.  
CVU quickly got back into its usual groove. At halftime the Redhawks were up 42-7.

As in other games, Champlain Valley’s scoring has featured multiple players reaching the end zone.  
“Our scoring has been distributed to a dozen or more offensive contributors, on the ground and in the air,” Fleming said.  
The coach said the scoring represents

his team’s “Ubuntu” mentality. Ubuntu is a southern African philosophy of belief in a bond of sharing connecting all, according to Wikipedia.  
Another big factor in his team’s success has been special teams’ play. Besides scoring a handful of touchdowns, the Redhawks’ special teams have played “lock down” on punt and kickoff coverage, resulting in making opponents regularly having to start within their own 30-yard line.  
Fleming said credit for CVU’s record should not just go to the 11 starters, there are 16-20 contributors to the Redhawks’ dominance on the field.  
Cheer was 5 of 8 in passing, accounting for 132 yards and two touchdowns.  
Brian Rutherford had a 37-yard touchdown catch, and Armstrong added a 22-yard touchdown catch.  
Bose scored on runs of 10 and 6 yards, while Dylan Frere notched a 28-yard rushing touchdown and Nolan Walpole punched it in from 9 yards out.  
McEnaney had a 75-yard kickoff return.

TOWN OF CHARLOTTE, VERMONT  
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING  
OFFICIAL WARNING  
NOVEMBER 7, 2023

The legal voters of the Town of Charlotte, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet at Charlotte Town Hall, 159 Ferry Road in the Town of Charlotte on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, between the hours of seven o'clock (7:00) in the forenoon (a.m.), at which time the polls will open, and seven o'clock (7:00) in the afternoon (p.m.), at which time the polls will close, to vote by Australian ballot upon the following Articles of business:

ARTICLE I

Shall the voters authorize the acquisition of solar energy equipment and its installation on the roof of the Town garage in an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Eighty-two Thousand Five Hundred Ten and 00/100 Dollars (\$282,510.00) to be financed with debt instruments other than bonds over a period not to exceed ten (10) years (the “Solar Project”)?

ARTICLE II

Shall the Town amend the Town of Charlotte Land Use Regulations at Sections 2.4 (Commercial/Light Industrial District definitions of Permitted and Conditional Uses), 2.5 (Rural District definition of Conditional Uses), 3.12 A) 3) and 6) (Performance Standards), 4.3 (Adaptive Reuse of an Existing Structure), 4.17 (Temporary Structures), 4.20 (Cannabis Establishment) and 10.2 (Definitions) for the purposes of defining “cannabis establishment,” specifying where such operations may be located, and specifying relevant performance standards for the operation of a “cannabis establishment”?

(A copy of the Land Use Regulations showing all proposed additions and deletions is available for review at the Town offices and on the Town’s website at [www.charlottetv.org](http://www.charlottetv.org).)

The legal voters of the Town of Charlotte are further notified that voter qualification, registration, and absentee voting relative to said special meeting shall be as provided in Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

The legal voters of the Town of Charlotte are further notified that an informational hearing will be held on Monday, October 30, 2023, at the Town Offices in the Town of Charlotte and electronically on the Zoom platform beginning at six-thirty (6:30) in the evening (p.m.), for the purpose of explaining the proposed project and the financing thereof. The details concerning access to and participation using the Zoom platform will be specified in the warning for the public informational hearing.

Adopted and approved at a meeting of the Selectboard of the Town of Charlotte duly called, noticed, and held September 25, 2023.

TOWN OF CHARLOTTE SELECTBOARD

/s/ James Faulkner, Chair  
/s/ Frank Tenney, Vice Chair  
/s/ Kelly Devine  
/s/ Louise McCarren  
/s/ Lewis Mudge  
Received for record and recorded in the records of the Town of Charlotte on September 27, 2023.  
/s/ Mary Mead, Town Clerk

TOWN OF CHARLOTTE  
NOTICE FOR PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARING  
FOR AUSTRALIAN BALLOT ARTICLES  
TO BE VOTED AT A SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

The Selectboard of the Town of Charlotte hereby gives notice that, in accordance with 17 V.S.A. §2680(g), a public informational hearing will be held on Monday, October 30, 2023 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Charlotte Town Hall, 159 Ferry Road, Charlotte, Vermont, to discuss and hear questions regarding the articles to be voted by Australian ballot at a Special Town Meeting to be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023. Town officials will be present during the public informational hearing to answer questions.

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

Please contact Nate Bareham or Dean Bloch, Town Administrator (425-3071 ext. 5; or at [townadministrator@townofcharlotte.com](mailto:townadministrator@townofcharlotte.com)), with any comments, questions or suggestions regarding the accessibility of this meeting.

Link to join meeting online (via Zoom):  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82246907998?pwd=QnVqWUdhMThOdIFXamN2QnhCVVFRdz09>  
Phone: 1-929-205-6099  
Meeting ID: 822 4690 7998  
Passcode: 963551

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

The following articles are to be voted by Australian ballot at the Special Town Meeting:

**Article 1:** Shall the voters authorize the acquisition of solar energy equipment and its installation on the roof of the Town garage in an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Eighty-two Thousand Five Hundred Ten and 00/100 Dollars (\$282,510.00) to be financed with debt instruments other than bonds over a period not to exceed ten (10) years (the “Solar Project”)?

**Article II:** Shall the Town amend the Town of Charlotte Land Use Regulations at Sections 2.4 (Commercial/Light Industrial District definitions of Permitted and Conditional Uses), 2.5 (Rural District definition of Conditional Uses), 3.12 A) 3) and 6) (Performance Standards), 4.3 (Adaptive Reuse of an Existing Structure), 4.17 (Temporary Structures), 4.20 (Cannabis Establishment) and 10.2 (Definitions) for the purposes of defining “cannabis establishment,” specifying where such operations may be located, and specifying relevant performance standards for the operation of a “cannabis establishment”?



# Hi! Neighbor

## Larry Sudbay: Happy to share his business knowledge

Phyl Newbeck  
Contributor

Initially, Larry Sudbay’s impetus for writing a book was to create a legacy for his wife Jan and sons, Will and Charlie, with a secondary goal of providing some ideas for business leaders to use to either start or end meetings.

It took a conversation with the man who would eventually provide illustrations for the book for Sudbay to realize his book “The Best Is Yet To Be: A Collection of Inspirational Stories, Illustrations and Quotations” could have a broader audience.

Sudbay is often asked how long it took him to write the book and his response is that when it was published in 2018, he was 61 years old and that’s how long it took. He credits his father, mother and uncle with having been great storytellers. He didn’t want those stories to get lost.

Sudbay had a lengthy career as an entrepreneur. In 1996, he and Pat Robbins founded Symquest, which provides managed IT and office equipment services. Sudbay soon began sending out a monthly newsletter with stories about work-life balance, customer service, resiliency, grief, challenges and positive thinking.

When Sudbay and Robbins started the company, they had 100 employees with revenues of \$9 million a year. By the time they sold the business, they had 180 employees with revenues of \$40 million, in work across Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and upstate New York. The company was so successful



Courtesy photo

From left, Charlie, Larry, Jan and Will Sudbay enjoying life in Charlotte.

that Senator Leahy read a commendation of the business into the Congressional Record in 2008.

