

The Charlotte News

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Good lookin'



Photo by Caleb Kenna

Things look good for a wonderful summer on Lake Champlain if this drone photo of Point Bay Marina is any indication. Caleb Kenna has published a book of his drone photos of Vermont: "Art from Above: Vermont."

Selectboard and state remember McCarren's accomplishments

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

On May 20, at the Charlotte Selectboard's last regular Monday meeting of the month, a week before Memorial Day, the board paused to memorialize one of its own.

The board began its meeting by pausing to remember late selectboard member Louise McCarren, who died Feb. 16.

On May 4, the Legislature unanimously passed a resolution recognizing McCarren for her accomplishments in both the private and public spheres, at both the state and local level, and as a triathlete and paddler.

"She served on the boards of leading Vermont corporate and nonprofit organizations and, in recent years, was an active community volunteer in Charlotte, and she had returned to public service as a current member of the Charlotte Selectboard," said the resolution, which was submitted by Charlotte representative Chea Waters Evans.

"If you take a look at her accomplishments, it's really quite remarkable," chair Jim Faulkner said.

Budget update

One of the first things on the meeting's agenda was a review of where the town budget was for the year-to-date with town clerk and treasurer Mary Mead.

On the plus side, Mead said that the delinquent tax list was low so far this year and that Thompson Point rent was coming in on schedule.

However, Mead said, revenues that were budgeted to come from her office were below expectations, at about 68 percent for recording fees, which is the lion's share of the budget her office brings in. This is a result of the housing market.

"People are not running to the bank to refinance and there's not a lot of sales going on," Mead said. "That is probably also part of the reason for the planning and zoning revenue budget, which is even lower at 46 percent."

A winner on the revenue side is the senior center, which had been

budgeted for revenues of \$37,000 and actually brought in almost \$46,000. This should go up even more with another month's worth of program revenue to come in.

Recreation programs have also beaten their projections so far this year, bringing in just over \$70,000 when revenue was budgeted at \$61,000. Although beach revenue is just 40 percent of what it is supposed to bring in, Mead was confident that this would be made up during May and June when people become excited to buy town beach passes.

The interest the town has made on its bank accounts is also up, having budgeted to get \$40,000 but so far having gotten more than \$44,000.

Another unexpected revenue is a \$10,000 Efficiency Vermont grant that wasn't included in the budget for the solar panels on the town garage, but she said she doesn't have a good picture yet of what the town will save in energy costs going forward.

"All in all, I think that we're in good shape with revenues and they will most likely come in higher than what we budgeted for them," Mead said.

Employee benefits "is right on target," she said.

Health insurance was budgeted for \$213,000, and so far, the town has paid just under \$178,000, but there are still other insurance costs to come with another month to go.

With the fiscal year winding down, other areas of the budget where expenses are looking good in relation to what was budgeted include recreation, the library and the town hall.

"The senior center is quite good. They're only at 71 percent," Mead said, citing as an example how low maintenance costs for the year were so far, with \$8,000 budgeted for the center, while only spending \$2,900."

"I don't know what that's about but it's good," she said. Costs are also down because the senior center has just recently hired a volunteer coordinator after having gone with that position

Senior center plant sale a blooming success

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Those in the know are aware that the early bird gets the best selection at the Charlotte Senior Center's annual plant sale.

Consequently, people began showing up at 8 a.m., even though the selling part of the plant sale didn't start until 9 a.m. Volunteers said gardening aficionados lined the red tape, pulled taut across the senior center parking lot to keep overeager buyers at bay until the official start time.

The parking lot was full, and cars were parked up and down Ferry Road.

Those of us who were unaware and showed up at 9:05 a.m. found there were still many great deals, but a lot of the really spectacular fauna finds had been scooped up. Nonetheless, there was an amazing number and variety of annuals, perennials, flowers, vegetables, plants for outdoor or container gardening, and even an assortment of hummingbird feeders.

Lane Morrison, chair of the Friends of the Charlotte Senior Center, said the plant sale is one of their two biggest fundraisers of the



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

This was the most successful plant sale in the more than two decades the senior center has held its plant-palooza.

year. The sale has been happening since 2002, and this year's was their most successful.

Money raised has been used to pay for facility improvements like painting, a new entryway and new rugs this year. The funds "keep the senior center looking clean and fresh," Morrison said.

Janet Ballantyne, who was selling cut flowers, lives in

Hawaii from January to May and Shelburne the other eight months of the year. She was volunteering at the plant sale in hopes of meeting new people.

Nearby, Doreen Kraft was reconnecting with friends as she sold raffle tickets to benefit the senior center. The \$5 raffle prizes

PLANT SALE

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bought folks a chance at a bird house by architect Rolf Keilman, a serving bowl from Susan Raber-Bray’s Springhouse Pottery, a 4x8-foot water color by John Howe or a garden party for four in Kraft’s gardens.

Wally Gates was collecting money from the many sales taking place in a 140-year-old cash box he inherited from his great grandfather.

Gates said his father had a small printing business in Burlington before he went to work for the newspaper there. He was city editor when he died on the job, doing what he loved to do, covering the Champlain Fair horse races.

Morrison said things were looking doubtful on Friday when Polly Price, who had been leading the plant sale effort, spending a couple of months on preparation and getting everything ready, tripped on a bag of dirt. Price had to go to emergency care with a broken wrist.

Morrison said they got on the phone to board members and other loyal senior center volunteers and marshalled forces to pull the plant sale together in her stead.

On Saturday, Price was at the plant sale. Although she was supposed to be managing the event from a chair, Morrison said she was up and active, interacting with the gardeners and their botanical fantasies.



Photos by Scooter MacMillan

Above: This wagon full of plants is nowhere near all the plants that Finn Aube was helping his mother Britney Aube pick out and load into their car.

Right: Magdalena Naylor and doodle mixes Bella and Zorba were enjoying the beautiful day while scoping out the plants.



Janet Ballantyne was selling cut flowers donated by Trader Joe’s. She said the plant sale is just one of many nonprofits the Caribbean-themed grocery store has been generous to.



Above: Wally Gates used a 140-year-old cash box to collect the proceeds from the plant sales.

Left: Although there was a big rush to begin the plant sale, after an hour there were still lots of shoppers and lots of plants to choose from.



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Here’s what’s been learned from village planning project

Larry Lewack
Town Planner

The initial Charlotte East and West Villages outreach wrapped up in April. Here’s a summary of how many residents participated, and what we learned.

From January through April, the project steering committee reached hundreds of Charlotters through a variety of methods. More than 85 residents participated in 14 listening sessions held in various venues across town. Another 68 participants joined two design workshops, one inperson and the other online. Around 300 residents completed two online surveys.

We now have an emerging picture of the community’s needs, preferences and hopes for the future of Charlotte’s two historic village centers.

We heard that residents enjoy and appreciate the villages as they are now, but want more options: Many respondents said they love the charm of their historic, compact and friendly villages.

Respondents also said they loved the villages’ rural character, existing architecture, locally owned businesses, the surrounding natural environment and the dark skies at night. That said, most Charlotters would like to have more stores, restaurants and other services available right here in town, rather than driving to Shelburne or Hinesburg villages to get their basic needs met.

Residents support increased density

in the villages. Most residents strongly support enabling more housing and limited commercial development in the villages, while maintaining their historic character. Small-scale, mixed-use projects are preferred over large, modern construction and commercial chain stores, reflecting a desire to preserve the community’s unique identity.

Housing density, scale and affordability are important. Residents want to maintain the small-town character and aesthetic of Charlotte’s villages when considering new housing developments. There was a strong preference for housing that blends with existing historic architectural styles and is scaled to the rural village setting. Many participants hope that allowing more density for housing on smaller lots in the villages will lead to creating urgently needed housing for downsizing seniors, smaller households and affordable homes for working adults with young families.

