

The Charlotte News

April 18, 2024

Your nonprofit community news source since 1958

Vol. 66, No. 21

School budget wins

On Tuesday, voters approved the school district's revised budget.

Of the 7,005 votes cast, 4,358 or almost 60 percent of voters supported the budget with \$101,801,185 in expenses this time.

Voters approved a budget from which exactly \$4 million had been trimmed. The school system has

been touting the reduction as a \$5 million reduction because \$1 million from the fund balance will be applied to this budget.

This is an almost exact reversal of the original budget vote when 60 percent of 8,481 voters rejected the proposed budget expenditures of \$105,801,185 on Town Meeting Day.

Fitful tree planting looks to be on again

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

(This story has been updated and corrected from the version that ran in The Charlotte News April 11 newsletter.)

Charlotte has found itself in the weeds about trees.

With 48 trees scheduled to be delivered to the town garage on Thursday, April 11, and 40 volunteers committed to planting the trees — at the town garage and on private property on State Park Road near Mt. Philo — the next Saturday, April 13, the selectboard decided at its meeting on Tuesday, April 9, to postpone the planting.

The trees were delivered on Thursday morning. And then it was decided that the trees to be planted at the town garage should be.

So, volunteers who had been recruited to plant all 48 trees, and then been notified that the planting was canceled, were re-contacted and asked to come on Saturday morning for planting after all, but just at the town garage.

About 25 volunteers showed up, and those trees were planted in about two hours. But around 30 trees remained unplanted.

On this Monday, April 15, the selectboard held a hastily called special meeting to figure out what to do with the unplanted trees that had been ordered for planting on State Park Road and which were still stored at the town garage. Chair Jim Faulkner said he had talked with the nursery that supplied the trees and was told the trees needed to be planted in a week.

Faulkner said that meant the trees

needed to be planted in two days.

The Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge oversight committee has a need for trees in the park. Jessie Bradley, co-chair of the committee, said they had found a company that would plant the trees there for \$3,000.

She said they planned to email volunteers to see if they could get more help with the planting effort.

Ultimately, the selectboard voted unanimously to spend not more than \$3,000 on the tree planting.

At the April 11 selectboard meeting, deputy tree warden Alexa Lewis told the board she would resign if the board stopped the planned planting. She said she had put in six months of work volunteering on the effort and had other things she needed to work on.

The next day, Charlotte tree warden Mark Dillenbeck and Susan Smith, the town's other deputy tree warden, resigned.

"I resigned effective immediately," Dillenbeck said by phone.

Smith said it has gotten hard to work with the selectboard. She was sorry to leave the tree warden program because, for most of her more than 15 years of volunteering on tree projects, the town has been appreciative.

The April 11 meeting began with chair Jim Faulkner saying the board needed to be more thorough in its conversations about allowing municipal water to be used for private uses.

The board then voted



Pier-ing at the sun

Photo by Scooter MacMillan

A group of eclipse watchers at the Burlington Pier on April 8 are silhouetted by the sun being silhouetted by the moon. For the most part, the sight seemed to inspire quiet reflection and camaraderie rather than raucous revelry.

See more on page 4

CVU girls coach headed to college coaching ranks

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Ute Otley had played basketball most of her childhood, but it was the summer between seventh and eighth grade when she realized this game was something special.

Otley said she had been nagging her father relentlessly. When she finally convinced him to put up a basketball goal in their yard, her father didn't accept the task halfheartedly. Rather than just slapping up a leftover piece of plywood for a backboard, Otley's dad "went all out," she said.

He put a basketball court with a glass backboard and an almost full half-court. It became a big draw for kids, and they played all the time.

That summer, as she was becoming a full-fledged teenager, Otley decided that basketball was the thing that she wanted to be the best at.

That decision stuck.

After coaching girls basketball at Champlain Valley High, Otley is leaving to take the job as head coach at Norwich University.

In her 13 years as the head coach of the Redhawks, she can make a pretty strong claim of achieving her goal of being the best. Her teams have played in the state championship 10 times and won the title seven times.

This year, the CVU girls repeated as state champions, beating cross-state rivals St. Johnsbury for the title for a second time.

She leaves Champlain Valley reluctantly, but realized when the offer came that it was now or never. Otley said she will continue to live in Charlotte.

"It was a really hard decision to come to grips with the idea of leaving CVU and leaving my high school team. That was the hardest part," Otley said. "Once I separated that from the question: 'Do



Coach Ute Otley celebrates her team's state basketball title in 2023.

you have the desire to be a college coach before you call it a career?" And the answer was yes.

"The opportunity to jump straight from being a high school to head coach of a college team doesn't come around very often."

On top of that she knew and

SEE **UTE OTLEY** PAGE 2



FREE! | May 2
802-488-6912
howardcenter.org

THE MARNA AND STEPHEN WISE TULIN
**SPRING COMMUNITY
EDUCATION SERIES**



**HOWARD
CENTER**
Help is here.

UTE OTLEY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

really trusted Norwich's athletic director Ed Hockenbury, who was the athletic director at Essex High, when she first started at CVU. She respects Hockenbury as someone whose vision for athletics matches her own.

"All the pieces really felt like they just came together," said Otley.

During her tenure, Champlain Valley had a 268-17 won-loss record, a 95-percent winning record. She has been named Vermont Coach of the Year six times.

From 2012-2016, CVU's girls team won 96 games in a row, which is the Vermont record for a girls basketball winning streak. According to MaxPreps, it is 39th longest winning streak in the history of girls high school hoops in the United States.

After she and her family moved to Vermont she coached the Charlotte Central School middle school team. When her daughter Sadie entered third grade, she started coaching with the Charlotte Recreation Department.

She also coached her two sons all the way through youth league basketball.

By the time Sadie got to high school, Otley was CVU's basketball coach.

She had a core group of basketball players who she had been coaching since second

grade. Nurturing those girls' hoops talent and commitment to the game paid off.

Sadie Otley, Laurel Jaunich, Annabella Pugliese, Madison Randall and Emma Hess of Charlotte were part of the team that ran up the remarkable win streak. They never lost a game.

Ute Otley said winning their first state championship with this group was a memorable moment, but when the team won their fourth state championship, it was something else.

"When we went four straight seasons undefeated, that felt like an incredible accomplishment and an incredible sense of relief because I knew that that was my daughter's class who was graduating that year, and I knew how important it was to them to finish what they started," Otley said.

"None of those girls lost a single basketball game at any level. The JV teams went undefeated and the varsity teams went undefeated the whole time. It was crazy."

Former school board member and mother of Laurel, Lynne Jaunich said the four years of undefeated seasons were a "multi-generational family affair" with parents, grand-parents and siblings supporting the team.

Otley's players learned real-life lessons that carried beyond the basketball court like sportsmanship, effort, resilience and team-

work.

"They learned the importance of team and teammate over self," Jaunich said. "Going undefeated was a bonus."

In her 13 years as head coach of the Redhawks, her team only missed the final four once. That lone year of not making the semi-finals was during the COVID-shortened season when the CVU girls basketball team finished 9-0 before play was halted.

Otley followed her middle-school basketball dreams to Valparaiso High in Indiana, where she was named to the all-state first team as a senior. In 2011, she was named to the Indiana Hall of Fame's Silver Anniversary Team.

Transitioning from a high school scoring guard, she played point guard at Dartmouth College. During her time there, the school won four Ivy League championships.

Before coming to Vermont, Otley was head coach at high schools on Long Island and north of Atlanta.

Besides coaching, she has taught social studies at Champlain Valley High, but at Norwich University her duties will be confined to coaching. Otley said after 30 years of teaching, she's looking forward to being done with grading papers.

"I am looking forward to being able to give basketball my full-time attention," she said.

TREES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

unanimously to rescind a previous motion that would have allowed municipal water from the town garage well to be used for watering the trees that were delivered on Thursday. Some of that watering would have taken place on private property.

At this past Monday's meeting, it was agreed that the trees in the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge would be watered with town water.

At the April 11 meeting, the board had a long public discussion interspersed with a closed executive session about updating the town's contract with Joshua Golek concerning the planting of trees on his property along State Park Road. Faulkner said the town attorney had determined the contract wasn't enforceable and needs to be modified.

The town's trails committee had supported the planting of trees along State Park Road for summer shade on the Town Link Trail there.

Under that agreement the town would supply the trees bought with Rutter Tree Fund, and volunteers would plant the trees.

Town clerk Mary Mead said there is about \$32,000 in the fund. About 20 years ago, the fund was started with a \$25,000 donation from Bill Rutter, primarily intended to pay for trees to be planted around town. Others have donated to the fund, and the town has added money for fighting the emerald ash borer.

Much of the tree planting paid for by the tree fund over the years has been along roadsides and in public places, Dillenbeck said.

For years, what trees to spend the money on and where to plant them has been a decision made by the town's volunteer tree wardens — Dillenbeck and before him the late Larry Hamilton.

But a few weeks ago, when complaints about the plantings on State Park Road began to appear on social media and be heard at its meetings, the selectboard began to question the process covering how these decisions were made.

Faulkner also said he wanted to make sure the town would not have any liability to care



Photo by Nancy Wood

After a change in plans, trees were planted at the town garage on Saturday.

for trees after they were planted on private property.

"We have a private group that are putting trees on private land, and we want to just make sure that the taxpayers are not burdened by this," he said. As the trees grow and need "fertilization, mulching, trimming or whatever," the board needs to be sure the town won't be responsible for taking care of them.

Although the money in the Rutter Tree Fund has been donated to the town, it might be possible to argue it is taxpayer money, board member Lewis Mudge said, because, if it is not used for these trees, it could be used for other trees in town.

The question, he said, is whether the fund is a town asset and how it should be managed. He doesn't have a problem with the tree warden having authority over how the money is managed, if it is "something we consciously do."

Resident Deb Preston has posted on social media about her opposition to the tree plantings on State Park Road.

"It's disheartening to see these walls of trees," Preston said at the selectboard meeting. "It's the same along every roadside."

In her review of state statutes, Preston said she found that the tree warden is also mandated to cut down trees to preserve views, so she wants to know if there's a possibility the trees might be cut down in the future.

"My only point here on what's going on is the total separation of church and state. The town and private money and the private citizen should all be separated from the town," Ward Preston said. "An agent of the town should not be going upon private property and promoting the planting of trees. The property owner should be coming to the town."

Although the trees have been ordered, the holes have been dug and the money has been allocated from the tree fund for the project, Mudge said, "I can't think about another issue where we're spending \$10,000 without it being discussed in open meeting."

Dillenbeck has worked hard as the tree warden, Mudge said, and the town owes "him a debt of gratitude," but the tree planting process needs to be fixed.