In 2017, Sudbay sold Symquest and ceded his role as president and CEO to Meg Fleming. While cleaning out his desk he found 15 years’ worth of newsletters. He began to sort them into piles and eventually came up with one

pile which had stories he wanted to retain and turn into a book. Each story had a quote which he believed could stand on its own. Forty of the stories were his and 15 came from other sources. Although most of the stories are business-related, Sudbay said the book also has a spiritual component.

It was only when he met with Steven Kellogg, a children’s book author and illustrator from Essex, N.Y., that Sudbay realized his book could have a larger impact. He had been excited to meet Kellogg, who had written “The Island of the Skog,” which Sudbay’s son Charlie had memorized as a boy. Sudbay was hoping to get a signed copy of the book for Charlie’s 27th birthday but ended up getting much more.

In return for a contribution to the Essex Humane Society, Sudbay asked for a painting of the family’s two yellow labs for Charlie. Kellogg decided to include all the characters from Charlie’s

favorite childhood book in the artwork. Sudbay then asked Kellogg if he would make some illustrations for the book he was writing but Kellogg said the stories stood on their own. Instead, he made eight illustrations and a cover which commemorated events in Sudbay’s life and convinced the author that his book should have a wider audience.

Upon leaving Symquest, Sudbay launched a consulting firm called Building Quality Companies. He continued to consult with Symquest and other technology companies across the United States and Canada. Sudbay recently stepped back from Building Quality Companies, having passed the torch to the Goodreau Performance Group. The only part of his portfolio that he’ll retain is his consulting work with Symquest.

Sudbay and his wife enjoy engaging in philanthropic work. They started an endowment in his father’s name for the otolaryngology department at University of Vermont Medical Center for the advancement of ear, nose and throat research and technology.

Sudbay also serves on the board of Knowledge Wave Training and is an angel investor with Prolocor, a local start-up doing research on blood platelet analysis. “Jan and I look at local business that we can be involved in and make a difference,” Sudbay said.

Sudbay and his wife have lived in Charlotte since 2006. Although they love to travel, they are equally happy hiking and walking locally with their dog Cooper. Sudbay has also co-authored a just-released book called “Reveal: Your Guide to Building a Quality Company” with Joe Goodreau, the man who purchased Building Quality Companies. Sudbay loves to cook and is in the process of collaborating with his wife on a cookbook with 50 recipes. He said the book is designed to encourage people, particularly men, to spend time in the kitchen.

Sudbay admits that he’s been called a bubble boy because of his optimism. “The glass isn’t half empty or half full,” he said. “It’s been overengineered and it’s too big.”

### Halloween scene



Photo by Lee Krohn

The World War I memorial across from the Old Brick Store is adorned in its seasonal finery. On Halloween, Lowell Thompson and his band will play again in the store parking lot for free, and Greenbush Road will be closed for trick-or-treaters 4:30-8:30 p.m.



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## Farming

# Most Vermont farms are still waiting for state help

Charlotte Oliver  
Community News Service

Outside Dog River Farm recently, five pallets of bright orange pumpkins rested roadside in a loose grid along the grass, far fewer than owner George Gross would have normally had for sale. The summer floods wiped away a dozen acres of his crops, he said, and those few pumpkins outside his farm store were the only ones left.

“This is probably the worst summer growing season I’ve ever seen in my life,” said Gross, a farmer for more than 30 years.

The state launched a grant program in early August to help businesses after the flooding. But months later, fewer than one-fifth of agricultural business applicants had received payments — and those that did, on average, received tens of thousands of dollars less than needed.

Of 41 approved applications, only 28 agricultural businesses had gotten paid as of Oct. 4, according to data from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

That was out of 147 agricultural business applications total, according to the data, sent to Community News Service by agency Secretary Anson Tebbetts.

Combined, the applicants had net damages of about \$13.2 million, according to the data, averaging out to about \$89,600 per applicant.

But the average grant award as of Oct. 4 was just \$14,193, Tebbetts said.

“We totally understand that this program is not going to meet the needs of all the losses that are out there, that the losses that our farmers have faced are catastrophic in many cases,” said Tebbetts in an Oct. 4 interview.

“We continue to have a long way to go,” Tebbetts said, explaining that his agency has recently taken on new reviewers to go through applications.

Gross, the Berlin farmer, said late last month he had applied for federal funds and for money from the state grant program — the Business Emergency Gap Assistance Program.

Had he received anything? “Zippo,” he said.

Farmers like him across the state seem frustrated the government isn’t supporting its local food producers.

“How do we back up the ecological and cultural value that we put into agriculture in our state?” asked Mandy Fischer, program director at the Intervale Center in Burlington, a collective of farms and community gardens. “There’s not going to be any farmers left if we don’t figure out how to do that, not just as a state but as a region, as a country.”

Instead, local farms are turning to their communities to help lighten the financial burden.

The Vermont Farm Fund, a project of the Northeast Kingdom-based Center for an Agricultural Economy, offers an emergency loan to people whose farms or farming careers have been jeopardized due to an unexpected natural disaster, like the floods.

The loans have no interest rate for up to \$15,000, payable over 36 or 48 months, with the ability to defer payments for up to 12 months.

“The flood only compounded what was already a really hard growing season,” said John Ramsey, the Hardwick center’s executive director.

The fund has been helping farmers since Hurricane Irene. It’s an example of how farmers and their advocates want to become more self-sufficient in the midst of what they consider incomplete resources from the state and federal governments.

The state grant program launched Aug. 3 to help businesses with damages not already covered by insurance, donations or other grants.

For businesses with less than \$1 million in physical damages, the program originally covered 20 percent, and it would only pay up to \$20,000. On Sept. 20, officials got rid of the \$20,000 max and raised the percentage covered to 30 percent for businesses with less than \$1 million in physical damages.

For businesses with higher damages, the state would cover 20 percent with a \$500,000 max.

Eligible businesses that applied before Sept. 20 should still receive the 30 percent coverage, officials said. Those eligible that have already received funding should receive an additional check in the mail.

Fischer, Gross and Ramsey all said the floods this summer came at an especially disastrous time for farmers, who after a season of prep and growing were getting ready to see their crops turn a profit.

Throughout May, farmers dealt with abnormally hot and dry conditions, followed by an unexpected freeze late that month, then weeks of heavy rainfall. The results: saturated soils and flooded fields.

“We (only) got one-twentieth of our crop,” said Gross. “I’m looking at \$25,000 just in repairs.”

Growers at the Intervale Center along the Winooski River are “anticipating about a 50 percent reduction in yields across the board,” said Fischer, the center’s program director.

Many farmers there struggled after the floods to pay their bills and put food on the table, even after receiving grant money from the state, Fischer said.

“Immediate cash is really critical in



Photo by Charlotte Oliver

The few pumpkins remaining after the summer floods at Dog River Farm in Berlin. Owner George Gross says he has received no financial help from the state or feds.

terms of resilience,” she said.

Gross has seen more financial support from his local community than from any state program. “I have a really great customer base, I always have,” he said. “All summer long this place would be busy all day long. They want to see me continue.”

Digger’s Mirth, one of the farms at the Intervale, was able to raise \$68,000 through a GoFundMe campaign.

At least 15 farms have gotten help from the Vermont Farm Fund, said Ramsey, who along with his work at the center owns Sawmill Brook Farm in Greensboro.

“I believe that we’ve deployed \$220,000 in emergency flood relief funds since the flood in July,” he said late last month.