Both villages would benefit from more or enhanced community spaces. Many participants want the villages to provide more opportunities to interact casually in public with other residents. They expressed a need for welcoming and inclusive spaces and events that would serve the community



as a whole and strengthen bonds between people. These should balance serving the needs of Charlotte residents, while encouraging visitors, such as bicyclists and hikers en route to Mt. Philo, to stop and enjoy Charlotte, rather than just passing through.

Speeding traffic in both villages is experienced as a significant and ongoing threat to resident safety and quality of life. Both village residents and other Charlotters noted that excessive speed by drivers through the villages, combined with the lack of sidewalks or multi-use paths separate from roadways, renders walking and cycling between village destinations unsafe. Many residents are frustrated that the town has not acted to reduce speed limits within the villages and have not implemented typical traffic calming measures, such as:

- Reducing lane widths
- Speed bumps or tables
- Adding planted areas or street trees
- Creating gateway signage and other treatments to indicate a change of use to drivers.

Infrastructure is needed to support new development. Because Charlotte generally now lacks available community wastewater capacity and water supply in the villages,

many residents commented on these factors as a major obstacle to more development there. Particularly in the Charlotte West Village, some residents fear that allowing any new construction will deplete private wells there. There is also concern about whether taxpayers would be “on the hook” for the capital costs of building new sidewalks, water and wastewater systems, and road improvements.

It is not a question if Charlotte’s villages will need additional water and wastewater capacity to grow, but how much and where. Although it’s beyond the scope of this project, the project team has been conducting preliminary research into potential water and wastewater solutions for the villages and the range of options available to address these challenges. This research will be presented as part of the conceptual plan, due for release in the next few weeks.

Some residents are concerned that current zoning rules encourage widely dispersed, or sprawl, development in the rural district, while discouraging development in the villages. Some participants pointed out that the town’s current 5-acre zoning enables low-density sprawl, allowing large homes on large lots in rural areas of town, while blocking increased density in the villages, especially for new housing. Many residents asked that in addition to revising zoning rules for the villages, this project also

SEE **VILLAGE PLANNING** PAGE 5

SELECTBOARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

unfilled for a good while.

“I think it’s probably important that I point out, since I had asked the senior center to bring in more revenue, that they did, so thank you senior center,” board member Kelly Devine said.

Mead said that it seems like, if things continue as they have so far this year, the town will end up adding to its fund balance.

Tree planting

The selectboard again was discussing tree planting and the process by which that should happen, but it was not so controversial a conversation as of late.

Before appointing a tree warden to replace Mark Dillenbeck, who resigned recently, the selectboard approved, by a unanimous vote of the four board members who were present, an updated tree-planting application to be used by future tree wardens and landowners.

Former selectboard member Matt Krasnow was the only remaining applicant to be tree warden. There was another applicant who withdrew his bid for the position before the selectboard meeting after reading Krasnow’s letter announcing his interest.

Krasnow said he began his career working for Landshapes, a landscaping design and installation company. During this time the company started its own nursery, so he was involved with working with bare-root trees brought in every day.

“I learned a lot working in the dirt, how to take care of trees right from the get go

and also the joy of working with them,” Krasnow said.

In response to questions about working on the process for determining where and how trees are planted by the town, Krasnow said, “The most important thing is that we have a viable process that’s open to the public and accessible to the public and will kind of stand the test of time. That’s my goal.”

He was approved as tree warden by a 4-0 vote.

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Around Town

Congratulations

Elizabeth Breen of Charlotte received a Bachelor of Arts degree cum laude from College of the Holy Cross on May 24.

Brynn Hutchins of Charlotte was named to the dean’s list at the University of Vermont for the spring semester.

Isa Kaplan of Charlotte received a bachelor’s degree with a major in electrical and computer engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute’s 155th commencement on May 10.

Condolences

Margaret Christine Hargrave Kurt (Peggy) was born May 25, 1922, the youngest child of Christine Margaret Hembpt and Philip Henry Hargrave. Believing in reincarnation, today she is enjoying life as an eagle, following 100 plus years of a full life. Her mother’s family were farmers and bridge builders of German descent and her father’s family were English Irish builders who constructed many of the brownstone buildings in Harlem. During the Depression they lost their home her father built in Bayside. She moved with her mother to the Hembdt family farm in upstate New York to care for her ailing grandmother. A fond memory of this relocation was a special fourth-grade math teacher who took



an interest in her abilities. This friendly intervention was life-changing, strengthening her self-image and view of education.

At age 15 she moved back to Bayside. She loved being again near the ocean and the family members and friends she had missed. She also reunited with her childhood friend Hank Pimm. They became high school sweet hearts. They were married in 1943 while Hank was on a brief leave from the coast guard during World War 2. Tragically Hank was killed at sea in the Pacific theater. He had been struck directly by a Japanese kamikaze plane while on board his ship. She recalled that at the very moment Hank was killed, she experienced an overwhelming feeling of dread and collapsed while walking home. She said she knew something terrible had happened to Hank. After recovering from the grief of Hank’s death, she joined the Cadet Nurse Corp and began her training as a nurse.

She later enrolled in New York University where she met and married Karl Kurt. Together, on Long Island, they raised four children: Karl Michael (Mike), Kristy, Nancy and Kerry. As luck had it, a house became available on East Bayberry Road across the canal that led to the Great South Bay from her brother Herb. Uncle Herb’s was a great swimming destination. The family’s home was in walking distance to the Bayberry Yacht club and Bayberry Beach and Tennis club where the kids could have fun with friends and burn off energy during the summer. During those years, all her Hargrave brothers and sisters and their families lived

in fairly close proximity, as did their Kurt grandparents for frequent family visits and reunions.

In 1969, her family moved to Vermont when her husband was hired as a member of the University of Vermont development team. She had the opportunity to study contraceptive medicine at the medical school, a field of study she strongly believed in. During this time, she continued her education at UVM attaining her master’s degree in counseling. She encouraged her children to join the Lake Champlain Swim Club and the Burlington Tennis Club where they made many friends. With her desire to return to a nursing career and with her master’s degree in hand Margaret was hired as the head of nursing at the student health center. Together Margaret and Karl enjoyed lunches in the Waterman Building and swimming in the university’s natatorium during lunch breaks. They also enjoyed driving around Vermont exploring their new state and involving themselves in local politics. She ran for the Vermont Senate at one point enlisting her children to go door to door with her. At every opportunity she would tell whoever was in earshot to notify the governor to stop erecting buildings and roads without plans to prevent all the phosphorus and waste from ending up in her cherished lake.

When she heard that UVM was offering a nurse practitioner program she applied and was accepted, becoming one of the first nurse practitioners in Vermont. She used this knowledge to care for university students. After leaving with an active interest in politics, she was hired by the Vermont Nurse Association as their Montpelier lobbyist. During this time, she helped expand the nurse practitioner role in Vermont. Margaret went on to work for the Vermont Professional Standards Review Organization, evaluating Vermont hospitals and nursing homes to ensure they were maintaining health care standards. In recognition of her long and active nursing career she was recognized at the 75th UVM Nursing Anniversary ceremony.

Always needing to be near the beauty of water and the many activities it provided for her kids, in 1973 she found a home in Charlotte on the shore of Lake Champlain. She loved her home in Charlotte and her life working and furthering her education and her time with her family. She was always there encouraging her children’s further development. She took an active role in their lives frequently reminding us in words and deeds to always be positive, say yes to opportunities, work hard, continue to advance their education, keep their heads up, learn from their mistakes and enjoy life. She also taught her children to cook from scratch, eat plenty of tomatoes and avoid prepared foods,

as well as the importance of regular exercise, especially swimming.

In retirement she worked at Shelburne Museum educating the public about its history, a subject she has always studied and discussed. She also enjoyed her Klifa club friends, Charlotte seniors, Red Hat ladies and fellow Edge swimmers, an activity she continued into her 101st year.