Vince Crockenberg, who has volunteered on tree work over the years, said the volunteers had done a good bit of work on this project and now the board was "pulling the rug out" from under them. He feels it will put town volunteering at peril.

The town has not been able to find anything that clarifies how the Rutter Tree Fund is supposed to be administered and the board has heard from residents who feel they have not had the opportunity to have input on the project, board member Kelly Devine said. "We absolutely have to clear up where the lines of authority lie between the tree warden and the selectboard."

Ward Preston was hired by Robin Coleburn to dig the holes along State Park Road. She agreed to pay him herself, rather than use any of the money in the tree fund. Coleburn is the daughter of Bill Rutter. She said when she hired Preston, he told her his opposition to the tree planting wouldn't be a problem.

On Saturday after the tree planting at the town garage was finished, a volunteer driving down State Park Road saw Preston filling the holes back in.

At Monday's special called meeting, Faulkner said the holes were being filled back in at no cost to the town.



Mission Statement

To engage and inform Charlotte and nearby communities by:

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

Editorial independence

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

Code of Ethics

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

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

Disclaimer

Individuals associated with The Charlotte News may engage in public discussion on issues in Charlotte, including at selectboard and other Town meetings, and on Front Porch Forum. They may also work or volunteer for organizations in Charlotte, including private businesses, the Town government, and nonprofits. When engaging in public discussions, they are expressing personal or organizational views and not necessarily the views of The Charlotte News, its staff, board of directors, or volunteers. Individuals who write opinion pieces for the paper will have their role at The Charlotte News identified, and the piece will be clearly labeled as their personal commentary.

Letters, Opinions and Obituaries

Consistent with our mission, The Charlotte News publishes letters to the editor, opinion pieces and obituaries submitted by our readers. All such materials are subject to review and approval by the editor in accordance with the standards and requirements listed on our website at charlottenewsvt.org/about.

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

Editorial Staff

Editor: Scooter MacMillan

(scooter@thecharlottenews.org)

Production Manager: Anna Cyr

(anna@thecharlottenews.org)

Proofreaders: Mike & Janet Yantachka,

Katherine Arthaud

Business Staff

Ad manager: Susie Therrien

(ads@thecharlottenews.org)

Bookkeeper: Susan Jones

(billing@thecharlottenews.org)

Board Members

Board Chair: Julia Russell

(julia@thecharlottenews.org)

Treasurer: Margery McCracken

(treasurer@thecharlottenews.org)

Secretary: Meredith Moses

Board members: Claudia Marshall, Peter Joslin,

Bill Regan, John Quinney, Dave Speidel, Vince

Crockenberg (emeritus), John Hammer (emeritus)

Technical advisor: Melissa Mendelsohn, Orchard

Road Computers

Website: charlottenewsvt.org

Subscription Information

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

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

Postmaster/Send address changes to:

The Charlotte News, P.O. Box 251,

Charlotte, VT 05445 Telephone: 802-425-4949

Circulation: 2,100

Copyright © 2024 TCN, Inc., dba The Charlotte News.

Member of the New England Newspaper and Press

Association, LION Publishers, Institute for Nonprofit

News and the Vermont Press Association.

**Support local
nonprofit
reporting.
Donate Today!**



Letters to the Editor

Historical society is seeking your memories of eclipse

To the Editor:

The Charlotte Historical Society is seeking memories of your experiences with the total solar eclipse. Did the eclipse have a special meaning for you? Where did you go to view the event? Did you have special plans to coincide with the eclipse? Who did you view it with? Do you have any special thoughts you would like to share? Would you like to create a unique piece of artwork? Write a poem? We are inviting residents of all ages to contact us and ask you to try to fit text submissions to one page if possible.

The historical society would like to create an archive of eclipse memories to preserve this moment for posterity. We would like to include any photos or selfies you wish to share from the day, or even a group of family and friends who observed the day with you. If you do wish to include a photo of people, please identify them.

It is our hope to curate an exhibit that will be at the Charlotte Museum in 2025, and possibly a traveling show to exhibit at other town locations.

Submit material to dtcole.chs.eclipse@gmail.com
Dan Cole
Charlotte

(Dan Cole is president of the Charlotte Historical Society.)

Resigning because of selectboard missteps, not difference of opinions

To the Editor:

On April 9, the selectboard killed the tree planting event scheduled for last Saturday, April 13, as part of the town's Earth Month Celebration. Their decision came two days before the 50 trees were delivered by truck and four days prior to the event. As a result, 40 volunteers were told not to come, and the tree warden and two deputy tree wardens resigned.

As one of those resigning deputy tree wardens and the project's leader, I resigned, not because townspeople had differing opinions about planting sites, but rather because of the missteps of the current selectboard.

1. At its April 9 meeting, the board referred to the Rutter Tree Fund as "taxpayer money" and "community money."

Last November, selectboard chair Jim Faulkner wanted his fellow board members to

"understand this Rutter Tree Fund, there's not a penny in there that is taxpayers' money; it's all donation." Faulkner then acknowledged that the town was missing any paperwork on this fund but said, "We're working on that now." Over four months later, no progress. Despite the advice of the town attorney to get together with the primary donors and work it out, the board never contacted donors.

2. On April 9, the board voiced concerns that planting plans did not get discussed in an open forum. While not required, the plan was discussed at the warned Nov. 30 meeting. And Faulkner asked for approval of the \$10,000 disbursement from the Rutter Tree Fund.

3. Last November, Faulkner told the board the tree planting agreement was in place for State Park Road and that it was acceptable, although not perfect. Last week he referred to the contract as "null and void" and "not legal, according to the attorneys."

For background, the agreement used for State Park Road was based on a template created by the previous tree warden, Larry Hamilton, and reviewed by the town attorney. It was modified for State Park Road, adding additional protections for the town. Traditionally, the property owner and tree warden signed the contracts. The recent contract was signed by both.

The legal issue arose with the passage of Act 171 in 2020 which inserted the local legislative body into the process when a tree warden enters into an agreement with a landowner. The act says that with the consent of the selectboard, the tree warden can enter into agreements with land owners to encourage a shade tree preservation plan.

To make the contract valid, the selectboard could have, at its April 9 meeting, authorized the tree warden to sign or simply co-sign the agreement; but the board chose not to.

4. Why did the selectboard go into executive session at its April 9 meeting on the basis that a discussion of the contract they deemed invalid "would significantly disadvantage" either the town or the property owner if it were to be discussed in open meeting? How could open discussion impact a contract that they deemed invalid, and why was a private conversation needed when the contract and issues were discussed in open meeting before and after the executive session?

5. Over the past two decades, the town has planted dozens of trees on private property

with a simple tree-planting agreement outlining the cooperation of the town and the landowner. I am unaware of any property owner coming back to the town with tree maintenance demands. Why does the selectboard treat property owners as enemies that the town needs to be protected from?

6. Four months have passed since they talked about creating a tree-planting agreement, four months since the board approved the disbursement of Rutter Tree Funds for the "purchasing, planting, watering of trees" on State Park Road, the garage and the trails. Four months since the board chair said they were working on the administration of the Rutter fund.

Six months of logistics, 40 volunteers, 50 trees — all wiped out just two days before the trees were delivered. They decreed that no trees should be planted Saturday, and no town water could be used to water the trees.

The volunteers who signed up to help plant trees represented almost every volunteer committee, commission and nonprofit in town. Charlotte runs on its volunteer efforts. I am extremely grateful for their support and cooperation. This benefit to our community and budget is huge. I'm saddened that this seems not to be the perspective of the current selectboard.

Alexa Lewis
Charlotte

Adding some clarity about the Rutter Tree Fund

To the Editor:

Thank you for writing about the select board meeting on Tuesday night pointing out the conflagration I missed due to being out of town. Unfortunately, Mary Mead's statement about the Rutter Tree Fund has put misinformation out in the public. And rather than have her narrative be the only one out there, I'd like to add some facts and clarity here.

Late last year another \$20,000 was sent to the town earmarked for the Rutter Tree Fund for the purpose of continuing the tradition of planting and caring for trees. About the same time the committee made a plan for the trees for State Park Road and trees to screen landowners along existing town trails in West Charlotte.

Here's a little history about how the Tree Fund came to be involved with the town garage landscaping project: When the town got the citizens of Charlotte to agree

to pay for the town garage, a line item for landscaping had been plugged in for \$25,000. As almost always happens, the building ended up costing more than was planned for, and the well of money ran dry before the landscaping could occur. So, Jim Faulkner asked the tree warden to help supply the trees and a planting plan.

Rather than cost the "taxpayers'" money, the Rutter Fund bought the trees, rallied the volunteers thus saving the taxpayers \$25,000. Then the selectboard put a pause on the entire planting scheme.

As Alexa Lewis stated, this planting project had been in the works for about six months. The tree stewardship team had Brett Towle, a professional landscaper and member of the team, draw up landscaping plans based on the original plan submitted by Horsford to the town. The selectboard approved the release of the money from the Rutter Tree Fund, and we ordered the trees. The selectboard approved the funding for the purchase of the trees.

The landscaping plan wasn't reviewed or approved by the selectboard, although Jim Faulkner had the plans and did not disapprove. It has never been the intention of the fund to do "landscaping jobs for public or private buildings around Charlotte," but as a kindness to the town of Charlotte we agreed to pay for the trees for the town garage, with no obligation on the town's part for any repayment. We did expect the trees at the town garage would be cared for by the town.

As for trees formerly planted on private property, with the exception of this State Park Road project, the agreements with the landowners have always stipulated that the trees are to be watered, pruned, fertilized and protected by the landowners. The trees on State Park Road would have been cared for by the Tree Tribe. Taxpayers have never paid for anything to do with the trees planted by the Rutter Fund.

Unfortunately, the Rutter Fund never had its own bank account so monies from the taxpayers for ash tree removal and from the charitable donations have been commingled. This commingling is not good bookkeeping practice, but Mary Mead has been doing a good job of tracking the two pots of money (Rutter Tree Fund and preemptive ash tree removal fund). Because there are so few donations and expenses for the Rutter Fund, however, the charitable funds can easily be

SEE **LETTERS** PAGE 5

PUBLIC NOTICE
THE SPORTS CAR CLUB OF VERMONT
PRESENTS THE HISTORIC
MT. PHILO HILLCLIMB
May 04-05, 2024
AT MT. PHILO IN CHARLOTTE, VT

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



Farm-Crafted Compost™

"Compost and topsoil for gardening connoisseurs"

Convenient Low-Cost Delivery

Also Available:

Topsoil Plus – Raised Bed Mix: A weed-free blend of compost, silt, peat moss, high-carbon wood ash and broad spectrum rock dust.