Standing outside the store that sits on his farm, Gross seemed optimistic about the fall growing season and the crops he has, despite the challenges he’s faced since summer. Across the farm he and workers have been picking kale, he said.

“Things are rolling, and we’re harvesting all these wonderful things,” Gross said. “Markets are strong, you know.”

He hoped the next few weeks would stay like that.

*(The Community News Service is a program in which University of Vermont students work with professional editors to provide content for local news outlets at no cost.)*



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Commentary

With new bear talks coming, activists call for hounding ban

Aubrey Weaver  
Community News Service

With bear season having started Sept. 1, and rising reports of bear encounters in Vermont’s more urban areas like South Burlington, the state is faced with new discussions on how best to manage its bear population, if at all.

Somewhere around 5,000 black bears live in Vermont, and recent estimates suggest approximately 14 percent of the population is hunted and killed each year, with a 2020 high of about 20 percent.

David Sausville, the department’s wildlife management program manager, said the population “has actually grown over the last 50 years,” with state estimates bottoming out around 2,000 bears in the early 1970s.

Despite the population statistics, animal rights groups worry how humane some of the bear-hunting practices are. “I mean, they are just treated pretty horribly in Vermont,” said Brenna Angelillo-Galdenzi, president and co-founder of the group Protect our Wildlife Vermont. To Angelillo-Galdenzi, taking a fifth of the bear population each year is “not a sustainable hunt.”

Her organization is seeking changes in bear-hunting laws in Vermont, “specific to the hunting of bears with hounds, (the) really long bear-hunting season and the fact that hunters can kill mother bears with cubs,” she said.

One Vermont trail camera caught a hunter shooting a bear sow with cubs last fall, prompting a petition back in April to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board, a rule-setting body. However, the board moved to table the petition until this fall, and hunting a sow with her cubs remains legal in Vermont.

Douglass Devos, president of the Vermont Bearhound Association, said nobody he knows would hunt a sow with cubs. “What you are looking for is a mature male,” Devos said, though he said he’s sure hunters sometimes kill mothers with their young. “There’s bad eggs in every group that can make the other guys look bad.”

About the renewed discussion this fall, Angelillo-Galdenzi said, “We are not hopeful that they’re going to vote yes on the petition.”

She believes board members are too sympathetic to hunting to work with. In

“We’ve been hunting in the same region for over 100 years.”

— David Sausville, wildlife management program manager



Photo by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
A family of bears.

a call to action emailed to members July 28, the group’s leadership wrote that “it is clearer than ever that the VT Fish and Wildlife Board must be dismantled.”

One particularly thorny point of debate between the activists, hunters and policymakers has been the practice of bearhounding — setting dogs after bears during hunts.

“They’re chased through the woods in the cornfields until the hounds either, you know, corner them on the ground or lead it up a tree,” Angelillo-Galdenzi said, referring to bears.

“And that’s when the hunter tracks his dogs on his GPS device and shows up and literally shoots the bear out of the tree.”

But it’s a little different than shooting fish in a barrel, said Devos, the houndsman. If a hunter didn’t come up to the tree, they wouldn’t be able to tell the bear’s sex and weight and whether to shoot. Across a field, “you might think that’s a big bear and you shoot it and it’s an 80-pound female,” he said. “So ethically, it’s probably the most humane way.”

During the last legislative session, Vermont issued a temporary moratorium on hunters’ ability to use hounds to hunt coyotes. Deploying dogs for bear hunting, though, remains legal in Vermont. Rep. Larry Satcowitz, D-Randolph, introduced H.323 last session, which, if passed, would have prohibited the hunting of bears and

coyotes with dogs across the board. But the bill didn’t leave committee.

Vermont’s long history of hunting, something once core to the state’s identity, means proposed rule changes can draw strong reactions.

“I don’t see how you can think of it as something that should be stopped. It’s something we’ve been able to do forever,” said Devos, who added that houndsmen like himself “take only a very small percentage” of the bears hunted each year in the state.

A sense of tradition guides many hunters. Sausville, the state wildlife management head, told Community News Service he treks out to hunt bears every year, something his family has done for decades.

“I have family members who do it, and

we’ve been hunting in the same region for over 100 years,” he said. “It’s a good activity to have people get out on the land and be connected in a different way.”

Said Devos: “I’ve been doing it myself for 25 years, and I was taught from some old guys I used to hang out with. They’re gone now. My stepsons come hunting with us all the time. It is comparable to any other tradition any family would have.”

Angelillo-Galdenzi acknowledged the historic tradition of hunting in Vermont and described the difficulty groups like hers face in trying to restrict what hunters can do. “If any organization comes out threatening hunting in general, it’s a very polarizing discussion,” she said.

She stressed that her organization’s aim isn’t to ban hunting in general. The group supports “science-based hunting regulations,” she said, and opposes practices like hounding and leg-trapping that they view as inhumane.

Devos views regulation and limitation as one and the same. “Anytime somebody wants to adjust something, they typically take something away from you,” said Devos. “Your hobby, even if I don’t agree with it, it’s not my right to try and change it.”

For the future of bear-hounding, Devos thinks “anything can happen.”

“I’ve been doing it my entire life. It’s a huge part of my life. It’s not a hobby for me. It’s part of my life, along with many, many other houndsmen in the state,” said Devos.

If the state bans hounding, he believes regulations will creep into “whatever else is next on their list.”

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

Solar-powered shed



Photo by Rebecca Foster  
Deirdre Holmes sits at the new convertible desk-bench installed by the Charlotte Energy Committee at the Charlotte Central School compost shed. Her computer is plugged into an outlet that is powered by the solar panel on the roof. The Charlotte Energy Committee would love to see pictures of you at the shed area — maybe charging your e-bike while gazing at the pollinator gardens. Reach out via their website at charlotteenergy.org.



## Into the Woods

# An old-growth forest may not be easy to appreciate

Ethan Tapper  
Contributor

On a highly-altered landscape, the idea of an old-growth forest is captivating to many. But what are old-growth forests? And why do they matter?

Definitions vary. Some would say that the only true old-growth forests are primary forests — the tiny fraction that have never been extensively altered by humans, or by humans of European descent. Others would say that an old-growth forest is any forest that is old and has escaped extensive disturbance for a long period of time, usually at least several centuries. Others would say that a forest becomes old growth when it attains late-successional characteristics, the suite of traits common to many older forests. These characteristics include multiple generations of trees (what I call “multi-generationality”), some big, old trees and lots of dead wood on the forest floor.

By any definition, most people have never seen an old-growth forest in Vermont, or anywhere in eastern North America. Unless you specifically seek out one of our few remnant old-growth forests, a walk in Vermont’s woods will carry you through an area that was a field or a clearcut within the last 150 years, and probably as recently as the 1960s. The vast majority of Vermont’s forests are just 60-100 years old — just at the beginning of their centuries or millennia-long journey towards old-growth.

While old-growth forests once covered more than 90 percent of Vermont, today the number is closer to 0.1 percent, perhaps 1,000 acres in total.

What are old-growth forests like? While they are defined by their irregularity and their variability (and so are difficult to make generalizations about), old-growth forests, whether they are primary or just old, often feature those late-successional characteristics

mentioned above. While the most obvious of these is big, old trees — but not a lot, often just 10-12 per acre — old growth is equally characterized by multi-generationality, by tons of dead wood on the forest floor, by a canopy filled with gaps, by deep, well-developed soils.