Many of the medical doctors she had worked with and friends lobbied to pass Act 39, patient end-of-life choices. Margaret believed very strongly that everyone who met its requirements should be able to decide when to end their life. She also believed it should be expanded to include end-of-life directions that specify an individual’s wishes in case of severe dementia. One of the other limiting stipulations as it now stands is that the individual has to be able to self-administer the medication. She was able to embrace this legislation as her body was failing on Feb. 2, 2023, eight months into her 101st year, with family and hospice nurses and a social worker present.

Her loving husband Karl died in 1990 of melanoma, a cancer that is now treatable. She is predeceased by her sisters and brothers: Eugenie, Dorothy, Herbert, Irvin, and Elmer, and dear nieces and nephews: Mary Grace, and twin sisters Lynn and Debbie, sisters Ann Marie and Jane, and brothers Ken and Peter. Though outliving her husband, siblings and friends was a major drawback to a long life, She was thankful to have her children and grandchildren near to enjoy.

Left behind are her children Karl Michael Kurt, Nancy Hargrave, Kristy and Jeff Spengler and grandchildren Reid, Nick and Sarah Spengler, Kerry Kurt and her sons Keenan Kurt and Kyle and Olivia Carpinello-Kurt and their sons Odin and Griffin. The Ensminger and Berner families, who she so enjoyed when they visited almost every year, and Rose Marie Hargrave and other family members thoughtfully kept her apprised of the many Hargrave extended family members’ lives.

She held a special place in her heart for her son Mike, with whom she shared intellectually stimulating conversations and laughter. Mike bought her iPhones and iPads and whatever new gadget came along that enhanced her life as her physical abilities failed. She loved to drive, though knew when she had to hang up her keys in her late 90s. Never one to stay still, many have experienced her in her last few years tooling around Costco in a motorized cart or swimming at the Edge pools.

Always hardworking, positive, imaginative, encouraging, a strong believer in the power of educating oneself and remaining open to possibilities, we remember an indomitable lover of life and family.

Letter to the Editor

Thank you Nicole Conley for contributions as rec director

To the Editor:
Nicole Conley, it’s hard to believe Friday was your last day.
I’d just like to say, your contributions to the town and the creation and sustainment of recreation programs and facilities are deeply appreciated. And your kindness, patience and openness to collaborate with

the community will be sincerely missed.
Charlotte is simply better because of your efforts as our recreation director for the past nine years years.
You will be missed. Cheers to new beginnings!
Julie Phelps

(Julie Phelps is chair of the Charlotte Recreation Commission.)

VILLAGE PLANNING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

consider changing permitting rules for the rural district, perhaps by increasing open space requirements to better protect Charlotte's wetlands, forests and farms.

Residents view both villages as larger than the defined village district boundaries as shown on the town's official zoning map. Participants' opinions of the functional extent of the east and west villages varied, but generally were larger than the existing village zoning district. (This was particularly evident in the drawing exercises done during the design workshops.) This may indicate that a re-imagining of the village boundaries on the official zoning map, which defines what types of uses are allowed and dimensional standards, should be considered.

Charlotte's reputation as a community hostile to development is perceived as a barrier to change. At times, it seems almost any proposed development becomes a "lightning rod" for opposition. There is anecdotal evidence that this attitude has discouraged some property owners and developers from even applying for permits. However, most residents do not themselves express personal resistance to growth. Only about 3-10 percent of the village planning study respondents said they do not favor any type of housing or commercial growth in the villages.

There is support for Charlotte (or the state) creating a designated park-and-ride lot in or near the west village to encourage residents who work outside of town (67 percent of employed residents) to carpool and as a possible stop for future commuter bus service. Many residents said they already use existing parking lots as unofficial park-and-rides in town, including the town hall lot, the library and the post office. It's less clear if most residents support adding additional surface parking lots in either village, to provide overflow parking for special events.

Overall conclusion of this outreach: There is strong interest in allowing Charlotte's villages to grow to a modest extent. Most residents want to ensure that any growth is carefully planned, aligns with the town's existing rural character and supports community needs without excessive expansion. The community values its small-town aesthetics and natural landscapes and prefers village development that would not compromise these. A more detailed

version of this summary, including a list of all outreach and public engagement activities completed to date and upcoming project milestones, can be found on the town website's project page at: https://bit.ly/Charlotte_Village_Plan_project.

What's next

Consultants from Dubois & King are on track to produce a conceptual plan for both villages that will depict proposed village center designs for further discussion by mid-June. This plan will include housing, commercial and mixed-use concept drawings, village road, street and multi-use path designs and street sections, examples of multi-use community green spaces and possible park-and-ride lot designs.

The draft conceptual plan will first be reviewed and vetted by the planning commission with at least one publicly warned meeting in late June or early July and also be available for review. Public feedback will be used by the consultants and project steering committee to refine that draft, to be finalized by mid-summer. (Note: This will be a planning document only, not a final plan for formal adoption.)

Meanwhile, the consultant team will work this summer to produce detailed draft zoning bylaw (land-use regulations) changes that closely follow from the broad-brush parameters that were presented and refined in the village conceptual plan. The goal is for that team to present these bylaw changes as a package for review by the planning commission by Labor Day.

The planning commission will review and mark up these draft amendments to the land-use regulations on a fast track early to mid-autumn. The commission's goal will be to forward these vetted land-use regulation amendments (following formal public hearings) to the selectboard for their consideration by January 2025.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions, concerns or suggestions to share, please contact the town planner at townplanner@townofcharlotte.com or at 802-425-3533 ext. 206.

The project steering committee invites every Charlotte resident to be part of this exciting visioning process. To learn more, visit the project website at: http://bit.ly/Charlotte_Villages_project. You can also sign up to receive project updates (like this one) at this link: https://bit.ly/Sign_up_for_notifications.

Honduran connection



Photo by Marco Antonio Reyes Madrid

From left, Marco Antonio Reyes Madrid, Linda Gault Gilbert, Osiris Maldonado Rodriguez, Osiris Valeria Reyes Maldonado, Al Gilbert and Nicole Gilbert O'Brien recently reunited in Charlotte. The friends from Honduras were in Vermont to visit their daughter, a student at Norwich University.



Courtesy photo

In February, Linda and Al Gilbert traveled to Honduras with a Hands to Honduras Tela service trip. They helped with construction at a hospital emergency and obstetrics facilities, building a health center, dental hygiene, school uniforms and other projects in Tela, Honduras.



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Viveka Fox helps fencers find their Yoda in Charlotte

Noah Diedrich
Community News Service

The two opponents faced each other on the strip inside the Charlotte Central School gym, glinting blades held upright in front of their stone-still bodies.

Suddenly the fencers advanced, and the duel began.

Lunge. Parry. Riposte. Retreat. Silver blurs whipped past masked faces. The clash of their thin blades rang through the air. Amid the fray, one fighter guided her blade under her opponent's arm and struck his gray vest just below the pit. An electronic tone sounded, and the bout was over as quickly as it began. The fencers pulled off their helmets and exchanged a high-five.

Viveka Fox, 61, had been standing off to the side, watching closely. For nearly 30 years, the head coach of the Vermont Fencing Alliance has held practice here in Charlotte, teaching the sport to both hobbyists and competitors.

As an organized sport, fencing often requires pricey equipment and private lessons and attracts a fiercely competitive crowd. Like all sports, it also carries a history of sexism at the highest levels of competition. But Fox has ferreted out a way to remove these barriers in Vermont. Since 1992, she has taught fencing to students regardless of their age, gender, talent or financial ability. It costs \$65 for five classes, but Fox said the group makes exceptions.

For her, fencing seems so much more than competition: It teaches focus, quick decision-making and the importance of knowing one's opponent.

"I think our culture puts a lot of premium on being a star, and 'Who are the best of the best?'" she said. "But everyone is intrinsically an athlete for your health, for your mental, physical — it's so good for you."