Topsoil Plus – Lawn/Flower Mix: A weed-free blend of compost and silt for thriving flower beds and lawns.

Champlain Valley Compost Co.

Serving NW Vermont gardeners since 1996

802-363-3930 | champlainvalleycompost.com

Glimpses of area eclipse gazing

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

The Charlotte Selectboard had had a long discussion about how to deal with a huge crowd at the town beach to view the eclipse before the event.

Members of the board worried about people camping out afterward and huge amounts of litter being left.

But at the selectboard meeting on Tuesday night, a day after the moon silhouetted the sun, chair Jim Faulkner said they had only picked up three bags of trash that morning and only found two people camping.

“It seems that I’m eating some crow,” said board member Lewis Mudge, who had been particularly concerned about eclipse crowds and too much revelry at the beach. “It seems that it was the nerds out last night, and not the partiers.”

On April 8, all over northern Vermont people donned eyewear appropriate for a Devo cover band. Even some dogs.

As Lee Krohn was taking photos of the eclipse at the Patrick Leahy Burlington International Airport, a man proposed to his girlfriend. She said yes, Krohn reported.



Eclipse proposal

The celestial phenomenon was amazing, but the human bond that spontaneously formed in the presence of the astronomical marvel was unearthly. Strangers became best friends in minutes. Sharing and cooperation were the order of the day.

All over, there were amateur astronomers with telescopes encouraging any and every one to share their expensive equipment and experience the grandeur more close up.

At the Burlington Pier, as the day descended into night, people spontaneously sprang into a cappella celebration. Besides the inadvertent yells and gasps, some began to sing.

Strangely, the most common song sung, at times in tune, was Soundgarden’s “Black Hole Sun,” instead of the more predictable Creedence Clearwater’s “Bad Moon Rising.”



Photo by Alexandra Z. Lazar



Photo by Lee Krohn



Photo by Peter Joslin

Looking east towards the Green Mountains, Camels Hump and Dylan Preston’s barn and silo, as an artist Peter Joslin was fascinated by the colors of the sky during the eclipse.



Photo by Lee Krohn

LETTERS CONTINUED FROM
PAGE 3

identified. Lewis Mudge suggested that the charitable donations could be construed as taxpayer money. I'm unaware of any universe in which this would be a logical assumption.
Robin Coleburn
Charlotte

(Robin Coleburn is the daughter of Bill Rutter who started the Rutter Tree Fund with a donation from his father.)

Resigning as tree warden with resolve but also sadness

To the Editor:

On April 10, I resigned my position as the volunteer town tree warden for Charlotte. Our deputy tree wardens, Susan Smith and Alexa Lewis, also tendered their resignations. I took this step with resolve, but also with sadness because I enjoyed many aspects of the job.

An important revelation to me about the tree warden assignment is that it is not so much about the trees as it is about the interesting and wonderful people in this great little town. I especially will miss working with our former deputy tree wardens and other members of the tree stewardship team: Robin Coleburn, Vince Crockenberg and Brett Towle. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to get to know many of you.

I am resigning because work with the current selectboard has become arduous and unproductive. The selectboard seems to be more interested in creating barriers than in facilitating our volunteer work. Communication has been poor. Important tree warden related items appear on the selectboard meeting agenda and I have not been informed. This has felt disrespectful.

There has also been bumbling. The selectboard chair took it upon himself, without consulting me, to send to the town attorney an outdated legal agreement used when landowners accept trees purchased through the Rutter Tree Fund. If he had consulted with me, I would have provided a recent version of the agreement, and we would not have wasted the town attorney's time working on an obsolete document.

There is a need to develop a revised version of the tree-planting agreements. It was unnecessary, however, to repeatedly and publicly complain that the current agreement somehow would put taxpayers on the hook for future care of the trees. Great pains were made to include language to prevent that possibility. In the 17-year history of this type of agreement, no taxpayer funds have been involved. Arguing about things such

as whether volunteers should be allowed to help maintain town-planted trees or if we can indicate that we "may lend watering tubs" bordered on ridiculous.

A shared and documented understanding regarding the operation of the Rutter Tree Fund is also needed. It is troubling to me that the selectboard members seem to be signaling that they want it to operate in a manner and for purposes other than what was originally intended.

The difficult dynamic with the selectboard came to a head with the tree stewardship team's most recent project, the planned tree plantings along State Park Road. We did due diligence, informing the selectboard, road commissioner, trails committee, the person who cultivates the landowner's field and others about our plans. Could we have done more? In retrospect, yes. That is one lesson learned from this episode.

The facts are these. We apprised members of the selectboard of the project and they approved disbursement of funds for that purpose. There was criticism of aspects of the legal agreement signed by me and the landowner, but the selectboard chair told us that he would not require us to submit a revised agreement to the landowner. We placed the order for the tree planting both at State Park Road and the town garage and proceeded with the planning. Holes were dug, stakes and other materials ordered and 40 volunteers recruited. The planting event was coordinated with other groups involved in the Charlotte Earth Month activities.

At the eleventh hour, however, the selectboard chair sent the State Park Road agreement to the town attorney, who declared it invalid because I was not authorized to sign agreements on the town's behalf per the recently revised state tree warden statutes. The selectboard asked for the State Park Road planting to be postponed. This was problematic due to the fragile state of the perishable bareroot trees and the challenges of coordinating volunteers.

Other solutions were available; a legal agreement was not required, and we could have gone ahead without it. Alternatively, the selectboard could have acted on the landowner's willingness to sign a revised agreement. We could have drafted a simple memorandum of understanding in the interim. Ultimately, the decision to plant trees on private property outside of the rights-of-way should be up to the landowner, not the selectboard.

I was presented with the option to proceed with the planting against the wishes of the selectboard. I chose not to do this. Before

trees went into the ground, the selectboard said there would need to be public hearings, a revised tree planting agreement template, and agreed rules for administering the Rutter Tree Fund. Given my previous experience with the selectboard, it seemed too difficult an uphill climb.

I am committed to helping Charlotte find and orient a new, well-qualified tree warden. As deputy tree warden, I benefited from Larry Hamilton's mentorship. I would like to pass that wisdom along. I remain an engaged Charlotte citizen, grateful to live in a town where people care, even if we sometimes disagree.

Mark Dillenbeck
Charlotte

NEXT PUBLICATION DATES

MAY 2

Copy Deadline: April 26

Ad Deadline: April 26

MAY 16

Copy Deadline: May 10

Ad Deadline: May 10

TO ADVERTISE CONTACT:
ads@thecharlottenews.org

SEND YOUR CHARLOTTE NEWS TO:
news@thecharlottenews.org



**JUST IN!
NEW RAINCOATS
FROM FRANCE!**



**JAMIE TWO-COATS
TOY SHOP**

54 FALLS ROAD | MON-FRI 10-5, SAT-SUN 10-4 | 802-985-3221

Around Town

Condolences

Allen Manley Martin has sailed on to calmer seas, departing on March 24, 2024. Allen lived a very active life, living his life in the Burlington area for 89 years.



Allen launched his career with his first business, Almartin Motors. His second business was Point Bay Marina for 38 years after bringing it back from bankruptcy.

Allen met his wife of 69 years on a blind date. Together they raised three children, Kathryn, Karin and Peter.

Allen had much joy giving the senior citizens of Charlotte boat rides on his boat, the Nancy Ann.

Allen leaves his wife Nancy; daughter, Karin Small, Kathryn Martin (deceased), and son Peter Martin (deceased); grandsons Matthew Small, Justin Small and Brennan Martin (deceased); and great-granddaughters Sadie Small and Mercy Small.

Smooth sailing, Poppy — you will be lovingly missed.

Donations can be made in Allen's honor to the Charlotte Senior Center.

Sarah ("Sally") Winston Robinson

was born on November 2, 1924, in Detroit, Michigan, and passed away on March 15, 2024, at age 99.

She resided in Osprey, Florida, and previously lived in Birmingham, Michigan and spent summers in Old Bennington and then Charlotte, Vermont. She was the beloved wife of Eliot Robinson whom she married in 1949, and together they shared 57 wonderful years of marriage. Eliot predeceased her in 2006.

Sally graduated from Bennington College in 1947 with a major in art and psychology and went on to receive her MFA from Wayne State University. She was driven by a passion for art and art-making, that came from her family background as the daughter of the noted art collector, Lydia Winston, and granddaughter of the famed Detroit industrial architect Albert Kahn. She was highly accomplished herself in printmaking and the technique of cliché verre and never stopped making art in her various home studios. Sally exhibited both nationally and internationally, including a one woman show of her works at



the Bertha Urdang Gallery in New York.

Vibrant and intellectually active to the end of her life, Sally also possessed a curiosity about others and world events. Throughout her life she spent time serving her community with Planned Parenthood, the Detroit Artists Market, Bennington Museum, and, later when she moved to Florida, cataloging rare plant specimens as a volunteer at Selby Gardens in Sarasota.

She loved to play tennis and competed in tournaments. In Florida, she was a superb croquet player and an avid bridge player.

Most of all Sally valued family and was an incredible inspiration and role model to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She instilled in the next three generations her love of art, travel and civic engagement. And above all what it takes to be a truly devoted mother and wife.

She is survived by her sister, Ernestine Ruben (Herbert) of Princeton NJ, her children Peter Robinson of Bloomfield Hills, MI, Lydia Robinson of Princeton, NJ, Suzanne Buchsbaum (Andrew) of Old Bennington, VT, and Sarah McGarghan (Kevin) of Charlotte, VT, eight grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

There will be a private family burial in

Michigan. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota, Florida, The Albert Kahn Legacy Foundation in Detroit and Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center in Birmingham, Michigan.

Arrangements are under the direction of Sanderson-Ducharme Funeral Home in Middlebury, VT.

Online condolences and tributes at sandersonfuneralservice.com.

Congratulations

Amelia Anair of Charlotte, who is studying accounting, was named to the Champlain College president's list for the fall semester for having a grade-point average of 4.0 or higher.

Heloise Guyette, Brennan Murdock and Stuart Robinson, all of Charlotte, were named to Champlain College dean's list for having a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher in the fall semester.

Juna Segel, of Charlotte, a 16-year-old homeschooler, competed in the American Association of Christian Schools' national competition at Bob Jones University in Greenville, S.C. last week and won first place in sacred piano.

Community Roundup

May the fourth be green with you at Charlotte Central School

On Saturday, May 4, the state of Vermont will celebrate its 54th Green Up Day.