Interestingly, while many people imagine that old-growth forests are peaceful and easy to appreciate, these qualities make them seem incredibly “messy,” chaotic, even jarring, to most.

From an ecological perspective, old-growth forests are not just valuable because they’re old; they’re valuable because of these characteristics. On a landscape that was once dominated by old growth, the characteristics mentioned above are the conditions to which our native flora and fauna have adapted for thousands of years. Each of these characteristics supports vital natural processes and provides important habitats for wildlife; and all are woefully underrepresented on our modern landscape.

The rareness and uniqueness of old-growth forests has convinced some people that the best thing for our forests is just to leave them alone. Unfortunately, this is not so. While we should certainly protect all existing old-growth forests and set aside some unmanaged reserves, we need to acknowledge that our forests are facing an apocalyptic array of threats and stressors: they have been cleared and exploited; have lost native species and had non-natives introduced; are simultaneously navigating a climate crisis, a biodiversity crisis, and a mass extinction event. Many, if not most, of our forests have been altered to an extent where they will likely never become old growth without our help. Of the forests that may someday become old growth on their own, this process will likely take two or three centuries, leaving our planet and our biodiversity to suffer in the meantime.



Courtesy photo

A tip-up caused by a windstorm. Tip-ups, canopy gaps, dead wood and different generations of trees are as vital parts of old-growth forests as big, old trees.

While we say “Not In My Backyard” to local forest management, forests, including old-growth forests, will be exploited across the world to feed our need for resources, forcing peoples and ecosystems elsewhere to bear the cost of our consumption. As we pretend that the beauty and the importance of old growth means that we should leave every forest unmanaged, our forests and the biological communities that they support will continue to suffer without our help.

To me, old-growth forests are a call to action. At a time when old growth is more needed than ever before, we can use forest management to create old-growth characteristics, and the myriad habitats and

benefits that they provide, in decades rather than centuries. We can do so while protecting biodiversity, sequestering and storing carbon, producing local, renewable resources, and supporting a vibrant and just local and global economy. To me, this is a far greater tribute to old growth than leaving every forest alone.

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



# Calendar of Events

Please send event listings to [calendar@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:calendar@thecharlottenews.org) at least three weeks in advance.

**CHARLOTTE**

**Book launch**

**Thursday, Oct. 19, 5-8 p.m.**

Split Rock Tree Farm is hosting a book launch and signing for a new children’s book, “Hope Beneath the Tree,” by Kristen Vincent of Shelburne in conjunction with the organization Hope Beneath the Tree which connects children of incarcerated parents with gift givers in the community.

**Avalanche forecasting**

**Thursday, Oct. 19, 6:30 p.m.**

Vermont Ski and Snowboard Museum in Stowe presents Avalanche Forecasting: The State of the Art, an in-person presentation and conversation about innovations in avalanche forecasting for both backcountry and resort skiing. Doors will open at 6 p.m., giving the opportunity to enjoy the exhibits.

**Spirits of Rokeby: Spectral Rooms**

**Saturdays, Oct. 21, 27 & 28, 5:45-8 p.m.**

Rokeby Museum presents a new production inspired by the spiritualist history at the museum. Ticket holders will gather for a drink and a short talk on Victorian spiritualism before entering the historic home where actors will guide visitors through a participatory dramatization, recreating a series of séances at the home. A study in mediumship methods, the script draws from Rokeby records and other historical accounts. Performances are every 45 minutes from 5:45-8 p.m. Tickets must be purchased in advance at [rokeby-museum.square.site](http://rokeby-museum.square.site) and cost \$20 for members, \$25 for non-members.

**International Archaeology Day**

**Saturday, Oct. 21, 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. & 3-4:30 p.m.**

Fort Ticonderoga will celebrate International Archaeology Day with two tours led by Fort Ticonderoga Director of Archaeology Margaret Staudter highlighting Fort Ticonderoga’s historically significant archaeological collections and Carillon Battlefield. The tours are included in Fort Ticonderoga’s general admission ticket. To purchase tickets and learn more, visit [fortticonderoga.org](http://fortticonderoga.org). The early tour will explore the fort’s exhibit spaces and the second will be a walking tour of the Carillon Battlefield.

**CHARLOTTE**

**Parent Coaching from Conflict to Cohesion**

**Wednesdays, through Nov. 16, 6-8 p.m.**

Marigold Farm at 151 Prindle Road in Charlotte is hosting a parent-coaching group. This class is for parents and caregivers who want to cultivate a relationship with their young ones that feels fun, sustainable and respectful. Participants will learn skills to improve communication and strengthen the family system through straightforward, actionable steps. To learn more or register visit [marigoldfarm.org/upcoming-classesworkshops](http://marigoldfarm.org/upcoming-classesworkshops).

**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](https://tinyurl.com/yeYrvvn4).

**Youth rowing race**

**Saturday, Oct. 28, 8 a.m.-noon**

Cheer on local high school and middle school rowing crews in the annual youth rowing race hosted by Lake Champlain Maritime Museum in Vergennes. The race starts at the foot of the Vergennes Falls and goes down and back via Otter Creek. Many crews compete in the race and in an annual costume contest. Watch and cheer from Vergennes Falls Park or along Otter Creek.

**Halloween art activity**

**Saturday, Oct. 28, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

Get ready for Halloween at Family Art Saturday. Drop into the BCA Center fourth-floor education studio on Church Street in Burlington for a free, intergenerational art activity inspired by the current exhibition, Terry Ekasala: Layers of Time. Kids, caregivers, students and adults will explore the power of process as they make their own abstract masterpieces, using watercolors, pastels and colored pencils. Come in your Halloween costume while you create your own curious creatures.

**CHARLOTTE**

**Trick-or-treating in Charlotte**

**Tuesday, Oct. 31, 4:30-8:30 p.m.**

Greenbush Road will be closed to make it safer for trick-or-treaters for four hours on Halloween evening. Organizers ask that residents of Greenbush leave and return to their homes during that time via the north end of the road. Lowell Thompson and his band will play again at the Old Brick Store for free. Revelers are encouraged to park east of the Greenbush and Ferry roads intersection at the town hall or senior

center or, for those coming from south of the intersection, at The Old Lantern.

**Women in cyber conference**

**Friday, Nov. 3, 9 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.**

Champlain College and our Women in Cybersecurity Leadership Council invite you to attend the Women in Cyber Summit at the college’s Center for Communication and Creative Media, 375 Maple Street, Burlington. This event is designed for high school students to seasoned professionals who want to learn more about cybersecurity, pursue a degree, enter the field or connect with others who appreciate technology. It is free and open to the public. Register by Oct. 27 at <https://tinyurl.com/2nn3brae>.



**Town of Charlotte**

**MEETINGS**

**Visit [charlottetvt.org](http://charlottetvt.org) for more information.**

**Planning Commission**

Thursday, Oct. 19, 7 p.m.

**Selectboard**

Monday, Oct. 23, 6:30 p.m.

**Development Review Board**

Wednesday, Oct. 25, 7 p.m.

**Energy Committee**

Wednesday, Nov. 1, 7 p.m.

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## Gardening

# Keep green thumb year-round with container gardening

Pamm Powers  
University of Vermont Extension

With cooler temperatures upon us, we have to say goodbye to our beautiful summer annuals. However, with container plantings, you can continue to garden throughout the year.