Classes are split into groups of beginners and competitive-level fencers who learn in the same room. Fox often works on basic skills with the greener fencers while those in the competitive squad spar with each other, preparing for upcoming tournaments. They train with two of the three swords used in fencing: foil and epee.

The competitive squad trades jabs with and without weapons. In between bouts on this recent evening, they engaged in good-spirited trash talk: "You're next!"

The big-group style of class is unique, said John Colt, an assistant coach.

"She has a good ability to assess how to communicate with a given student," he said. "Everybody has their own language, especially when they're young and they don't know how their body works yet. I think she's pretty good



Photo by Catherine Morrissey

Fox, right, works one-on-one with a student in Charlotte.

at that."

Fox teaches students as young as 9 years old and doesn't place an age limit on any of her classes. She's taught students as old as 80.

Andrew Lamoreaux, 12, has been fencing for a year and a half now. The Burlington resident said fencing practice makes him "very hot, but the friends you meet are very valuable." In fact, the entire Lamoreaux family are fencers. Husband and wife Zach and Julie regularly attend practices with their sons Isaac and Andrew.

"She's very good at being encouraging without being discouraging," the Lamoreaux dad said of Fox. "There's a lot of places that fencing is a lot more serious and a lot less fun. You don't realize it here."

Rick Davis is the class' oldest student and one of its best competitive fencers. He was first exposed to the sport at age 60 while attending graduate school in Seattle.

Now, at age 74, Davis finds fencing more engaging than ever. Other sports pale in comparison, he said.

"They don't involve the constant analysis of what's going on and that intellectual side of things," he said. "Fencing does."

"There's also just the silliness," Davis continued. "I mean, here I am dressed as a cross between a French courtier and a waiter and fighting with swords. How much better does it get?"

Fox has stuck with fencing for most of her life. She was 12 years old when she first saw the sport at summer camp in Pennsylvania.

"The counselor I had a crush on was a fencer — like, he was so cool," she said. "So, I got hooked on it, and I've been doing it ever since."

Fox became a master of the sport. Fencing at Harvard she earned All-Ivy honors. She's a former North Atlantic women's foil champ, has twice represented the United States at the Veteran's World Championship and is a certified referee for USA Fencing, the sport's national organizing body. This past April, she placed sixth in her age group at the North American Cup in Salt Lake City.

Jesse Lussier, president of the Vermont Fencing Alliance and a fencer for 15 years, had high praise for his coach.

"In 'Star Wars' terms, I would say she's Yoda," Lussier said. "She knows a lot about everything."

Fox even shares some philosophies with the legendary Jedi master. Boutng with a student who was struggling to execute a parry, Fox issued a take on Yoda's sage advice.

"I'm trying," the student said.

"Don't try, do!" Fox replied.

Her ability to adjust to individual learning styles makes Fox such an effective teacher, say her students.

"Viveka's the only coach I've been with who has to transfer from elementary school,

middle school kids to a 74-year-old like that," said Davis, snapping his fingers. "She's very engaging, she knows the sport intimately, she's been doing it for I don't even know how many years at this point, and she has a style that draws people in, gets them fencing quickly."

She moved to Vermont in 1990 to take a teaching job at Middlebury Union High School. When a few of her students found out she fenced, they were eager to learn more.

"So, I started a little after-school club," Fox said. "Everything grew from there."

In 1992, Fox founded the first branch of the Vermont Fencing Alliance in Middlebury, which still meets at Mary Hogan Elementary School. The second branch opened in 1996 in Charlotte. In total, the alliance is home to about 80 students.

"Here in Vermont, because we have such a small population of fencers and it's a pretty specialized sport, most of our events are mixed," Fox said. "We just have the women and men play together."

Fencing requires more than physical ability to succeed, something that puts duelists with smaller bodies on equal playing ground with larger foes, according to Fox.

"It's technique, quickness, timing — brute strength doesn't matter as much."

During her stint at Harvard during the 1980s, women weren't given the same opportunity as men when it came to competitive fencing, Fox said. The head coach refused to give lessons to women, she said, and Fox learned most of her skills from the assistant coaches.

"It was a very different scene, you know? I'm old enough that women were not in the NCAA until I was halfway through college," she said. "Even though the college team that I was on now consists of, like, Olympians and amazingly skilled athletes, back then it was a little bit more easygoing."

Above all, despite the challenges, fencing gave Fox confidence.

"Which is something that girls often are lacking," she said, "especially in my generation."

She hopes the idea will translate for her students — that no matter who you are, you can succeed when given the opportunity.

"Once you put on the fencing mask, nobody cares that you're young or old, male or female," she said. "You're just another fencer."

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



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On court or mound, Vermont Miss Basketball does it all

Will Thorn
Community News Service

You could call Elise Berger a Swiss Army knife, a state champion — even Captain Chaos, the nickname she earned for her messy room as a kid. Now, as her time at Champlain Valley Union High School comes to end, you can call her Miss Basketball.

Berger of Shelburne took the crown this year as the best player in girls high school hoops in Vermont, as selected by the Burlington Free Press. The award came on the heels of a Division I championship over St. Johnsbury Academy this March, good for the team's second title in a row.

"We all knew going into the season that this was going to be a grind," said Berger, who's played organized basketball since the first grade. "It was cool that we had six seniors on the team that have been playing together for a really long time and that we were able to bring the team together, put in all that work and have it all pay off in the end."

The 5-foot-11-inch point guard averaged 8.5 points, 4.5 rebounds, 4.5 assists and 3.2 steals per game for the Redhawks this season en route to earning the program a seventh Miss Basketball victory. The senior and teammates also helped send 13-year head coach Ute Otley off to her new post leading Norwich University's women's team with a record 10th Division I win.

"She's pretty much a coach's dream," said Otley. Berger was a four-year varsity player and a mature locker-room presence who thrived in any role, she said.

Berger's win comes at a time of unprecedented focus on the women's college game and its recent superstars, like Caitlin Clark, Paige Bueckers and Angel Reese. Berger is all for the attention. "I think it's really cool to see the growth women's basketball has had," she said. "It's really cool to see that growth and it becoming a big national thing."

Otley hopes those who tuned in to watch Clark play realized just how many women play the game "in a way that's at such a high level that this is really entertaining to watch."

Berger's playing style is far from Clark's high-octane shooting from deep but commands a similar respect on the court. She's "a floor leader who can advance the ball quickly, who knows how to create shots for her teammates and whose presence on the floor demands so much defensive attention that she can make the defense do what she wants it to do and create the kinds of shots she wants for her teammates," Otley said.

Berger said she likes to attack the glass and do "the smaller things that set people up and get the team in good positions." Sometimes Otley had to remind Berger to look for her own shots,



Photo by Catherine Morrissey

Elise Berger poses at her home court.

too.

Berger separates herself with her playmaking, Otley said. "We haven't had a kid at 5 foot 11 inches that can handle the ball the way she can," said the coach. Plus: "She has a true pull-up jumper."

"That combination of ball handling, size and midrange game," Otley said, "made her a pretty unique athlete that we could use defensively a million different ways."

Her athletic prowess goes further: Berger is even better with a baseball in her hand. She not only pitches for her high school's baseball team but has also twice been selected to pitch for the U.S. women's national team, which she first made at 16 — the earliest age allowed.

"There definitely are some nerves, but it's also really prideful, especially being from a small state like Vermont that a lot of people haven't heard of outside of the U.S.," she said. "Being able to show what we can do as a team is also really cool."

Berger has committed to play baseball for Bard College. She has been in touch with current players and other commits and is excited to get to Bard and out on the field with them. "I was definitely looking for a school that had the

academics and the intensity that I was looking for but also was a supportive place to play baseball," she said. "Bard was the best mix of the two for me."