As in years past, Charlotte's effort will be based in the parking lot of Charlotte Central School from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Green bags for trash that is picked up from town roadsides will be available starting April 27 at the Charlotte Library, Old Brick Store and Spear's Corner Store.

You can sign up for a route to "green up" at charlottevtgreenupday.com through May 3. Or you can sign up the morning of May 4 at Charlotte Central School.

Junior and Tyler Lewis will have trucks at the school for the trash that is collected, and Sustainable Charlotte will also be holding its annual electronics recycling collection.

Lewis Creek Association releases stormwater guidance manual

What is stormwater, and how can you help

manage it to promote healthier watersheds?

"How To Manage Stormwater To Promote Healthier Watersheds: An Ahead of the Storm Guide" was recently published to help you assess and understand where problems might be occurring on land near you and what opportunities there are to improve these areas.

Over the past year and a half, the Lewis Creek Association has collaborated with a variety of partners to develop materials, photos and examples of how to assess the land near you and what solutions to better manage stormwater and improve water quality may be possible. The final manual is now available on the association's website at <https://tinyurl.com/fdn7jss4>, as well as in libraries in the Lewis Creek and LaPlatte watersheds: Bristol, Charlotte, Hinesburg, Monkton, Shelburne, Starksboro, Vergennes and Williston. It is also applicable to properties in the Lake Champlain Basin or anywhere in the Northeast or beyond.

You can learn more about the problem and

what landowners can do to improve water quality in a 17-minute presentation on the Lewis Creek Association's website at bit.ly/lca-wq-videos. These include things like slowing water down, spreading it out and sinking it into the ground ("three S's" that are central to the Lewis Creek Association's Ahead of the Storm program. You can learn more about the Ahead of the Storm program at bit.ly/lca-aots).

The funding for this project also allowed the Lewis Creek Association and its partners to hold workshops to help landowners with poor water quality understand the connection between their actions on the land and the quality of the water in their area, introducing neighbors to some of the wildlife (bats, amphibians and reptiles) that depend on clean water.

Extension helpline provides free gardening information

Do you have questions about how to prepare your garden site for planting or want to know which perennials grow best in the shade?

Maybe you have a pesky insect that you can't identify or need advice on your soil test results. The University of Vermont Extension master gardener helpline is there to help for free.

Trained volunteers are available to answer questions from gardeners in Vermont on a broad range of home horticulture topics, including soil bed preparation and planting; vegetable and fruit gardening; annuals and perennials; backyard composting; sustainable lawn care; plant diseases; and integrated pest management, among others. All are experienced gardeners and graduates of the 16-week extension master gardener course.

Volunteers will be on hand to answer calls on the master gardener helpline from 9 a.m. to noon, Thursdays through October 31. The number to call is 802-656-5421.

Questions also may be submitted online at



Photo by Kim Findlay

A truck is loaded with trash harvested from the 2023 Green Up Day.

go.uvm.edu/gardenquestion. Gardeners are encouraged to include up to three clear photos of plants damaged by insects and diseases to help volunteers properly identify the problem and provide an accurate response.

Soil tests for home gardens are available through the UVM Agricultural and Environmental Testing Lab. For information, visit go.uvm.edu/soiltest. If you have follow-up questions about your soil recommendations, please upload a copy of your soil test report through the helpline online service.

Commercial growers of vegetables, berries, tree fruit and related crops should contact the commercial horticulture team at go.uvm.edu/hort for information and assistance.

In addition to staffing the gardening helpline, extension master gardener volunteers share their gardening knowledge by teaching workshops and staffing garden information tables at events around Vermont. They also plant educational gardens at schools, libraries, community gardens and other public spaces to demonstrate sustainable gardening practices. To request a volunteer for a public event, see go.uvm.edu/request-volunteer.

Hi! Neighbor

Emma Slater is filling a pastry niche in Chittenden County

Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

If Emma Slater, owner of Twisted Halo Donuts, had stuck with what she refers to as her first “adult-feeling” job, perhaps she would be the one writing this article. A native of Charlotte, Slater was one of The Charlotte News’s first interns as a teenager.

Growing up, Slater spent a fair amount of time in the kitchen. “My grandmother was an incredible baker of bread and pastries,” she said, “and my mom was a really incredible cook.”

In college, Slater gravitated toward languages. After studying French and Arabic, she moved to Algeria where both languages are spoken.

“Most kids who grow up here want to spend some time away before they can figure out their niche,” she said. “There were less Americans there than in other Arabic countries, so it was great to be thrown into the deep end and get full emersion.”

When the pandemic hit, Slater returned home and began working as a barista. She thought there was a lack of what she calls “approachable pastries” in Vermont, describing them as something you can eat on a daily basis, so she began to bake.

She picked the name Twisted Halo because that was her original donut shape.

“I discovered I really enjoyed the science and precision of baking,” Slater said, noting that when doing so on a larger scale there are additional challenges which she enjoys, involving logistics, people and managing the process.

Since she started Twisted Halo in 2021, Slater has baked 76 different flavor variations. She is currently baking a more manageable group of 12 and has moved away from pre-orders to fully wholesale which she said gives her more breathing room to develop new flavors and types of donuts.

Her personal favorite is a sour cream cake donut with orange glaze, but she confesses that she does not enjoy baking it on a large scale because it involves a lot of extra work like using flour with lower protein content and micromanaging the temperature of the dough before it goes into the fryer. Her favorite donut glaze is made with tulsi basil from Head over Fields Farm and blueberries from Adam’s Berry Farm.

Twisted Halo’s most popular donut is the cinnamon-sugar churro followed by the lemon blueberry brioche. Slater’s creations include sour cream cake, raised and glazed donuts as well as cream filled brioche. She uses 100 percent canola oil, and her flour comes from the Nitty Gritty Grain Company.

One of the things Slater enjoys about baking is the opportunity to use local ingredients with an emphasis on organic ones.

“We get inspiration and ingredients from farmers markets,” she said, noting that when there are surplus items or imperfect ones, she scoops them up for her donuts.



Photo by Maura Mead

Emma Slater’s Twisted Halo Donuts is named after the shape of her first creation.

Last year, heavy rain damaged the strawberry crop, so she and her team went to several farms, buying berries that weren’t going to last for more than a day. “The next week everyone got strawberry donuts,” she said.

Twisted Halo isn’t a family business, per se, but it’s mostly made up of two families: Slater’s and her friend Marissa Guidry’s. In peak season, there are three part-time employees and one full timer. At the farmer’s market, they may have as many as five people.

In the past, Twisted Halo has created some breakfast sandwiches at Champion Comics using local sausage and cheese, tomatoes from Head over Fields, and rolls from Nitty Gritty Grain Company’s flour. She would love to expand her menu and enjoys making croissants and scones but recognizes that she has created a lot of hype about her donuts which now have a devoted following. She’d love to have her own brick and mortar store and is in the process of trying to find one.

In addition to new products, Slater is working on some merchandizing, collaborating with some of the vendors at the farmers’ market. And although she hasn’t had a full weekend off in at least four years, she is building non-kitchen time into her schedule on Mondays and Tuesdays.

For now, Twisted Halo is based in the Champion Comics kitchen in Williston, but they also sell their wares at the Old Brick Store in Charlotte, Misery Loves Company in Winooski and the Shelburne Farmers Market.

In Shelburne, Slater tries to make sure she has at least half an hour away from the fryer to interact with the public and last year she made a point of trying to remember the favorites of some of the Little Leaguers who came by every week. “Seeing people enjoy the donuts is the best part of the job,” she said.

Education

A degree doesn't guarantee a job; a good interview can seal the deal

Margo Bartsch
Contributor

The cost of college is nearing \$100,000 a year for some undergraduate schools; yet, there is no guarantee of a job after graduation. Forbes reported this February that less than half of graduates feel optimistic with their career prospects. Nearly 60 percent of hiring managers say that college graduates are unprepared for the workforce. How can a student become confident in their abilities and build confidence with future employers?

Research findings show that 40 percent of college students feel that college did not teach them skills to navigate the work force emotionally or mentally. Reaching out to ask for feedback and pushing out of one's comfort zone are experiences that are learned in college. However, students need to take additional initiative to meet with professors, advisers and career counselors to perfect these skills.

Advocating for oneself and being patient to improve over time is part of adult growth. Professional skills are formed by learning from experiences. Top grades and professor recommendations are just one piece of the professional puzzle. Joining academic clubs, practicing mock interviews and participating in networking events are part of the college process that students need to add to their schedule.

Nearly 40 percent of employers have reported that they avoid hiring recent college graduates. Employer surveys reveal that many recent graduates fail to hold eye contact during interviews and have unrealistic salary expectations. By not doing their homework in being enthused for an interview or understanding entry-level salary ranges, the student may not appear to be a team player or show a desire to build skills on the job.

Employers scan LinkedIn for keywords that match academic experiences with job responsibilities. Being granted an interview shows that the student made the first cut. However, it is the interview process that sheds insight into the applicant's personality and character traits. In other words, many people can be qualified for a position, but it is the human elements that bond people together.

Shifting an interview into a conversation is an art. This is like writing an essay: share a story to bring the topic to life. The student



Photo by Aurélia from Pixabay

is the hero who interacts with supporting characters.

Be sure to research the company, culture and position. Let your knowledge and enthusiasm for contributing to the mission and team shine through.

Do not list attributes in an interview. Your resume has this covered. The interviewer is evaluating how the student approached a range of tasks, overcame difficulties and moved the process forward. People remember how you make them feel with your communication style and reflection process.

Typical interview questions ask about skills to do the work and lessons learned from various experiences. For example, illustrating teamwork can explain how the applicant interacted with people who have different skills, backgrounds and perspectives.

During the interview, many employers mention that recent graduates do not dress appropriately, refuse to turn on their Zoom camera, or even bring their parents to the interview! First impressions are memorable: it is hard to overcome an awkward interaction.

Wearing business-casual attire is a safe bet to help the applicant get in the mindset

of an important discussion and shows the potential employer that the meeting is a priority from a typical interaction. Researching online resources can provide dress code options to feel comfortable and at ease in the professional environment. The little details can make a big difference.

Reaching out to schedule an informational interview with neighbors or colleagues who work in fields of interest is a great first start to become familiar with the social dynamic of the work environment. For example, if a student is interested in becoming a journalist, contact local newspaper editors and writers. The informal meeting can ask about their experiences and thoughts on the future. People are usually open to passing forward information to future professionals.

Be sure to write a thank you note after the meeting. Reflect on an anecdote from the conversation and why it was a meaningful discussion. Personalization shows a greater sense of engagement and interest. Each meeting should build confidence with the interview process, while adjusting responses from mistakes.