A four-season container allows you to move easily into the next season with a few simple updates. By choosing a woody ornamental as the focal point (thriller), this is easily achieved. As the seasons change, keep the thriller, but add new plant material (fillers and spillers) to provide bursts of color, added texture and form.

Just be aware that, when planting woody ornamentals or other perennials that remain above ground over the winter, the root systems may be more vulnerable due to the freezing and thawing effect we typically see now in Vermont winters as a result of climate change. It is this freezing and thawing that is most damaging to the roots.

When choosing plant material, consider your U.S. Department of Agriculture plant hardiness zone ([planthardiness.ars.usda.gov](http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov)), light and watering requirements. Some plants may have multi-seasonal appeal and can be left through many seasons, while others will no longer add seasonal interest.

Next, consider the container. Think big! You will need enough room around your small, slow-growing evergreen or deciduous shrub to add plants from season to season. Avoid terracotta pots, as clay expands and contracts with different temperatures and will crack in the cold.

Designing a four-season container garden around a living evergreen or shrub ensures never-ending color throughout the year. Container planting does not provide the same insulation as planting in the ground. Therefore, when choosing a shrub, look for one with a hardiness zone that is one to two zones colder than where you live to ensure



Photos by Bridget Schroeder

Left: Four-season container gardens can be created in all types of containers, including window boxes, providing they are big enough to accommodate a small woody ornamental and a variety of other plants to add color, texture and form. Right: Designing a four-season container garden around a living evergreen or shrub will provide an eye-catching display of continuous color throughout the year.

overwintering.

Evergreens such as dwarf Alberta spruce (zones 2-7), emerald petite arborvitae (zones 3-7), Blue Arrow Juniper (zone 4) and Chamaecyparis (zones 4-8) make excellent thrillers. I have used blueberry bushes, which are striking and unique three-season plants and have decorated these with lights once they dropped their leaves.

Red sprite winterberry, with its stunning red berries in winter, is another option. However, this plant is only a possibility if you have two containers, as both a male and female plant is needed to produce berries.

As the seasons change, plants lose their luster or you may just want to change it up for variety. Removing and adding new plant material is simple.

One thing to keep in mind when adding plants in fall is to utilize well-established plants since the growing season has slowed considerably. I like to use hardy perennials from my own gardens, such as hosta, ferns, heuchera and ornamental grasses with splashes of color from pumpkins, gourds, ornamental kale and mums.

Creating a winter container can be as simple as removing fall plants before the potting soil freezes and placing lights on your shrub, or adding greenery, red twigs, berries and other decorations.

Once you have added winter interest material, moisten the soil and allow it to freeze. This will ensure that limbs, twigs and other decorations remain in place.

Spring and summer are exciting times for gardening. Be sure to check the frost dates for your region, and always start with the hardiest plant material to ensure it survives Vermont’s spring temperature fluctuations.

A few great choices for spring fillers are hellebores, pulmonarias, pansies, lobelias

and marguerite daisies. When to make the transition from spring to summer is entirely up to you.

With an array of colors, textures, shapes and smells, creating a beautiful summer showpiece will be sure to evoke a sense of joy and satisfaction. For a shady spot, consider combining polka dot plant with a spider plant and begonias or tradescantia.

Fillers such as salvia, lantana and other upright flowers work well with trailing scaevola, sweet alyssum and other spillers for a sunny location. Or go tropical with hibiscus, crotons or caladiums.

Four-season container gardening can be started in any season. Just choose your design, collect your plant material and have fun creating your masterpiece.

*(Pamm Powers is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener intern from Shaftsbury.)*



Gardening

Many Vermont trees experiencing early defoliation this year

Ann Hazelrigg  
University of Vermont Extension

A lot of Vermonters are noticing that their crabapples and apples (*Malus* spp.), in addition to many other deciduous trees, have dropped many of their leaves well before the first autumn frost.

This has been a common occurrence for the past few years in many parts of the state depending on the microclimate of the area. The cause is typically stress-related. The good news is that these early defoliated trees usually will look fine the next spring.

The emerging leaves and blossoms of many trees were damaged by the cold temperatures in the third week of May. Although the trees have recovered and new leaves replaced those that were damaged, the energy required to do that caused stress on the tree.



Photos by Ann Hazelrigg

Apples or crabapples that experienced early leaf drop this year should recover next spring if there is a good bud set, as shown by this terminal bud and leaf axil.

*Malus* host and a juniper host to complete its lifecycle. This rust disease causes bright yellow leaf spots on the apple or crabapple host.

If you notice early leaf drop in your apples or crabapples, check to make sure there is a good bud set on the tree for next year. These are the dormant buds that will start to grow next May.

Scratch the bark lightly to make sure you see green healthy tissue under the bark. Both indicate that the tree is ready for next spring and is still alive in spite of the leaf



The low temperatures in May, combined with a rainy summer that led to a wide variety of foliar fungal diseases, stressed apple and other deciduous trees, causing them to drop many of their leaves well before the first autumn frost.

drop.

To improve the vigor of the tree and to minimize fungal diseases next year, rake and destroy fallen leaves this autumn. If raking is too much work, mow over the leaves several times to encourage them

to break down quicker. Prune the tree this winter when it is dormant to open it up to air and light.

*(Ann Hazelrigg is the University of Vermont Extension plant pathologist and director of the plant diagnostic clinic.)*

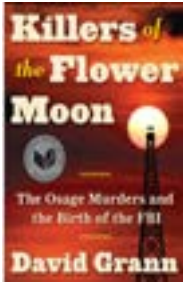
On Books

‘Killers of the Flower Moon’ and history without the yawn

Katherine Arthaud  
Contributor

“In April, millions of tiny flowers spread over the blackjack hills and vast prairies in the Osage territory of Oklahoma. There are Johnny-jump-ups and spring beauties and little bluets. ... In May, when coyotes howl beneath an unnervingly large moon, taller plants, such as spiderworts and black-eyed Susans, begin to creep over the tinier blooms, stealing their light and water. The necks of the smaller flowers break and their petals flutter away, and before long they are buried underground. This is why the Osage Indians refer to May as the time of the flower-killing moon.”

So begins American journalist and storyteller David Grann’s historical account, “Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI.” Published in 2017, the book investigates a series of



murders in the early 1920s of a staggeringly large number of wealthy Native Americans in Osage County, Okla.

What happened, basically, was, though the Osage “had been assured by the U.S. government that their Kansas territory would remain their home forever,” before long they found themselves under siege from settlers (including, interestingly, the family of Laura Ingalls Wilder, who later wrote “Little House on the Prairie”). In 1870, “expelled from their lodges, their graves plundered,” the Osage agreed to sell their Kansas lands for \$1.25 an acre. “Nevertheless, impatient settlers massacred several of the Osages, mutilating their bodies and scalping them,” prompting an Indian Affairs agent to comment, “The question will suggest itself, which of these people are the savages?”

The Osage, essentially refugees from territory that they had been promised, ended up purchasing 1.5 million acres of rough, uninhabitable, virtually unworkable land in Northeast Oklahoma. Not a great situation.



David Grann

But then in 1894, crude oil was discovered on the ostensibly unpromising land, and by the 1920s the Osage had become crazy rich with the royalties from oil sales. They were able to afford mansions, cars, chauffeurs, a total reversal of fortunes.