Although she loves basketball, played soccer through middle school and dabbles in mountain biking, baseball "has always been the big thing," said her mother, Elizabeth Berger.

At 4, Elise would watch Lake Monster games start to finish, and growing up, she'd drift asleep to the sound of baseball broadcasts, her parents remember. She made every school project she could baseball themed.

Berger's father, Chris, is a California native and big fan of the Golden State Warriors and Cincinnati Reds. His love of sport spread to the young Berger, who, raised in Vermont, became a Red Sox fan — an infinitely better option, she's quick to say, than choosing the Yankees. She stuck with the Warriors too for their dynastic run over the last decade.

"They've been super supportive of whatever I've wanted to do," Berger said of her parents. "Whichever teams I wanted to be on, whatever training I wanted to do, different tournaments we needed to go to — it was always, 'We're going to figure out a way to make this happen for you.'"

That doesn't mean there haven't been challenges along the way. She felt on the same level as boys throughout Little League, but as those male teammates got older she worried she was falling behind. Those feelings continued into her first two years playing for the Bases Loaded Bulldogs, a local travel team she started playing for at 13. But by year three, feeling more trust from her team, she grew more confident. Her pitching improved.

"That year I think I grew comfortable in my role as a pitcher, understanding that I wasn't necessarily going to keep up with them velocity-wise on the mound, but I had other aspects that made me a good pitcher," she said.

It came down to work ethic. Berger said she's driven by her competitive nature, hatred of losing and the collective euphoria of team success.

"If I lose because I feel like I got outworked by somebody, that's something that drives me to keep pushing and keep working harder," she said.

And it shows. Said her father: "She puts in hours every week on either strength work or specific conditioning work for her pitching muscles. Since middle school, it's been pretty constant every week. She's incredibly disciplined."

Back in the summer of 2022, Berger had to miss basketball workouts because of national baseball team obligations. Otley had challenged Berger a few months prior to get faster and tighten her ball-handling, and she worried the young standout wouldn't have time to do it, her

coach recalled. But Berger came back that fall with improvement in every area Otley wanted.

Heading into last summer, Otley challenged Berger to hone her 3-point shooting. Once again, Berger came through, said her coach, meaning opponents in her senior season were forced to respect her shot and bring double teams out of the post.

That dedication to her craft was present even when Otley first met Berger when the latter was a fourth-grader at a basketball camp. "I remember thinking that she was a serious little kid, very focused, very dialed in. She wasn't there to goof around; she was there to learn," Otley said.

Berger's mother recalled Elise's baseball games: "I'm there cheering her on, and I'm like, 'Hey, Elise, did you hear me cheer?'" and she says, "Nope, didn't hear." She doesn't notice anybody in the stands, she's just focused on what she needs to do."

But Berger isn't always stone-faced. "Once you break under Berger's shell, she definitely talks a lot," said basketball teammate and fellow senior Samara Ashooh. "She's a very funny person, and she's always down to go out and have some random adventure. People say that she's quiet and reserved, but I think she's actually a very open and communicative person and always a good presence to be around."

Berger's mother called her daughter a "chatterbox" at home. The two like to cook together, and Berger loves showing off her 30-plus Spotify playlists filled with recent music finds — lately some country, classic rock and hip-hop.

As Berger s into the more competitive college game, her parents are confident she'll be able to handle it. "Our attitude for college baseball is the same as it's been," said her father. "We feel she can usually rise to the level she needs to, and work as hard as she needs to, to be competitive, and we'll see how it goes. She's going to have to earn her playing time like anybody else."

In the meantime, Berger said she appreciates the chance to give back to her community. She got invited to throw the first pitch on opening day this month for the Champlain Valley Little League, the same one she played in those years ago.

"I've been able to come back into my community and be a role model for younger girls," she said. "When I was younger, I know I had role models that I aspired to be, and being able to go meet and play with some of them now has been huge. I hope that I get to be that person for some girls."

(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.)

An advertisement for US Sherpa featuring a group of trekkers on a steep, rocky mountain trail. The background shows snow-capped peaks under a blue sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

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CVU win streak interrupted by South Burlington — again

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

A loss at South Burlington knocked the previously unbeaten Champlain Valley Union down to 6-1, but it didn't seem to blur their focus on reaching the postseason ranked No. 1.

Despite the loss, CVU remained at the top of the Division 1 rankings, while the Redhawks continued to add wins.

After that loss, the team faced five opponents and just one away game, taking all those contests, some by blowout margins and a couple by nail-biting margins to improve to a 12-1 record.

Then, with the postseason just over the horizon, on this Tuesday, May 28, the Redhawks had a chance to even the season series in a rematch at home against the South Burlington Wolves, but the outcome was not what was wanted. The Wolves took Tuesday's game 6-0.

The team had been looking forward to the test, hoping having a second go against South Burlington would set them up nicely for the postseason.

However, don't think the setback will necessarily impact the team's drive towards repeating as state champion. As coach Nicky Elderton said, "Our whole mentality this year, and every year, is one game at a time."

CVU 3, Mt. Mansfield 2

On Wednesday, May 15, Mt. Mansfield came to call and brought with them a tenacity that tested the Redhawks' mettle in a closely contested pitching duel.

Easton Randall pitched a complete game for the Cougars but took the loss. He allowed three hits and runs, only one of which was earned, while striking out four and walking one.

In his six innings, Rickert remained strong on the mound, giving up six hits that lead to two runs, while striking out seven and walking only one.

In the seventh, Russell Willoughby came on in relief and sat down the minimum, facing three batters and notching three outs.

The Cougars got on the scoreboard first when Garrett Carter hit a sacrifice grounder to bring in Caleb Murphy in the third inning.

Mt. Mansfield added to its lead in the top of the fourth when Murphy hit a line-drive double to center field that scored Carter Tosch from second.

Although Travis Stroh it into a double play in the fifth, Declan Cummings scored to put the Redhawks up 3-2 for the winning margin.

Stephen Rickert pitched six innings, giving up six hits but only two runs. He registered six strikeouts against one walk.

CVU 10, Bellows Free Academy 0

The Redhawks used a big fourth inning at home on Thursday, May 16, to effectively put Bellows Free Academy away, scoring six runs when the team was already up 3-0.

Riley McDade got the scoring onslaught going in the fourth when he hit a sacrifice grounder that scored Stroh from third.

With two outs, Declan Cummings hit a

hard ground ball to left that scored John Deyo and Willoughby, putting CVU up 6-0.

Lander Magoon hit a hard grounder of his own to center that scored Calvin Steele and Cummings. Mitchell Niarchos hit a grounder that led to a Bobwhite error, scoring Magoon and putting the Redhawks ahead 9-0.

In the bottom of the sixth, Noah Musgrave hit a sacrifice fly to left field that scored Cummings from third and ensured the end of the game after six innings via the mercy rule with the Redhawks ahead 10-0.

Steele started the scoring in the bottom of the first, homering in CVU's first at bat of the game. Cummings hit a sacrifice fly to score Willoughby with two outs in the first, putting CVU ahead 2-0.

Stroh, Deyo and Willoughby led the Redhawks offensively, each getting two hits in three trips to the plate and scoring two runs.

CVU 6, Essex 5

The Redhawks' contest at home against Essex on Saturday, May 18, was a completely different affair than its shut-out romp two days earlier.

With the game tied at 5-all after eight innings, Aaron LaRose singled to right field, scoring Cummings and giving the Redhawks a 6-5 walk-off win.

CVU scored first in the first when Deyo singled to score Stroh. The Redhawks added to their early lead when Willoughby hit a ground ball and reached second on a Hornets' error to put the team ahead 2-0.

Essex scored in the top of the second inning on a hard grounder to center field that scored one.

The Redhawks added two more runs in the bottom of the second on a Stroh double that scored LaRose and a Deyo sacrifice grounder that scored Stroh.