College includes mastering the skills to perform tasks and work as a team. Building professional networks can bridge academic knowledge to the real world.

Stellar interviews are the catalyst that can tip a candidate into the winning half of job seekers.

(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.)

Education

Charlotte Central School transitions into spring sports

Naomi Strada
(Summarized by Tom Scatchard)

A newer tradition at Charlotte Central School has been the monthly all-school meetings that are hosted by different grades. In early April the second graders taught students and staff all about the solar eclipse and what to expect. Songs like “Walking on Sunshine” and “Total Eclipse of the Heart” kept the mood lively, helping students dance into and out of the multi-purpose room.

Not only did the learners share facts, they created a demonstration for all to understand better how an eclipse happens. Every student brought home a pair of eclipse glasses.

Spring sports

Charlotte Central School is preparing for spring sports — baseball, track & field and ultimate frisbee.



The Charlotte News file photo.

This seasonal transition was a great opportunity to reflect on the co-curricular experiences provided to the students of Charlotte Central School. In the fall, students in fifth-eighth grades could choose between cross-country or soccer. This winter, there were four teams for basketball.

Other clubs like Lego robotics, math counts and theater give students other options for connecting with peers and

doing what they love. These opportunities would not have been possible without the coaching and coordination by the team of educators.

District III jazz festival

On April 5, the District III jazz festival was held at Browns River Middle School in Jericho. Students from 12 Chittenden County middle schools participated, including Charlotte Central School.

Band director Andy Smith has been co-managing the festival since its inception 10 years ago. This year, he guest conducted the maiden voyage of the D-3 jazz combo.

Riak Chol, a Charlotte Central School alto sax player, was a featured soloist in this ensemble and wowed the audience by performing three memorable improvised solos.

Nathaneal Akselrod (trombone) and Odie Kallock (tenor saxophone) were incredible section players in the D-3 big

band. They have gained a reputation of being solid and dependable members of the middle school festival scene as they also participated in the District III band, orchestra and chorus festival held in February.

Owen Scriver played lead trombone in the big band and turned the heads of the band directors, fellow ensemble members and audience with his creative and bold solos. He was featured in two tunes and was a highlight of the evening.

Liam Anderson drove the entire big band by performing on the upright bass. He set the groove. He created a buzz with his outstanding solo and the feel he brought to the tunes.

Charlotte Central School could not have had better representation. The students, once again, made the whole community proud.

Legal tender would actually be legal tender under S.175

No credit card? No problem, under Vermont Senate bill requiring accepting cash payments

Brooke Burns
Community News Service

The number of Vermonters without bank accounts has climbed in recent years, from 0.7 percent of households in 2019 to 2.5 percent in 2021, according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. A Senate bill would look to protect the consumer power of those households by requiring businesses to accept cash for transactions under \$1,000.

S.175 (<https://tinyurl.com/39f6wj8v>) was introduced by Sen. Andrew Perchlik, D/P-Washington, in a Feb. 22 Senate economic development committee meeting. Perchlik said constituents approached him about such a bill after they were turned away from a business because they only had cash, and soon he realized many groups in the state could often be in the same situation.

“There was concern about refugee populations,” he said in an interview. “At first I was like, ‘How many people don’t have credit cards?’ It seems like it’s pretty prevalent, electronic pay of some sort. And then I found out there really are people getting out of prison or people that are immigrants or people that have had problems with credit cards that purposely don’t have them so that they don’t get into debt. And so it was more common than I thought.”

Perchlik said he also heard from an employee at a ski resort that went cashless who noticed customers were surprised they needed credit cards to purchase not only lift tickets and equipment but also food and beverages.

“The person in the ski area thought it was something that businesses did on purpose, and it was becoming more common as a

way to get people to spend more money because, according to this person, people are more likely to spend money when they don’t have to see the cash or hand it over,” Perchlik said in the interview. “Or if a parent is giving money to a kid for lunch, they can say, ‘Here’s \$20 — you have to spend within \$20.’ Now it’s, ‘Here’s a credit card.’”

Similar legislation requiring businesses to accept cash has been enacted in Connecticut, Colorado, New Jersey and Massachusetts, as well as by local governments in New York

SEE **CASH** PAGE 10



**The Town of Charlotte
TOWN MEETINGS
AND AGENDAS**

Visit charlottevt.org
for more information

**Charlotte Park & Wildlife Refuge
Oversight Committee**
Thursday, April 18, 5:30-7 p.m.

Republican Committee Caucus
Thursday, April 18, 6-7 p.m.

Planning Commission meeting
Thursday, April 18, 7-9 p.m.

Selectboard Regular Meeting
Monday, April 22

**Charlotte Conservation
Commission meeting**
Tuesday, April 23, 7 p.m.

Into the Woods

Working forests can maximize ecological, economic and cultural forest values

Ethan Tapper
Contributor

We can put the ways that forests benefit our lives and our quality of life into three general categories: ecological, economic and cultural.

The ecological benefits of forests include how they clean our air and our water, regulate our climate and do much, much more, providing the means for humans, and so many other species, to exist.

Forests also provide economic benefits, adding billions of dollars to Vermont's economy and growing local, renewable resources like wood that enrich our lives and lower our reliance on more harmful resources produced elsewhere.

Finally, forests provide cultural benefits. They are inarguably essential to our identities as Vermonters, to so many of the things that we do and value and love.

As we envision a future for ourselves and for our forests, balancing all of these benefits is key: How can we care for forests in a way that creates and sustains an ecologically, economically and culturally functional landscape?

Almost anywhere that there are forests, they can be placed into one of three broad categories — production forests, working forests and reserves — a triad of forest management approaches with different objectives, that employ different strategies and have different strengths and weaknesses.

The first leg of the triad is production forests, where trees are managed essentially as crops, often grown and harvested on relatively short rotations and using intensive management techniques. Production forests may be more diverse forests of naturally-regenerating trees, but globally often take the

form of monoculture plantations.

Production forests provide some of the ecological benefits of a natural forest, but their main strengths are economic; they provide huge amounts of renewable resources, jobs and local economic benefits. It should also be said that the fact that production forests produce so many renewable resources is itself a powerful global ecological and cultural benefit, lowering our reliance on resources that cause significant harm to ecosystems and peoples elsewhere.

The second leg of the triad is working forests, the category that nearly all forests in Vermont fall into. These are forests that are periodically managed for wood and other resources, but also for a wide range of other values: things like biodiversity protection, carbon, wildlife habitat and recreation. The economic benefits of working forests are not as concentrated as production forests (so you need a much greater acreage to produce the same quantity of resources), but they provide periodic economic benefits, as well as more ecological and cultural benefits than production forests.

Finally, the third leg of the triad is reserves. Reserves are forests that are essentially unmanaged (although we use the term passive management), allowed to develop largely without human intervention. Reserves may provide some economic benefits from tourism and forest-based recreation, but their primary benefits are ecological and cultural.

While you may be biased toward one leg of the triad or another, production forests, working forests and reserves are likely all necessary to meet our ecological, economic and cultural needs. The three legs of the triad exist in a dynamic relationship with one



Photo by Ethan Tapper

A freshly managed area of Ethan Tapper's own forest in Bolton. Working forests are managed for biodiversity, climate resilience and more, while also producing local, renewable resources.

another. If we want more reserves, we will also need more production forests to produce the resources that we need to sustain us; if we want fewer production forests, we will need far more working forests and fewer reserves. If we say "not in my backyard" to working forests in Vermont, we are likely saying "yes" to production forests somewhere else.

Of these three forest types, I think that working forests are by far the most radical and beneficial. They are the only forests that we have a real relationship with, the only ones that truly balance all the things that we ask, and require, from our forests. In working forests we can recognize our responsibility to protect forests for their own sake (like a reserve) and to produce

renewable resources (like a production forest), while also acknowledging that we can play a positive and even regenerative role in these ecosystems — not as a farmer of a crop, not as a bystander, but as the steward of a complex and precious living system. While we need some production forests and reserves, I believe that working forests are the place where we can maximize the ecological, economic and cultural values of forests.

(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.)

CASH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

City and Philadelphia.

In a Feb. 28 committee meeting, one senator expressed concerns over the safety of businesses carrying large amounts of cash, especially those open late at night.

"If you have an employee in an isolated location, or alone at night in a convenience store and it's held up, it's difficult to get employees after that," said Sen. Ann

Cummings, D-Washington, adding later, "It's nice until we can't get anybody to man the transfer station or the convenience store at night."

At the same meeting, Sen. Randy Brock, R-Franklin, questioned the need for the bill at all.

"The merchant can decide," Brock said. "And if you don't like the merchant's policy, you'll go elsewhere. But you can always change the merchant. If the merchant is losing business, they're not going to do business that way."

Jay Greene, a policy analyst from the Vermont Office of Racial Equity, testified in support of the bill and its potential for protecting the consumer power of marginalized people in Vermont.

"Protecting the right to pay cash is one of the office's top policy priorities for this legislative session," Greene said in the Feb. 28 meeting.

"There are a significant number of Vermonters who are unbanked," Greene added later. "There are likely racial disparities in who is unbanked in Vermont. It's more likely to be a person of the household of color who is unbanked, a Black or Hispanic household. So our office is strongly in favor of making this legislation the most protective of unbanked and underbanked households that it can possibly be."

In a letter (which can be seen here: <https://>

tinyurl.com/4a33uaxj) to the committee, the Office of Racial Equity cited the importance of cash as a failsafe.

Cash "can survive natural disasters, electrical grid failures, outdoor and open-air market settings and cashless transaction system failure scenarios," the letter reads. "Vermont is likely to experience more frequent and more severe natural disasters in the near future due to climate change. It is essential that retail businesses maintain the infrastructure needed to accept cash in case cashless payment systems fail."

If passed, S.175 will go into effect July 1.

(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.)



ANIMAL HOSPITAL
of
HINESBURG

482-2955
205 Commerce St.
Hinesburg

Integrating compassion, expertise & service

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



Sacred Hunter

Seems like growing older means more catch and releasing

Bradley Carleton
Contributor

Even us whacky ice fishermen, who love the cold barren environment on the frozen lake, share a certain affinity for the second Saturday in April. Known in some circles as the “Glorious Opening Day of Trout Season,” for many of us it is simply the celebration of swiftly flowing water and the hope of hooking up with nice holdover rainbow.

For others it means a trip up to the Willoughby River to watch the spawning steelhead catapulting themselves over the rapids as they swim upstream to spawn.

For still others, it is the mere camaraderie of sharing a hot cup of French roast coffee from a thermos, talking about the long winter and how many cords of wood we set aflame in our woodstoves.