But then, they started dying.

Grann reveals, over the course of 321 pages, how — by dynamite, gunshot, poison and other means — wealthy members of the Osage tribe and their heirs were systematically murdered.

As the Osage deaths multiplied, the news caught the attention of a young J. Edgar Hoover of the fledgling Federal Bureau of Investigations. To help unravel the tangle of the mystery of who was behind all the bloodshed, Hoover enlisted the help of former Texas Ranger, Tom White. White assembled a motley team of cowboys and private eyes to help expose what turned out to be a sinister, coldblooded conspiracy that will blow your mind with its greed and hardheartedness.

I listened to this book on audio. It was fantastic and engrossing and got me through miles and miles of otherwise uneventful driving. But honestly, it might be better to experience this one on the written page. For one, the actual book has photographs, so you can see the faces of many of the characters — heroes, villains and victims alike. Also, there are so many players in this story and so much detail, I found it a bit tough to keep straight, while driving, who’s who and how it was all going down. But don’t get me wrong, I was riveted by the audio version. I just had to rewind a lot. My plan is to go back and read the actual book. And yes, it’s that good.

As The Boston Globe commented, this is “a masterful work of literary journalism crafted with the urgency of a mystery.” Exactly. Highly, highly recommend.

Oh, and postscript: I hear that “Killers of the Flower Moon” has been made into a movie, directed by Martin Scorsese, with Leonardo DiCaprio, Robert De Niro, Lily Gladstone and Brendan Fraser, being released on Oct. 20. But I strongly suggest reading the book first.

Another book by David Grann I would also recommend is “The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder,” the true

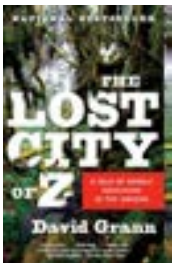
story of a ship that sets sail from England in 1740 to embark on a secret mission during an imperial war with Spain.

On Jan. 28, 1742, a wasted version of the same ship washes up on the Brazilian coast, with 30 men, emaciated and clinging to life, with some crazy tales to tell. I read this book a while ago and passed it on to my son, who is a picky reader but says he is enjoying it. I loved it.

David Grann is also the author of “The Lost City of Z: A Tale of Deadly Obsession in the Amazon,” which it seems everyone on the planet has read except for me, and “The Devil and Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Murder, Madness, and Obsession,” which I’ve also have not read, but certainly plan to.

Though his style is different and unique, Grann’s work reminds me a bit of that of Erik Larsen, who has written a number of mostly nonfiction books, including “The Devil in the White City,” “Dead Calm” and “In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler’s Berlin,” all of which take historical events and make them read like good stories.

As a student of history in high school and college, I found myself more often than not bored and disengaged, chin in hand, staring longingly out the window at the living, breathing modern world beyond the glass. I mean: So many men, so many wars, so many dates to remember. (Yawn.) I knew it was important, but it all seemed so colorless and boring and dry and drab.



With Grann and Larsen it’s a whole different ball game. Their tales — all true, all historical, all well researched — are spellbinding, colorful, highly compelling and actually illuminating.

“History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again,” writes Maya Angelou.

Thank you to David Grann and all the artists and writers of every generation who have helped us face history, with all its joys and sorrows, glory and shame. May the stories help us to not relive the wrenching pain parts. Seriously.



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# Library News

## Halloweeny things like pumpkins, pianos and poems coming to library

Margaret Woodruff  
Director

Looking for something Halloweeny to do? Seasonal festive fun comes to the library on Saturday, Oct. 28, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

The event begins with live piano music and poems performed by young Charlotte musicians to set the mood for the quintessential Halloween craft of pumpkin carving.

Everything you need to carve your jack-o'-lantern will be provided. The finished jack-o'-lantern will be added to our growing display.

If you can't make it to the event and would like to have your creation included in the display, just bring your jack-o'-lantern to the library any time before Saturday, Oct. 28, at 2 p.m. and add it to the scaffolding.

It is always exciting to see how the display comes together. The more jack-o'-lantern the merrier.

There was a grand gathering of jack-o'-lanterns last year thanks to the many people who carved and dropped off their jack-o'-lanterns at the library. Every year, it is fun to see community members pointing out their creations and admiring the work of others. The display offers a great opportunity for a community Halloween experience even if you don't have any trick-or-treaters.

### Jack-o'-lantern display Oct. 28-Halloween Night

There will be a grand gathering of jack-o'-lanterns at the library. Last year many community members dropped off their jack-o'-lanterns at the library. The library is doing it again and hoping it's even bigger this year. The display offers a great opportunity for a community Halloween experience even if you don't have any trick or treaters. Drop off your carved pumpkins at the library any time before Saturday, Oct. 28, at the library to be included in the display.

### Trick or treating on the library porch Tuesday, Oct. 31, 5-7 p.m.

Don't forget the library when you and your trick-or-treaters make the rounds. The library will be handing out treats on the porch to ward off the tricksters.

### Children's programs

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

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

#### Preschool play time Wednesdays, 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, 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](mailto:youth@charlottepubliclibrary.org).

### Programs for adults

#### Special events Writing art into poetry Sunday, Oct. 22, 2:30 p.m.

Join JC Wayne, to explore the theme of "under the surface" by writing poetry in response to the library's current exhibit of sustainable art by Landa Townsend. Townsend will get us started by sharing her story and some of the materials and techniques used to create her Japanese woodcut prints. For adults, teens and tweens. Sign up by email at [margaret@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:margaret@charlottepubliclibrary.org).

#### Gmail basics Tuesday, Oct. 24, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Let's talk Gmail. This hands-on workshop is for people new to Gmail or those who want to get more comfortable with this popular email service. Review basic functions including sending, receiving and replying to emails. Learn how to delete, organize and search for emails and recognize and deal with spam. Please bring your Gmail address and password. Participants will be entered in a raffle to win a gift card from a local business. Space is limited space, registration required. Please register at <https://tinyurl.com/pf57v4fy> or by calling 802-425-3864.

#### Internet safety basics Wednesday, Oct. 25, 1-2 p.m.

In this hands-on workshop, learn strategies to stay safe when visiting websites and receiving email, what makes a strong password, and how to avoid scams. Co-hosted by Charlotte Library. Supported by AT&T and The Public Library Association. Laptops and snacks provided. Participants will be entered into a raffle to win a gift card from a local business. Free. Limited space, registration required by calling 802-425-6345.

#### Vegetable garden wrap-up Friday, Oct. 27, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

As Audrey Hepburn said, "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." Join fellow gardeners to share questions, experiences and lessons learned for next year. Facilitated by seed library coordinators Karen Tuininga and Linda Hamilton. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/ubsaxxt>.



Courtesy photo

There was a seasonal vegetable conflagration at the library last year. Organizers hope there will be even more this year.

### Recurring programs

#### 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 this year. Contact garden stewards Karen Tuininga and Linda Hamilton at [seed@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:seed@charlottepubliclibrary.org) to sign up and join in the merry group 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.

#### Thursday night book group Thursday, Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m.

A discarded painting in a junk pile, a skeleton in an attic and the greatest racehorse in American history: from these strands, Pulitzer Prize-winner Geraldine Brooks braids a sweeping story of spirit, obsession and

injustice across American history in "Horse." Copies available at the circulation desk. Join on Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/4ch2xzap>.