The Hornets added another run in the fifth inning and three more in the sixth to pull ahead 5-4, but the Redhawks evened it up at 5-all when a McDade grounder scored Deyo.

Elise Berger put in five innings on the mound, giving up six hits and two runs. Willoughby pitched one inning with three hits and three runs. Stroh came on for the final two innings and pitched admirably, giving up no runs and no hits and earning the win for the Redhawks.

CVU 13, Rice 3

Before the home game on Thursday, May 23, coaches and players wore shirts that said "Brave," and assistant coach Sam Fontaine gave an inspirational message from the mound, saying that for the past six years one of CVU's games has been categorized as an Awareness Game.

In October of 2018, a CVU student and baseball player took his own life. In the aftermath of that tragedy his parents founded Project HoePpnEr to share the story of their son Paul Hoepner, raise awareness of teen suicide and encourage teens to say, “I need help.”

Fontaine encouraged those gathered at the game to check in on others and have the

BASEBALL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8



Photo by Judy Stroh

Travis Stroh slides under the tag at Rutland on Saturday, May 25, a 5-2 Champlain Valley win.

courage to have difficult conversations. The purpose of wearing the shirts was intended as a step toward solving the pandemic of teen suicide and raising awareness of mental health, he said, thanking Rice for participating in the effort.

In the game, the Redhawks notched their second victory over the Green Knights, having beaten Rice 8-4 in an away game at the beginning of the season.

CVU took an even more decisive win in this game that began with the Redhawks scoring eight runs in the first inning.

Deyo started the scoring by hitting a single that brought home Stroh. Willoughby scored on a triple by McDade. Then, McDade scored on a ground out by Rickert.

With two outs, the Redhawks added a fourth run when Steele scored off a Cummings double. A Rice error on a LaRose grounder put him on base and scored Cummings.

CVU went up 7-1 on a Deyo single to center field that scored Niarchos and LaRose.

After a Rice pitching change, CVU added an eighth run when Willoughby knocked in Stroh.

The game was called by the mercy rule after five innings with CVU ahead 13-3.

CVU 5, Rutland 2

This past Saturday, May 25, Champlain Valley traveled to Rutland and came away with its twelfth win of the season.

CVU got on the board in the first when McDade hit a sacrifice fly to left field, scoring Deyo.

Rutland knotted it up at 1-1 in the bottom of the fourth inning on a sacrifice grounder.

The Redhawks retook the lead for good in the top of the fifth when Deyo hit a drive to center field that resulted in a Rutland error, scoring Stroh. A Willoughby home run gave CVU two more runs to make the score 4-1.

The Redhawks added another run in the sixth, when Stroh knocked in Cummings.

Although Rutland added a run in the bottom of the sixth, that was all the scoring in the game, as the score stood at 5-2 until the final out.

LaRose took the win for the Redhawks on the mound, giving up two hits and one run, while striking out five and walking none over five innings. Elise Berger pitched the final two innings for the save, giving up four hits and one run.

South Burlington 6, CVU 0

The Wolves jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first inning. Their first three hitters hit singles with the third single by Lucas Van Mullen scoring Andre Bouffard from second.

With one out, Brady Havers scored from third on a passed ball.

In the top of the fifth the Wolves added four more.

With one out, Sam Mazza-Bergeron hit a solo homer to center field.

Isaac Hungerford added another, scoring on James Chagnon’s drive to center field.

A pair of singles scored Chagnon and Ryan Carpenter to put South Burlington up 6-0, and that was where the score stood for the rest of the game.

Starting pitcher Rickert took the loss for the Redhawks. Van Mullen earned the win for the Wolves.

Outdoors

Tapper offers relationship advice for forests

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

It wasn't love at first sight for Ethan Tapper and his relationship with forests. He took what he describes as a circuitous route to arrive where his vocational wandering merged into his avocation. But it was love that put him on that path. Tapper's first book, "How to Love a Forest: The Bittersweet Work of Tending a Changing World" comes out in September. And he's come to a fork in the road of his relationship with forests. Following the advice of baseball player and guru Yogi Berra, he's going to take that fork. Tapper is ping down on June 1 as Chittenden County forester, a position he's held since 2016. He said it's become clear that he can't use the book as an educational tool and promote it while he's a public state employee because it would be a conflict of interest. Tapper began thinking of ways he could find a bigger platform to not only promote "How to Love a Forest" but also promote his vision of how we should care for and love our forests. He is starting a business called Bear Island Forestry. One component of that business will be promoting his book. Another component is doing forest management, writing forest management plans for private landowners and practicing the other

tradecraft of traditional forest consulting. While talking about his book, Tapper said he will be looking for ways to spread his forestry message. He also is planning to consult with both nongovernmental organizations and government organizations about how to communicate forest and ecosystem management better. A fifth part of his new business is producing things including maple syrup, firewood, other wood products and things like that from his 175-acre forest in Bolton called Bear Island. Tapper grew up in Saxtons River in Rockingham in southeast Vermont. A 1907 history of the village includes a story about a settler in 1783 who cut down the first trees in an "entirely unbroken wilderness of immense trees of primitive growth." Although it was a rural area with a history rooted in forests, Tapper didn't grow up infatuated with them. He describes himself as sort of aimless in high school, except he was a serious musician, playing classical and jazz bass. In his senior year, he won a scholarship as the valedictorian, but it didn't have a big impact on his vision of what he wanted to do. "You know, it didn't help me work any harder that year. I'll say that much," Tapper said. He went to the University of Vermont



Photo by Daria Etchings

Ethan Tapper on his land, Bear Island, in Bolton.

thinking he might study music. Or he might go into teaching. "I felt pretty aimless at the time," he said. After two semesters Tapper was in his first serious relationship, and his girlfriend was very connected to the outdoors. She spent a semester in a wilderness program, and when she got back, Tapper could tell there was a

SEE **ETHAN TAPPER** PAGE 11

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ETHAN TAPPER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

distance between them.

“We were not connecting because she’d had this transformative experience that I couldn’t understand. That freaked me out,” he said.

On the spur of the moment, he decided to sign up for a six-month wilderness experience that was starting in a few weeks.

The 12 participants made a lot of their own gear and then skied north from January to March. During April they made a cedar-canvas canoe and canoed back to the home base in New Hampshire.

“That adventure kind of changes you, especially as an 18-year-old,” Tapper said. “It changed the whole course of my life.”

He became a wilderness guide. For two years he worked for a couple of wilderness programs guiding, teaching wilderness skills and homesteading.

Eventually, Tapper was notified that, if he didn’t use his scholarship, he would lose it. He didn’t want that, so he decided to return to the University of Vermont.

“I remember looking at a paper list of all the different majors at UVM and running my finger down it, and I saw a forestry. I swear that I did not know what forestry was,” Tapper said. “All I knew was that it had the word ‘forest’ in it, and so that’s what I decided I wanted to do.”

His wilderness experience only saved his relationship with his girlfriend for a little while.

But, Tapper said, “It saved everything else. All this incredibly positive stuff in my life now sort of goes back to this weird, spur-of-the-moment decision that I made for no good reason.”

The kind of rash romantic reasoning 18-year-olds may have used forever.

“How to Love a Forest” is sort of a memoir of his experiences working with Bear Island and what it means to be in a committed relationship with a forest. When he bought his forest, Tapper became a foster parent to some property with a lot of issues.

“When I walked through the woods, my impression was that there were no healthy trees. I literally thought that I could not find a single healthy tree,” Tapper said.

The forest had a 30-acre infestation of invasive plants that was the worst infestation he had ever seen. The deer were so overpopulated that they were limiting the forest’s ability to regenerate. All the roads were eroding.