Whatever the reason, whatever the motivation might be, it is indeed a glorious way to embrace the spring. Hope springs eternal in the heart of an angler. Even though the chance of catching a tired but hungry trout on a deep beaded nymph fly is remote at best, it is the love of the fight that brings us to the streamside.

We will cast all morning long at every possible hidey-hole in the river. Drifting our fly over the rapids and into the tail of a deep pool, there is hope, there are prayers, that maybe, just maybe, we might feel that tug on the rod and be quick enough to set the hook into a big kype-jawed brown. Sometimes, it does happen on the first day, but it is the hope and faith that keep us there in conditions that are not amenable to the salmonids. Frustration

does not exist. Persistence and faith are the virtues of the experienced angler.

Much like the book “A River Runs Through It” by Norman McLean, fishing for trout is closer to a religion for some than for those who attend church every Sunday. The sheer power of nature as it is reflected in the hydraulic energy of a briskly flowing stream. The rearranging of pools and underwater landscapes dramatically altered by one ice jam in a brook way up in the mountains, suddenly releasing its pent-up energy. If one is reflective enough to stop and think, “How in the world can a trout survive a winter where the river is locked up and then not get washed out when the giant waves of ice water cascade down from the streams into the river?”

How did this trout eat all winter? Where did he hide? What is this remarkable instinct that drives them to expend so much energy to jump up and over the falls?

If you take the time to ponder these piscatorial philosophies, you will inevitably find yourself with a deepening respect and love for these fish. It is this love, this respect, that draws out the best in humanity. We can return to the stream each year, like a pilgrimage to a watery Mecca, to find the best of ourselves as we cast our lines into the murky depths and pray for a connection.

Lost in thought streamside, hours pass by, and we find that we are in what athletes refer to as “the zone.” It is at this pinnacle of mindfulness that it happens. Bang! The rod bends down toward the rushing water and we bow with it, then raise the tip up quickly but not violently, so as not to pull the hook out of



Courtesy photo

Kazmin Thibault of Charlotte with a beautiful brook trout.

the mouth. The fight begins.

The rod begins to thump and swing from side to side as the fish seeks to shake the entomological deceiver from its jaws. Keep the tip up and enough tension to keep the hook set — but not too much.

When the fish swings downstream, walk with him. When he swings back up into the raging current, play the rod to the upstream side. It’s like a beautiful choreographed tango where two beings are mirroring each other, connected by a thin piece of monofilament line and a tiny hook. Delicate yet powerful.

Finally, the fish begins to tire, and you gently retrieve the line, allowing it to swirl at your feet. Do not reel. Honor the retreat. Once the fish is brought to hand, take the time to admire the beauty of this miracle. Will his flesh nurture yours tonight, or will you choose to release him back to the stream to live to fight another day? It seems that the older I get the more I choose the latter.

(Bradley Carleton is executive director of Sacred Hunter.org, a nonprofit that seeks to educate the public on the spiritual connection of man to nature.)

Calendar

Send us your calendar events two weeks in advance to news@thecharlottenews.org

Art in Shelburne Through May 11

Book Lab, a group of 10 Vermont artists, will show artist books and book related artwork at Village Wine and Coffee in Shelburne, April 15-May 11. Charlotte artist Marcia Vogler will have several pieces in the show including a grouping of collaged birds.

Park & Wildlife Refuge workdays April 20 & 23, 10 a.m.-noon

A workday may include clearing invasive plants, weeding or planting native wildflowers and grass seeds at the Charlotte Park & Wildlife Refuge. Contact Sue Smith for details at ssmith@gmavt.net.

Vermont Poetry Festival Saturday, April 20, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

The Green Mountain Writers Group will host the second annual Vermont Poetry Festival in Underhill Center at the Historic District 5 Schoolhouse. A morning poetry writing workshop, “Ending the Silence,” will be led by poet Jodi Girouard. At noon, there will be a break for a potluck lunch and barbecue. At 1 p.m., there will be poetry readings at the schoolhouse. If you would like to read, register. Scheduled poets will be followed by an open mic for anyone in the audience who wants to share their own poetry. For more info: Stephen Kastner at 802-557-4397 or stephen.kastner@gmail.com. Tickets at <https://tinyurl.com/2unrhn8j>.

Masonry in Early Vermont Sunday, April 21, 2 p.m.

Masonry has always been a presence in the Green Mountain State. From the first settlers to the present, Vermont masons have made a difference in their communities. Ira Allen, Thomas Chittenden and other Vermont founders were members of this fraternity. Join Robert Grandchamp, historian and past master of Mt. Mansfield Lodge #26, at the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum at 2 p.m. on April 21 for a talk on this fascinating subject and how masonry helped shape the early history of the Green Mountain State. Admission is free but donations are accepted.

Earth Day at the library Monday, April 22, 7 p.m.

Celebrate the ways we’ve protected the environment on Earth Day at the Charlotte Library. Learn how local conservation organizations like the Lewis Creek Association, the Charlotte Energy Committee and the Charlotte Conservation Commission got started. Earth Day, since it was founded in 1970, has inspired generations of people to protect the environment. They have done this through direct action and public campaigns, and by starting environmental organizations and educational programs. For more information contact John Howe 802-734-8820 or johnh@gmavt.net.

‘Steamboats, Subchasers and Shipwrecks’ Tuesday, April 23, 6:30 p.m.

Brian Knight, architectural historian and preservation planner, will trace the history of the Shelburne Shipyard from the earliest steamboats through the World War II

manufacture of subchasers to the recent investigations of shipwrecks in Shelburne Harbor at the Shelburne Town Hall. Enter by the Pierson Library main entrance.

Secrets of Mount Philo Saturday, April 27

Judy Chaves will lead a history-focused, guided hike up Mt. Philo on Saturday, April 27. Learn the mountain’s fascinating history and discover where evidence of that history hides in plain sight. Early spring is a great time for this — the park is closed officially (no cars) and the leaves are still off the trees (views). Plus, this year marks the park’s 100th anniversary; what better way to celebrate? Number of participants is limited to 20, so send an email to chaves@gmavt.net soon to reserve your spot. You will then get more info.

Job Fest Thursday, May 2

The Middlebury Spring Job Fest will be on Thursday, May 2, at Middlebury Parks & Rec on Creek Road. This unconventional job fair should feel a bit more like a farmer’s market. Vermont Department of Labor says both jobseekers and employers have preferred outdoor venues and felt as though conversations were easier. The event will be moved into the gym in the event of inclement weather. For more information, contact the Department of Labor office at 802-388-4921. Registration is required at <https://tinyurl.com/ycjzvsth>. You will be provided additional information and reminder notifications as the event approaches.

Green Up Day Saturday, May 4, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

The 54th annual Green Up Day in Charlotte

will happen on Saturday, May 4, with activities beginning at Charlotte Central School at 9 a.m. Green bags can be picked up starting April 27 at the Charlotte Library, Old Brick Store and Spear’s Corner Store. You can continue to sign up for a route through May 3 at charlottevtgreenupday.com.

Shelburne Grab and Go Meal Tuesday, May 14, 11 a.m.-noon

Age Well and St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Shelburne are providing a meal to go for anyone age 60 and older. The meal will be available for pick up in the parking lot at 72 Church Street from 11 a.m.-noon on May 14. A \$5 donation is suggested. The menu is: chicken breast with sweet and sour sauce, brown rice pilaf with veggies and cannellini beans, Brussel sprouts, wheat roll, cookie and milk. To order a meal email agewellstcath@gmail.com or call 802-503-1107. Deadline to order is Wednesday, May 8.

Woodlands protection retreat Friday-Sunday, May 17-19

Maintaining and connecting habitat is important for the movement of wildlife across the landscape. Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife will hold their 2024 cooperator training May 17-19 in Waterbury. This weekend retreat will share information on improving habitat for wildlife, maintaining connected landscapes and improving forest health. The two-and-a-half-day session features presentations by state and local experts in wildlife and forest management and alumni from past sessions. Visit vtcoverts.org to download an application or call 802-877-2777.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY



Empowering families through financial planning.

Our team includes CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professionals.

802-878-2731 | CopperLeafFinancial.com

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS HERE!

Only **\$25 per issue** or **\$20 per issue** when you run six months or more.

Contact ads@TheCharlotteNews.org



Investing in better water

- Water Filtration Systems
- Water Delivery
- Water Softners

Call us today!
Culligan Water


802-865-0000
154 Brentwood Drive
Colchester

Brushhogging by Adam
Taking your bush to brush

Adam Dantzcher
Proprietor

Services:
Brush-Hogging
Chain-Sawing
Driveway Repair
Excavating
Lawn Mowing
Delivery/Haul-away
Roadside Mowing

802-578-8347
adamdantzcher@aol.com



Our Local Feast

Fiddlehead ferns only a spring delight if you cook them right

Dorothy Grover-Read
Contributor

It's almost time, you will find them soon — fiddlehead ferns, a local delicacy that signals the arrival of spring.

I was lucky enough to grow up in rural New England with an uncle who lived across the road, an avid forager of all things delectable in the woods. We feasted on mushrooms, ramps and other tasty early spring sprouts, ground nuts, berries of all types and his favorite fiddlehead ferns.

Fiddleheads are the early, tightly coiled sprout of the ostrich fern and resemble asparagus in taste and texture. They are called fiddleheads because they resemble the curled ornamentation on the end of a fiddle or other stringed instrument.

If left on the plant, each fiddlehead would unroll into a new fern frond. They are not cultivated, but are gathered in the wild in the northern United States and in Canada.

These sprouts provided the native population a needed hit of nutrients at this time of year, almost a spring tonic. Fiddleheads are a powerhouse with good antioxidant content and lots of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, iron and fiber.

When I don't make it out to the woods myself, I turn to my suppliers; it could be a man selling on the side of the road (same man, same pickup truck every year). But I'm happy that farm stands and co-ops, and even some of our larger health food stores, also stock them in abundance in mid-April through early May.

My sister-in-law had a secret foraging patch, and most years she brought some for me to cook and share with her. A fair exchange, as she disliked messing with the

prep, and you do have to prep them properly to make them edible.

If you are lucky foraging, you might find a morel mushroom or two in your wanderings. If so, use them as the mushroom in this dish.

Prepping fiddlehead ferns — a must

If you don't clean, rinse and blanch them, they will be beyond bitter and taste like old moldy grass, which is why many people think they don't like them. But if cooked properly, the taste is divine.

To begin, soak fiddleheads in cold, salted water for five or so minutes and rub off any brown scales with your fingers or a soft cloth. These are extremely bitter. Change the water and soak an additional few minutes. Discard the soaking water. If the second water is still murky, soak them a third time.