#### Better together book club Wednesday, Oct. 25, 7 p.m.

An open group disussion of books related to parenthood. "Good Inside" by Becky Kennedy offers perspective-shifting parenting principles and troubleshooting for specific scenarios, including sibling rivalry, separation anxiety, tantrums and more. Copies available at the circulation desk.

#### Men's Book Group: Wednesday, Oct. 25, 7:30 p.m.

"Educated" by Tara Westover is an account of the struggle for self-invention. It is a tale of fierce family loyalty and of the grief that comes with severing the closest of ties. Copies available at the library circulation desk. Join the Zoom discussion at <https://tinyurl.com/29steja5>.

#### Library contact information:

Margaret Woodruff, director  
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian  
Susanna Kahn, tech librarian  
Phone: 802-425-3864  
Email: [info@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org)  
The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets on the first Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. The next meeting takes place on Thursday, Nov. 2, online and in person. Please contact the library or visit the library website ([charlottepubliclibrary.org](http://charlottepubliclibrary.org)).



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### In-Person Medicare Products Seminars

Saturday, Oct 28	2:00 p.m.
Saturday, Nov 11	10:00 a.m.
Saturday, Nov 18	10:00 a.m.
Thursday, Nov 23	2:00 p.m.
Saturday, Dec 2	10:00 a.m.
Thursday, Dec 7	2:00 p.m.

MVP Office  
62 Merchants Row  
Williston

### Online Medicare Products Seminars

Saturday, Oct 21	10:00 a.m.
Friday, Oct 27	11:00 a.m.
Thursday, Nov 2	11:00 a.m.
Monday, Nov 13	12:00 p.m.
Friday, Nov 17	11:00 a.m.
Friday, Dec 1	11:00 a.m.
Wednesday, Dec 6	9:00 a.m.

Dates and times are subject to change.



## Senior Center News

# Senior center welcomes Lawson as new volunteer coordinator

Lori York  
Director

The senior center is excited to welcome Jennifer Lawson as the new senior center volunteer coordinator. Lawson served as a middle school teacher for 22 years and most recently has been the Charlotte Town Beach manager.

Volunteers play a critical role in providing the variety of programs at the senior center. She will be focusing on volunteer recruitment, training and retention.

If you are interested in volunteering at the senior center, please stop by (She works part-time in the mornings.) or email her at [jlawson@charlotteseniorcentervt.org](mailto:jlawson@charlotteseniorcentervt.org).

### Programs

#### Artist reception: Playing with Sticks Friday, Oct. 20, 4-6 p.m.

Check out this unique art show where botanical materials from Vermont gardens, fields and woods are given prominence by artist Alice Trageser, who is a Charlotte gardener and retired art teacher.

#### AARP Smart Driver Course Thursday, Oct. 26, 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

The AARP Smart Driver course is designed especially for drivers over 50. It will help you refresh driving skills and may even help save on auto insurance. AARP members can take the course at a discounted rate. Please plan to bring lunch. Checks should be made out to AARP. Cost: \$25 or \$20 for AARP members. Registration required.

#### Backgammon league Tuesdays, 6-8:30 p.m. & Saturdays, 2-4 p.m.

Backgammon is a tactical table game with a 5,000-year history. Players of all levels are welcome. If you have questions, please contact Jonathan at [jonathanhart1@gmail.com](mailto:jonathanhart1@gmail.com). Cost: \$3

#### Brain games Fridays, 3-5:30 p.m.

There are many ways adults can stimulate their brains to increase mental health, improve memory skills and contribute to overall well-being. Research finds that positive interaction with others and engagement in stimulating group activities sharpens cognition and increases memory ability. Join us, play various games, share laughter and enjoy one another's company. There are some games available, but also feel free to bring your own games. Questions? Please call Lin Kalson at 608-345-9321 or email [lin.linkalson7@gmail.com](mailto:linkalson7@gmail.com). Free.

#### Creativity workshop Tuesdays, Oct. 24, 31 & Nov. 7, 9 a.m.-Noon

Join Lynn Cummings for this collage and intuitive painting workshop for all levels of artists and wannabe artists. No drawing skills required. This workshop will include using stencils and masks to add design and patterns. Fee: \$160 with student providing all supplies or \$185 with instructor providing materials and student providing a limited supply list. Registration and payment required by Friday, Oct. 20.

#### Italian 1 for beginners Fridays, Nov. 3-Dec. 15, 10-11 a.m.

Interested in beginning your study of Italian? Join instructor Nicole Librandi and explore the beauty of the Italian language and culture. Cost: \$60. Registration required by Monday, Oct. 30.

#### Introduction to tai chi movement Mondays, through Oct. 30, 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Join Kristin Borquist for a tai chi movement series. Rather than learning the

tai chi set, each class explores one of the movement principles of tai chi that you can integrate into your daily life and all your other activities. For questions, email [kristin@thaibodyworkvt.com](mailto:kristin@thaibodyworkvt.com). \$40 for the four-week session or \$10 per drop-in class. Registration recommended.

#### Meditation Wednesdays, through Nov. 15, 5-6 p.m.

As the days shorten and the weather turns cooler, it's a great time to start meditating again. Come join Charlie Nardozzi for this meditation series. No experience necessary. The meditation class will be broadcast live via Zoom (and recorded). Even if you miss a class, everyone who signs up will get the recording each week. \$50 for the five-week session. Registration required.

#### Kirtan Sunday, Oct. 29, 4-6 p.m.

Join Charlie Nardozzi, Heidi Kvasnak and Kirsten Rose for a Sunday afternoon kirtan. Kirtan is an ancient yoga gathering where musicians play traditional instruments and sing simple chants. Some chants are call and response, and others are singalongs. All are welcome, and no experience is necessary. Questions? Please email Charlie Nardozzi at [cnardozzi124@gmail.com](mailto:cnardozzi124@gmail.com). Register by Friday, Oct. 27. Suggested donation of \$5-\$15.

#### Walking and gentle hiking group Thursday, Oct. 26, Location TBD

Enjoy the beauty of nature. Come walk at a gentle pace with other seniors. The group will meet monthly for a congenial non-strenuous walk. Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot at Charlotte Senior Center. Please bring sunscreen, bug spray and water. To register, call Penny Burman at 916-753-7279.

### Presentations

#### 'The Long Grief Journey' Tuesday, Oct. 24, 1 p.m.

Grief can be messy and does not follow a specific timeline. Join co-authors Pamela Blair and Bradie Hansen as they discuss their book, "The Long Grief Journey." This book covers the challenges that long-term griever encounter and discusses finding hope again after death. Registration recommended. Free.

#### Internet Safety Basics Wednesday, Oct. 25, 1-2 p.m.

In this hands-on workshop learn strategies to stay safe when visiting websites and receiving email, what makes a strong password and how to avoid scams. Laptops and snacks provided. Limited space. Registration required. Free. Supported by AT&T and the Public Library Association.

### Meals

Menus are posted on the website at [charlotteseniorcentervt.org](http://charlotteseniorcentervt.org).

#### Monday Lunches

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

#### 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](mailto:meals@charlotteseniorcentervt.org).

#### Age Well restaurant tickets Monday, Oct. 23, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Stop by the Charlotte Senior Center to talk with Age Well representative Kerry Batres about resources available through Age Well and the restaurant-ticket program



Photo by Robin Reid

Jennifer Lawson is the senior center's new volunteer coordinator.