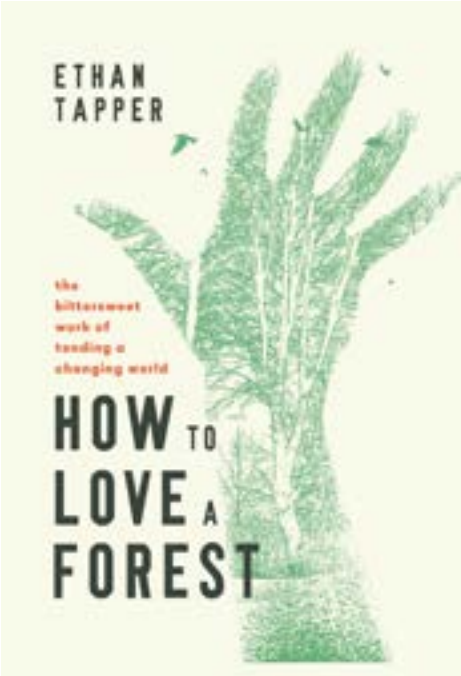
“It had, what I would say, is basically every problem that a forest could have,” he said. “It was such an apt example of what so many of our forests are like.”

People don’t seem to realize that almost every forest is degraded from years of poor management and is missing vital components, habitats and key parts of our biodiversity that have defined our forests for thousands of years.

Tapper said he had to ask himself whether it wouldn’t be a greater kindness, and much easier, to leave his forest alone and hope that all of these issues would resolve themselves.

But he decided that, if he rescued a dog with a lot of health issues, he wouldn’t leave the dog alone to heal on its own.

“Even if some of the medicine that you had to give the dog made you uncomfortable, wouldn’t you do it?” Tapper said. “Wouldn’t that be a greater expression



of responsibility than saying, ‘You know, nah, I don’t really feel comfortable with doing that, so I’m just going to let this dog suffer.’”

He feels that there are lots of books about how beautiful forests are, but there are no books about how our forests are threatened and what we can actually do to safeguard them.

Much of what needs to be done is confusing because sometimes it’s necessary to cut trees to save forests, he said. However, it’s difficult to find a balance between helping a forest and not interfering too much.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution for anything we do in forests, Tapper said. “That makes it challenging to communicate because I would never say that forest management is categorically good.”

Good forest management means facing a countless array of different situations to figure out the appropriate amount of intervention. Tapper pointed out that our forests have been fundamentally altered over the last 300 years.

Almost any forest in Vermont that any of us has ever been in was cleared for pasture and maintained that way for around 100 years. Less than a tenth of 1 percent of our current forests, or around 1,000 acres in the state, is what is considered old growth.

Our forests are missing species and new species have been introduced, Tapper said. Major tree species have been lost to invasive pests and pathogens.

Forests are facing “a completely fresh array of threats and stressors projected onto them in a minuscule amount of time,” he said, adding that forests are being deforested, fragmented and polluted all at once.

Sometimes light forest management is called for, and sometimes heavier management is needed. But no forest management is the best management action for some forests.

In the past, there were forest management practices that were gospel that now are believed to be bad for forests. When Tapper was asked how we know if the way we practice forest management now will prove to be the best thing for forests in the future, he laughs, because it’s a conundrum he thinks about perpetually.

“I ask myself this question all the time, and I ask it in my book, too,” Tapper said. “If we’re not worried about that, we’re not

doing our job.”

Modern foresters, or at least the best of them, cringe at some of the forest practices of the past. He believes that now foresters are looking at forests holistically, considering ecosystems and all of the species that comprise them.

Now, he said, “We are also adaptive, and when we need to change, we will change. That is a fundamental difference.”

Tapper thinks that foresters today appreciate forests as more than just a commodity for timber or something else. “I think that really what makes us different from those people, that we look back at what they did and shake our heads now, is humility and the willingness to change and to adapt.”

Although he was considering music as a career when he first went to college and discovered his love affair with forests, he has remained faithful, to a degree, with that earlier infatuation.

He plays guitar in a punk band called The Bubs, described on the band’s website as a 10-piece, jumpsuit-clad, collective of Burlington artists and musicians, who serve up white-hot punk and garage rock. Their album “Cause a Fuss” can be heard on Spotify, and there’s a video of the band performing at <https://tinyurl.com/4p9bwwat>.

Tapper is totally involved in forestry management during the work week. On weekends he is either working on or hunting in his own forest at Bear Island, or he’s volunteering for the Richmond Land Trust. He wakes up at 5 a.m. every morning

to write about forests. He is in a pretty monogamous relationship with forests.

He said, “All of those things are sort of like in the same world, where at a certain point they’ve kind of blurred together, but the band is the one thing that I do that’s completely different. I’m like, ‘Wow, I think that must mean it’s really important.’”

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at St. Jude’s, Hinesburg

Sunday, 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.,

at Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Sunday, 9:30 a.m.,

at St. Jude’s, Hinesburg

Education

School winding down, classes taking field trip opportunities

Naomi Strada
(Summarized by Tom Scatchard)

As the end of this school year nears, classes are taking final field trips for learning outside of the classroom, including trips to Shelburne Farms (first graders), Echo Leahy Center (kindergarten, third and fourth graders), Media Factory (some of seventh and eighth graders), Champlain Valley Union High (eighth graders), Jazz Fest (jazz band), trout release in Starksboro (sixth graders), Jay Peak (eighth graders), Oakledge Park (seventh graders) and Spare Time Entertainment (fifth and sixth graders).

The music department wound down with the final in-school concert on Monday, May 20, and the Champlain Valley School District Jazz Festival on Thursday, May 23. A special shoutout to University of Vermont student teacher, Hazel Dority, who showed up the day after her UVM graduation to be a guest conductor.

Don't forget about Charlotte Central School students' performances at the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival on June 5, 12:20-1 p.m. and at the Lake Monsters' game on June 6, 6:30 p.m.

Charlotte Central School coordinator Kate Rooney committed at the start of the year to grow the mentor program. It has now reached 21 matches between a

student and a caring adult. On the night of Wednesday, May 22, caregivers joined mentor and mentee pairs for dinner and a magic show.

Omega seventh and eighth graders are embarking on a personal interest project that merges these three areas: something they are curious about; strong learning habits; and fitting into one of the categories of head, hands or heart. These projects spark engagement and develop problem-solving, reflection and self-direction skills.

Thespians from Charlotte Central School are performing "Dear Edwina Jr."

The play follows the adventures of plucky advice-giver extraordinaire, Edwina Spoonapple, as she directs the neighborhood kids in a series of buoyant production numbers for the latest edition of her weekly "Advice-a-Palooza." Edwina and her friends share wisdom on everything from trying new foods to making new friends through clever, catchy and poignant songs.

Performances are Friday, May 31, 7 p.m. and Saturday, June 1, 2 and 6 p.m. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$10 for adults and can be purchased at the door.

Summer camp information

We run this list of summer camps again as a convenience to Charlotte families. Charlotte Central School does not endorse

any particular camp but provides the list as informational only:

- Junior Redhawks running camp (<https://tinyurl.com/yuy9fk38>) — For more information, contact Champlain Valley Union High cross-country coach Dave Baird at dbaird@cvsdvt.org or 802-578-8040.

- CVU athletics (<https://athletics.cvuhs.org>) — Families should start paying attention to the school athletics website regarding summer sports camp info, captains' practices (not mandatory) and info for fall sports especially (tryouts usually start on Aug. 15). Any questions can be directed to the appropriate coach listed on our website or athletic director.

- CVU girls lacrosse summer camp, June 18-20, Tuesday-Thursday, 12:30-3:30 p.m. — Registration is open at <https://tinyurl.com/2s3jhxhk>. This is for players entering fifth-ninth grades at CVU's A Field, Cost: \$125. This is a fundraiser for the girls lacrosse program. CVU coaches as well as current and graduated lacrosse players will lead the camp. Questions: tpierson@cvsdvt.org.

- CVU summer camp (cvsummercamp.cvuhs.org) — CVU summer camp registration is live. Questions:



The Charlotte News file photo.

camp director Joey O'Brien at cvsummercamp@cvsdvt.org.