Prepare a large pot of salted water and once it is boiling, add the cleaned fiddleheads. Bring back to the boil and blanch for a minute or two or until the water looks like dark English Breakfast tea. It truly will. This is the bitter tannin you don't want to eat. Immediately soak in ice water to stop the cooking process. These steps are all important.

Once they are completely chilled, tumble onto a fresh tea towel and pat dry. You can do all this ahead of time and refrigerate the fiddleheads for a day or two until you are ready to use them, sautéed, turned into soup, stuffed into an omelet or just served with butter.

Fiddleheads, onions and baby potatoes

In the time it takes for the baby potatoes to cook, you can have everything else ready to go as long as you have prepped your fiddleheads. You can still find last season's sweet onions at the farm stands, but if you

happen upon Vidalia onions from Georgia at this time of year, they are a perfect substitute. We'll send them our apples in the fall in exchange.

This side dish has the lightest of dressings just to add a little zest. You can substitute other herbs you have on hand if you like.

If you don't have fiddleheads, use blanched asparagus. In fact, the two are interchangeable in all recipes.

Scrub one pound of baby potatoes, multi-colored if possible. Place the potatoes in a pan and cover with about an inch of cold water. Add some salt and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until the potatoes are tender. This will depend on the size of the potatoes, but start checking at about six minutes.

Whisk together in large mixing bowl:

- Zest and juice of one lemon
 - 1 heaping teaspoon of grainy French mustard
 - 1 scant teaspoon tarragon, minced.
- Set aside.

In a large skillet, heat over medium-high:

- 2 tablespoons of extra-virgin olive oil
- When warm, add:
- 5 or 6 large shiitake or morel mushrooms, sliced
 - 1 local sweet or Vidalia onion, sliced
- Cook until the mushrooms have started to brown and the onions are soft. Add:
- 10 ounces of prepped fiddleheads



Photo by Dorothy Grover-Read

Fiddleheads before being cleaned and blanching don't look appetizing. But after rubbing off the papery brown scales, soaking them, and blanching them in boiling water (which will turn dark like tea), you'll remove all bitterness and be left with sweet sprouts that rival asparagus in flavor.

Cook for another five minutes or until the fiddleheads are tender.

Drain the potatoes and add them to the dressing bowl, tossing in the fiddlehead mixture as well. Season with a little salt and a lot of pepper, taste and season again if needed.

Plate and enjoy. If you have some fresh edible flowers, garnish with those.

The second act: Reheat leftovers for breakfast and top with an egg if you like. Or turn it into a cold salad, sprinkling with a bit more lemon juice.

Weed's in the Garden

Greens for backgrounds just as important as brilliant blooms

Joan Weed
Contributor

The gardeners among us are looking forward to the blooms and colors of spring and summer. As beautiful as the flowers are, they shine more if a constant background with some neutrality helps set them off.

In my own garden I achieve this with grasses, sedges, shrubs, ferns and the foliage of spent blooms. It's so much more inviting to set off a beautiful bloom against a green plant.

I love a cluster of grasses through the many seasons — fresh spring growth, tall waving summer plumes, crisp fall straw-like stems. I leave the cutting back of grass clusters until spring to allow insects and small wildlife to nest, protected, in winter. They need to be cut back before the new green growth starts to appear but not too early so as not to disturb living things. I have often interrupted the slumber of solitary bees and toads with my garden clean-up.

There's an old rhyme which will help you determine what your clump of greenery is. It goes like this: "Sedges have edges, rushes are round. Grasses have nodes all the way to the ground."

One of my favorite ornamental grasses is

call Miscanthus silver feather and it makes a sizeable clump without any encouragement. Growing to 5 feet or so it waves in the breezes and adds another shape to the garden scheme. Definitely back of the border.

There is a variegated form as well but I find it difficult to control. The upright but shorter Calamagrostis Karl Foerster gives a sturdier, rigid appearance. Fescues tend to be small and are useful as edgers. The blue fescue is charming and makes a low clump.

Chasmanthium also known as northern sea oats has a truly interesting seedhead. At the top of nodding stems are flat russet sea oats. This can be an interesting focal point in your beds.

The pennisetums are mid-sized in height, and I especially like the rubrum which has burgundy highlights. The seedheads on this variety are soft like bunny tails with arching stems. The pennisetums are treated as annuals here.

My garden has so many different ferns. A few are native and some not but all are reliable and useful as fillers. The anthurium or lady fern is soft and delicate, easy to propagate. Cinnamon fern sends up a stiff brown seedhead as the season moves along. Osmunda cinnamomea produces a lovely

vase-shaped clump. I love the native adiantums. They look different than the stereotypical fern shape but spread out on wiry stems in the woodland. Matteuccia or ostrich ferns can grow quite large and seem to like wet places most. They are the same ones we harvest for the spring treat of fiddleheads.

The Japanese painted ferns add color themselves in cream, burgundy and green shades. Some are very pale with the cream dominating and others highlight the red tones. They are hardy and spread easily. There are so many sports of this type of fern. I find I need to edit aggressive ferns but this is not a difficult chore as they come up easily. And don't forget the many varieties of hostas whose leaves stay fresh till frost.

Among the foliage plants which also bloom for a short time are peonies, kalmias, iris and roses. I especially like peony foliage which is clean and fresh all summer and rarely has pests or disease. The iris are accent points with their spears reaching skyward and a



Left: Japanese painted fern Right: Sea oats (chasmanthium)

cooler green shade. Kalmias or mountain laurel has shiny clean foliage after the blooms fade. They add another interesting height to the design as well. Rugosa roses have bright green leaves but are loved by Japanese beetles.

As these foliage additions grow, they help to disguise the maturing foliage of spring ephemerals which must remain to nurture bulbs and roots. You'll find the various forms and shades of these background plants can be as lovely as the colorful blooms. You can appreciate designs and the nuances they offer. So, when you are shopping for bedding plants don't overlook the very useful greens that are as important as the flowers we are drawn to.

Library News

Celebrate Earth Day hearing stories of making a difference

Margaret Woodruff
Director

Earth Day, since its founding in 1970, has inspired generations of people dedicated to improving and protecting the environment.

Celebrate Earth Day at the Charlotte Library. Join others at 7 p.m. on Monday, April 22, to hear and share stories of earth activism and taking action to make a difference. Get inspired by hearing how Charlotte's conservation organizations got started.

Through the month of April, participants are being encouraged to swap seeds, plant trees, repair things, count frogs and promote pollinators among other things. Participants can use the Earth Month bingo card available at <https://tinyurl.com/mr28u76s> to keep track of events.

'Beaverland' author talk Thursday, April 18, 7 p.m.

Celebrate the release of "Beaverland: How One Weird Rodent Made America" in paperback at the Pierson Library in Shelburne. In the rich naturalist tradition of "H Is for Hawk" and "The Soul of an Octopus," "Beaverland" tells the tumultuous, eye-opening story of how beavers and the beaver fur trade shaped America's history, culture and environment.

Children's programs

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. We'll be exploring the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks, play dough. These are a few of the open-ended projects planned for Wednesday morning play-based



Photos by Anne Marie Andriola

From left, roasted grapes with ricotta and Spanish paella were dishes from the library's latest cooking book club event on April 10.

learning at the Charlotte Library.

Babytime Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.

Babytime is an unstructured hour at the library for parents, caregivers and babies so they can play and chat during the dark winter months. Explore books and toys and general conversation every Thursday morning in the young children's area. Ages birth to 18 months.

Let's LEGO Saturdays, 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Drop-in for LEGO free play. There will be loads of LEGO bricks out along with some books and prompts for inspiration. For all ages. Please note children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult.

Programs for adults

Stillwater meditation Saturdays, 9 a.m.

Poetry and meditation are offered freely and in person to the Charlotte community. Come for quiet reflection, contemplation and gentle meditation instruction. Respect for all beings and faiths is a foundational quality of our time together. Beginning and experienced meditators are welcome.

Men's book discussion Wednesday, April 24, 7:30 p.m.

Join the men's book discussion of "Demon Copperhead." The book is set in the mountains of southern Appalachia. It's the story of a boy born to a teenaged single mother in a single-wide trailer, with no assets beyond his dead father's good

looks and copper-colored hair, a caustic wit and a fierce talent for survival. Many generations ago, Charles Dickens wrote "David Copperfield" from his experience as a survivor of institutional poverty and its damages to children in his society. Those problems have yet to be solved in ours. Copies available at the circulation desk.

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.

Crochet & knit night Wednesdays, 5-6:30 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.

Short story selections Wednesdays, May 1 & 15, 1 p.m.

Join library director Margaret Woodruff to discuss short stories old and new on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Via Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/9c398wyy>.

Library contact information:

Margaret Woodruff, director
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian
Susanna Kahn, tech librarian
Phone: 802-425-3864
Email: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org
Please contact the library or visit the library website at charlottepubliclibrary.org for more information.

Celebrate the close of Earth Month at the Charlotte Library

Alexa Lewis
Contributor

As Earth Month comes to a close, the Earth Month coalition has planned a

celebration for 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, April 27, at the Charlotte Library. There will be guest speakers, activities, prizes and information about future events and ongoing volunteer opportunities.

Come to learn more about the work local groups do to care for our planet and consider a long-term relationship with your favorite town committee or commission.

The morning will start with a presentation from Ethan Tapper, Chittenden County Forester, on the benefits of intact forests and how conservation and smart planning can help protect and connect our forests. Then participants can peruse the tables to see what the Charlotte community groups have been focusing on — building trails, wildlife tracking, storm water management, pollinator gardens and much more.

Or help create some delicious soup from gleaned veggies and learn how food waste reduction can be a tool to stop the climate crisis. Bring your picnic lunch to enjoy along with Disco Soup and delicious Backdoor Bread.

There will be prizes awarded to those that have participated in Earth Month

events and filled out their "bingo cards." These are available online or at the Charlotte Library. Redeem your bingo cards, that document activities you have participated in this month, for some earth-friendly prizes that may include a flying squirrel house, a bluebird house, a bare-root tree or a bee hotel kit. You might win a four-week CSA subscription for flowers and berries.

The Charlotte Energy Committee will be giving away energy saving devices such as low-flow shower heads and outlet gaskets and make-your-own insect hotels.

Guided tours of the rain garden at the Charlotte Library will be led by Linda Hamilton. The Lewis Creek Association will have copies on hand of their new landowner's guide, "How to Manage Stormwater to Promote Healthier Watersheds: An Ahead of the Storm Guide."

The event will wrap up with Alicia Daniel, the founder of the Vermont Master Naturalist Program, sharing some thoughts about the importance of Earth Month and its continuance throughout the year.