Photo by Lori York

The senior center hosted a lunch-and-learn session on how to read your Medicare summary report.

that can be used for meals at participating restaurants.

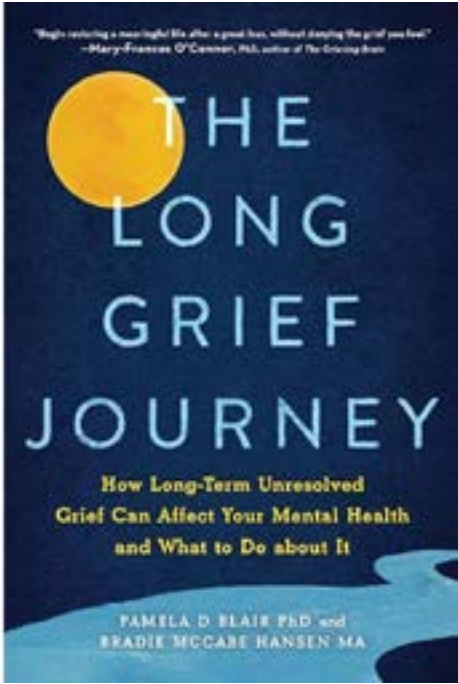
### Senior center info:

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. Programs include weekly lunches, daily exercise classes and many opportunities to connect through board and card games and art and language programming. If you haven't been to the Senior Center, please stop by and visit.

Interested in receiving a weekly reminder about what is happening? Sign up for the email newsletters at [charlotteseniorcentervt.org](http://charlotteseniorcentervt.org). The "Week Ahead" email is sent out on Friday mornings with activities, lunch menus and special programs for the upcoming week.

Lori York, director, [lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org](mailto:lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org)  
Jenn Lawson, volunteer coordinator, [jlawson@charlotteseniorcentervt.org](mailto:jlawson@charlotteseniorcentervt.org)  
212 Ferry Road, Charlotte  
802-425-6345  
[charlotteseniorcentervt.org](http://charlotteseniorcentervt.org)

Follow the senior center on Facebook or Instagram at [charlotteseniorcentervt.org](http://charlotteseniorcentervt.org).



Co-authors Pamela Blair and Bradie Hansen will discuss their book 'The Long Grief Journey' on Tuesday, Oct. 24.



# Write Ingredients

## Pumpkin Month celebrates a vegetable to die for

Susan Ohanian  
Contributor

October is the treasure of the year,  
And all the months pay bounty to her store.  
— Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)

October is, of course, Pumpkin Month, but, as The New York Times points out, pumpkin spice flavoring has become ubiquitous: “This past year’s pumpkin-flavored products accounted for \$787 million in national sales, including pumpkin spice hummus and pumpkin spice deodorant.”

Not to mention pumpkin pie spice extract all-natural peanut butter powder, pumpkin spice and apple cider Moravian-style thin cookies, gourmet fall halloween candy pumpkin cheesecake fudge, pumpkin gelato, pumpkin cheerios, pumpkin M&Ms ...

And on and on and on. The list is endless.

I wasn’t at all sure a Yummly online recipe for pumpkin spice puppy chow was a real thing for dogs until I found Weruva’s pumpkin supplement, advertising itself as “a great source of healthy fiber helping to support your cat’s or dog’s digestive system.” The variety pack includes pumpkin purée, pumpkin with ginger and turmeric and pumpkin with coconut oil and flaxseeds.

For humans, there’s pumpkin spice and vanilla chai moisturizing hand cream.

A few years back at The New York Times, Frank Bruni, far from sanguine about the ubiquity of this autumnal flavoring, issued a warning: “Lock the refrigerator, bolt the cupboards and barricade the pantry. Pumpkin spice is here. And there. And everywhere.”

Of course, there is no pumpkin in pumpkin spice, but put “pumpkin” into a search at the newspaper of record and you’ll come up with 10,767 entries — from soup to corn bread to polenta to beets to vodka.

Yes, the Times go-to guy, Judge John Hodgman, issues an opinion. In a column rejecting the very idea of banana peel soup, he acknowledges that pumpkin in oatmeal “might actually be pretty good.”

Oct. 29 is National Oatmeal Day, so go ahead and give this a try.

For many, pumpkin is welded to pie. But not for Margaret Renkl, Times opinion columnist, whose new book “The Comfort of Crows: A Backyard Year,” will be out Oct. 24. She notes, “I was astonishingly old before I learned that pumpkins are food. It would never have occurred to my grandmother to put a pumpkin pie on her Thanksgiving table. In the Lower Alabama



of my youth, fall celebrations meant pecan pie topped with vanilla ice cream. Pumpkins were for jack-o’-lanterns.”

In the opening of Agatha Christie’s “Hallowe’en Party,” a British dowager helping with what the hostess calls an Eleven Plus Party isn’t even sure what pumpkins are, never mind what they’re used for. She remarks that she’d seen hundreds in America “all over someone’s house.”

This pumpkin “attitude” is confirmed by “The Oxford Companion to Food” which tells us, “Few vegetables are so little understood and consequently so much undervalued in Great Britain as the pumpkin.”

In Christie, all discussion of pumpkins disappears when a 13-year-old girl is found drowned in an apple-bobbing tub. Enter Hercule Poirot. “A Haunting in Venice,” directed by and starring Kenneth Branagh, moustache and all, offers a film version of this tale.

“Recipes for Murder: 66 Dishes that Celebrate the Mysteries of Agatha Christie,” connects this tale with jack-o’-lantern deviled eggs. No need to call Poirot for this one. Just use black food coloring to draw jack-o’-lantern faces on deviled eggs.

Not as exciting as pumpkin spice Jell-O shots with Kahlúa, vodka and cream.

Pumpkin spice has been mentioned in cookbooks since the 1890s. It was introduced commercially by McCormick & Company in 1934. These days, there are dozens of companies selling versions, but nothing could be easier to make. Every source from Farmer’s Almanac to The New York Times Cooking website has pretty much the same recipe, using cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, allspice and cloves.

Me? I’m keeping it out of my hand cream and not pushing it on my cats.

Pumpkin isn’t mentioned in the Washington Post’s “9 recipes inspired by famous literary meals,” but it’s lots of fun. Be

sure to look at reader comments for strong opinions at [wapo.st/3PSSiXn](http://wapo.st/3PSSiXn).

### Monday Munch

**Oct. 23, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Menu to be announced. Register for Thursday’s Age Well Grab & Go Meal by email at [meals@charlotteseniorcentervt.org](mailto:meals@charlotteseniorcentervt.org) or phone 802-425-6345.

### Age Well Meal Pickup

**Thursday, Oct. 26, 10-11 a.m.**

Beef steak, barbecue sauce, Italian risotto with diced tomatoes and vegetables, Italian vegetables with black beans and berry crisp with cream

Suggested Age Well donation of \$5, but not required to receive a meal. Pay what you can, when you can. Registration required by the prior Monday.

### Monday Halloween Munch

**Oct. 30, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Baked “worms” Alfredo spaghetti, gross greens from the garden, goblins good lemonade and pumpkin surprise parfait.

### Age Well meal pickup

**Thursday, Nov.2, 10-11 a.m.**

PRESORTED STANDARD

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