Download a bingo card and take a look at the Earth Month activities planned for



this month at bit.ly/EarthMonthCharlotte. Join our ecochallenge team at bit.ly/48Vx4Qj.

(The Earth Month coalition includes the Charlotte Public Library, Charlotte Energy Committee, Lewis Creek Association, Sustainable Charlotte, Charlotte Tree Stewardship group, Pollinator Pathways, Charlotte Grange, Charlotte Land Trust, Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge and the Charlotte Conservation Commission. Adams Berry Farm and Branch Out Burlington are contributing to this event.)

Senior Center News

Take tai chi or watercolor classes but don't forget art exhibit

Lori York
Director

This month you might check out the new tai chi for arthritis class or the watercolor workshop for beginners or the April art exhibit. Or you might try out a new activity at the senior center.

Community events & services

Annual plant sale

Saturday, May 25, 9 a.m.-noon

Stop by the senior center's annual Plant Sale and stock up on a great selection of annuals and perennials at great prices. Rain or shine. If you're dividing perennials in your garden, pot (and label) a few to donate to the sale. Drop off plants at the center any time between Friday, May 17, and Friday, May 24. Need help digging? Call 802-425-6345 and leave your name, address and phone number. A team member will call to arrange a time to dig your plants. The group will be digging plants through May 22. Questions? Email Polly at ppolly62@ymail.com.

Age Well Resources

Monday, May 6, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Stop by the Charlotte Senior Center to talk with an Age Well representative about resources and information available for older adults. Also learn about the restaurant ticket program that can be used for meals at participating restaurants and the Age Well Grab & Go and Meals on Wheels programs.

Red Cross blood drive

Thursday, April 25, 1-6 p.m.

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

Alzheimer's caregivers support group

Wednesday, May 8, 4-5 p.m.

Are you caring for someone with Alzheimer's or know someone who is? Join the Caregivers Support Group on the second Wednesday of each month from 4-5 p.m. The meetings provide a safe place for caregivers, family and friends of persons with dementia to develop a support system. New date and time option to attend by Zoom or in-person. For more information or to receive the Zoom meeting link, email Susan Cartwright at cartwright.susan1@gmail.com.

Weekly Age Well Grab & Go meals

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

Programs

April artist exhibit

Found and Fiddled With

This month's exhibit, "Found and Fiddled With" describes Jan Lawson's style, themes, palette and materials. Many of her pieces reflect her emotions, ranging from the whimsical light-heartedness of snagging a mermaid and parading chickens to the despair of an earthquake, hunger and the horror of war. Jan enjoys experimenting with the

juxtaposition of colors and shapes in abstracts and collage.

Beginner watercolor workshop

Saturday, April 27, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

If you've always wanted to try watercolor but were too intimidated, "The Sky's The Limit!" with Ginny Joyner is the class for you. Every landscape painting starts with a great sky; learn the basics of water and washes for ways to create clouds, gradations and depth. Learn the properties of a variety of blue shades and experience the "zen" of watching paint dry. Class limit 10 students. For more information about Ginny Joyner, check out her website at ginnyjoyner.com. Registration required. Cost: \$35.00 plus \$6.00 supply fee which is paid to the instructor.

Shape-note singing

Sunday, April 28, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Traditional a capella, four-part harmony sung for the joy of singing, not as a practice for performance. Search "sacred harp" on YouTube for examples, then come and sing. Introduction to shape notes and scales is recommended and offered 30 minutes before each first Sunday singing. Contact Kerry Cullinan at kelynxtv@gmail.com to schedule. No registration required. Free.

Samba-canasta

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

Samba is a new version of canasta that has quickly become popular due to its variety of melds, which keeps the game interesting. If you are curious to learn how to play samba, call Sandy Armell at 802-425-3248.

Shanghai mahjong

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

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

Exercise activities

Tai chi for arthritis

Thursdays, May 9-30, 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Try out this new class. The benefits of a tai chi practice include reduced pain and stiffness and improved muscle strength and joint flexibility. Through learning the tai chi movements and practicing regularly, many have found significant relief from arthritis symptoms. Questions? Email belizahammer@hotmail.com. Cost: \$40 for the four-week session. Registration and payment by Tuesday, May 7.

Pilates fitness

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

This pilates class, for folks 55+, is designed to be challenging and safe. Phyllis Bartling leads the class through upper-body strength work with hand weights and mat exercises with the focus on working core muscles to improve balance, strength and posture. Cost: \$10 a class. No registration required.

Walking and gentle hiking group

Thursday, April 25, 9 a.m.

Enjoy the beauty of nature. Come walk at a gentle pace with other seniors. The group will meet each month for a congenial non-strenuous walk. Location to be determined based on conditions of the local walks. Meet



Photo by Lori York

Bob Stock, veterans outreach specialist with the South Burlington Vet Center, provided drop-in Veterans assistance at the senior center.

at 9 a.m. in the parking lot of the Charlotte Senior Center. Questions? Call Penny Burman at 916-753-7279. Registration appreciated. Free.

Yoga strength-building practice

Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-noon

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

Meals

Menus are posted on the website: charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday lunches

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

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

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

Follow the senior center on Facebook or Instagram at charlotteseniorcentervt.

RAISE YOUR HAND

IF YOU NEED MORE INTERNET SPEED

Try our faster speeds FREE for 60 days! SPEEDS UP TO 100 MBPS!*

It's time to get your hands on much faster Internet! Don't settle for yesterday's Internet speed when you have a home full of today's devices. Upgrade now to the incredible speed you need for maximum enjoyment when multiple people are streaming, downloading, gaming and more.

*Service availability and Internet speed will depend on location. Contact us for details!

www.greenmountainaccess.net

Communications Group © 2024

Try Our Faster Internet Speeds FREE for 60 Days!
Call 888.321.0815 to start enjoying more.

Write Ingredients

No quiche puns nor green eggs at senior center

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

On the Internet, you'll find a list of over 100 quiche puns. Reading one makes you wince, and then the next one is worse. They are quite painful, and I'll refrain from repeating any of them.

Instead, let's go with Mark Twain, who observed, "Noise proves nothing. Often a hen who has merely laid an egg cackles as if she laid an asteroid."

For now, let's skip the very pertinent political implications of that statement and note that in the kitchen at the Charlotte Senior Center, where volunteer cooking teams gather to put very good, fresh food on the table each week, there's lots of laughter but no cackling.

Put "quiche" into a search at The New York Times, and they offer 2,744 results. Many are quite traditional, but being the paper of "all the news that's fit to print," they also go for variety, offering quiche made with asparagus, tofu, bacon-and-apple, chard, cabbage, hot sausage, crab, raisins and more. I got to key lime quiche in beer and quit. Sometimes variety, rather than being the spice of life, is just weird.

I did find it interesting that Judge John Hodgman, with over 450 entries offering his vehement judgments about so many things, seems to have nothing to say about quiche.

There are lots of egg recipes in Jacques Pépin's beautiful "Art of the Chicken: A Master Chef's Paintings, Stories and Recipes of the Humble Bird" (available at the Charlotte Library), but no mention of quiche, so let's move on to "Green Eggs and Ham."

Not to worry: I can guarantee no green eggs will be used in the Monday Munch at the senior center. But speaking of green eggs, when Theodor Geisel stood up to receive an honorary degree from Princeton University, the graduating class offered a tribute by reciting from his most popular book, "Green Eggs and Ham":

"I do not like them in a house.

I do not like them with a mouse."

This cultural icon was a complicated man. Brian Jay Jones provides a good read (496 pages) and a good listen (18 hours) in "Dr. Seuss: Theodor Geisel and the Making of an American Imagination." I admit to being especially enthusiastic about books that provide both notes and an index as well as a good narrative.

Monday Munch April 22, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Quiche, salad and ice cream with blueberry compote.

To celebrate the blueberries in this Monday Munch dessert, here's Fats Domino with "Blueberry Hill" at youtu.be/8mix3gmzPa0.



Photo by Antoni Shkraba

Monday Munch April 29, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

50s drive-in theme: popcorn, pizza, French fries and root beer float.

Although senior center cooks won't be roller-skating up to your car windows with food trays, surely just thinking about the 50s drive-in theme must bring a smile. This website offers historical photos of drive-in restaurants rarehistoricalphotos.com/drive-in-restaurants-vintage-photos.

"Taste of Home" offers pictures and brief descriptions of drive-ins around the country at tinyurl.com/5cyyycuv. You'll see lots of root beer.

Wikipedia provides an interesting history of root beer. Imbibed in the United States since the eighteenth century, written recipes date from the 1830s. Starting in the 1850s, druggists sold it as a medicinal syrup. It has never gained much popularity in other parts of the world.

Pharmacist Charles Elmer Hires developed a root tea made from sassafras which he debuted at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. In 1919, Roy Allen opened a root-beer stand in Lodi, California. This became A&W Root Beer.

Ingredients in early and traditional root beers include allspice, birch bark, coriander, juniper, ginger, wintergreen, hops, burdock root, dandelion root, spikenard, pipsissewa, guaiaacum chips, sarsaparilla, spicewood, wild cherry bark, yellow dock, prickly ash bark, sassafras root, vanilla beans, dog grass, molasses and licorice.

Figuring that drive-ins are second cousins to diners, the Little Free Library for Kids outside the Grange (2858 Spear Street), funded by the Friends of the Charlotte Senior Center, offers "Frank and Ernest" by Alexander Day, a fun-filled picture book featuring the special diner vocabulary Frank and Ernest must learn when they buy a 50s diner and learn to run it. You can try your hand at guessing what food they serve up with this one: "Adam and Eve on a raft, wreck 'em, add a spot with a twist."

For more fascinating vocabulary twists, see "Diner Lingo" at Wikipedia. There, I was surprised to see "shit on a shingle," a term I first heard when I was in grade school. I

didn't know it was diner lingo but thought it was a good name for a food my sister and I complained about when my mother offered it as dinner fare.

Yes, we had to "clean our plates," but I've never eaten it since.

For a fun illustrated diner history, see "How Did the Diner Menu Get So Long?" in The New York Times at tinyurl.com/3tn7j4fu. This is a gift article, so you don't need a subscription to read it.

Here's Billy Joel on the piano with "Root Beer Rag" at youtu.be/OghK8XP0mdg.

And George Jones with "Root Beer" at youtu.be/CcoU1pk5SJM.



**Restoration, Preservation, and Construction
of Antique and Classic Boats**

802-425-2004

821 Ferry Rd., Charlotte | sam@darlingsboatworks.com

PRESORTED STANDARD

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