- Green Mountain Day Camp (<https://tinyurl.com/3jn8x2th>) by the Girls Scouts of the Green & White Mountains at Branbury State Park, June 24-28. Campers do not need to be a Girl Scout.

- Horse & theater camp (<https://tinyurl.com/48t66kd6>) — Sentinel Farms, Starksboro. Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., weeks of June 24, July 8 and July 29. Ages 6-17.

- Smugglers' Notch Vermonter Camp Program (<https://tinyurl.com/2zusjx28>) — Ages 7-15. Contact smuggs.com/vtcamp.

- Summer Symphony Camp (vyo.org) — Vermont Youth Orchestra summer camp with Berta Frank.

- Vt. Jazz Camp — vtjazzcamp.com with Andy Smith and Tony Pietricola.

Katherine Riley announced as interim principal at CVU

Contributed

Champlain Valley Union High School curriculum director Katherine Riley will take over as the school's interim principal for the 2024-25 school year. She will into the new job on July 1.

Riley joined CVU in 1998 as a social studies teacher. Besides working as curriculum director, she has also been Snelling house director.

"As an administrator, she has played an important role in the school's transition to a proficiency-based system, the design of the school's action plan and the development of current graduation requirements," a release from the Champlain Valley School District said.

Riley received a bachelor's degree from St. Lawrence University and a master's in education from Plattsburgh State University.

Besides teaching in New York state before coming to Vermont, she has international education experience, teaching in Bhutan and Peru.

At Champlain Valley Union, Riley has led numerous international student trips and advised both Amnesty International and the Student Council for over 20 years.

"Riley highlighted her desire to maintain the collaborative approach that has been a cornerstone for the CVU leadership team and that continuity is a priority for her," said Sarah Crum, the school district's director of learning and innovation who was on the interview committee. "Riley's steady



Courtesy photo

CVU's curriculum director Katherine Riley will take over as interim principal at the high school on July 1.

leadership will ensure that CVU continues to build on the incredible strengths of the administrators, faculty and staff while it fosters innovative solutions to challenges in education."

According to the district's release, upon accepting the job, Riley said, "I look forward to working closely with the students, faculty, staff and community to grow the culture of belonging and high academic standards which have been the hallmark of the high school since long before I began my teaching career at CVU."

Open

Hi! Neighbor

Jessica Sriver combines her love of science and art

Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

It takes Jessica Sriver a while to get warmed up to do a painting.

“I start with little experiments,” she said. “I don’t worry about color. In fact, I’ll just use whatever I have left over.”

Eventually, the little experiments result in a finished product, although she noted that sometimes the process takes several months.

Sriver believes her artwork is influenced by her background in science. She switched from studying art at Indiana University to getting a degree in biology and then worked as a high school physics and chemistry teacher in Connecticut. During that time, an art teacher offered Sriver some studio space which led to her taking classes at the Rhode Island School of Design, inspiring a change in profession.

The creative process is not a linear one for Sriver.

“I usually don’t start with a preconceived idea,” she said. “The ideas evolve from the materials I use and the way I manipulate them.”

She generally has three or four different threads of ways to do things which overlap and interact. Her larger pieces are often created after a series of experiments with smaller works.

“A lot of what I do is data collecting,” Sriver said. “I think a lot about the process of observation and experimentation and what different models look like compared to what they represent.”

The representations are generally static while the things they stand for are more dynamic.

“I am interested in how the neatness of theory compares to the messiness of reality,” she said. “I am more interested in the interaction of movement across patterns and the breakdown of patterns than pattern itself. I am interested in ideas of control and the reminders of a lack of control.”

Sriver paints with acrylics but also uses a wide range of media to create her art including magnets and iron filings to form magnetic field lines. She uses several different notched trowels and has a large collection of stencil materials which she has created, and which are employed to make designs on her canvases. Sriver also throws items like beads or pasta onto the surface of her work. The materials don’t stay on the painting, but they leave their imprint behind. For Sriver, laying down patterns and then breaking them up reflects the realities of her existence. “It is my way of processing my experience with the world,” she said.

Sriver moved to Charlotte in 2016. “We moved from the desert,” the former Colorado resident said, “and everything felt so soft and green.”

She loves being able to look across Lake Champlain to the Adirondacks. Sriver is happy to have found a home away from the hustle and bustle of city life.



Photo by Geoff Sriver
Jessica Sriver savors the creative process.

“Whenever I go away and experience traffic and a more frenzied existence and then come back to Charlotte,” she said, “I feel grateful to be able to live here.”

Sriver has enjoyed taking part in Open Studio Weekend, two days in late May when artists and artisans across Vermont open up their studios to the public. She believes the event reaches an audience that might not otherwise visit her studio. She’s especially happy when locals stop by.

“There are so many interesting people I have the privilege of calling my neighbors,” she said. An added benefit of Open Studio Weekend is that the process of changing her studio space into a display area requires a great deal of work. “It’s really helpful for me to take inventory and clean things out,” she said. “It’s a good yearly exercise.”

Sriver’s work has been displayed in galleries across the state as well as in Colorado. She will be part of a group show at the Furchgott Sourdiffe Gallery starting on June 7.

She enjoys watching people engage with her work.

“I like to let everyone have their own experience with it,” she said. “It can be helpful to explain how things came about but I don’t think people need that to engage with the work. They can have their own experience with it.”

Sriver doesn’t give her artwork a title until the end of the process and the titles can be somewhat enigmatic.

“They come from a place of me figuring out my own interpretation of what is happening there,” she said. “It tells of the process. Titles reflect some of the thoughts that swirl around my head as I make the work and, in a way, ties the work together.”



‘Aspect’
Courtesy photo

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- June 26, 2024:** Raising An Athlete in Today’s Sports Culture
- July 24, 2024:** Preparing For and Navigating the 4th Trimester: An Event for Expecting and New Moms AND Dads (newborns welcome!) - FREE event! With co-speaker Lucy Chapin, NP, CNM of *Mad River Birth and Wellness*
- August 28, 2024:** Coping With The Back-to-School Scaries
- September 25, 2024:** Antiracist Parenting, with co-speaker Kate Littlefield, LCMHC, of *Through to THRIVE*

\$15/person or \$25/couple (except 7/24, which is free).
Questions: aubreycarpenterphd@gmail.com
RSVP: www.ittakesavillagevermont.com/events



First Responders

Rescues up, responders fear more unprepared heading out

Lauryn Katz
Community News Service

At any moment Drew Clymer could be pulled out of rest or running errands to answer the phone and listen to the anxious voice of a hiker on the other end, lost with daylight fading.

Say the hiker is in good shape, has the right gear. Clymer grabs the handle of his rugged laptop and starts inputting the coordinates he receives from the caller on a map. A red dot pops up on the screen, and Clymer immediately knows where they are. He might just know every trail in all of northern Vermont.

Clymer starts to orient the lost hiker and gives them directions. Every 20 minutes, the pair regroups on the phone, and Clymer updates the map with a new red dot. With each inch Clymer's marker moves closer to the parking lot on the map, he feels confident the hiker will get home safe.

Sometimes it's as simple as virtually holding someone's hand for Clymer, search and rescue coordinator for the Vermont Department of Public Safety. His job is to field calls and send rescuers from different departments to help those in need. Other days entail lengthy, multi-unit rescues with complex maneuvers in treacherous conditions.

And Clymer fears those hard days are on the uptick.

The number of search and rescue incidents in Vermont rose 41 percent from 100 in 2015 to 141 in 2023, according to public safety department data obtained by Community News Service. More and more people are trekking off-path without being prepared, putting themselves and

first responders in danger, say those in the field.

The trend has accelerated since the peak of the pandemic, the records show. From 2015 to 2019, the trendline stayed relatively stable, with the number of cases each year not straying far from 100, according to the data. From 2020 to 2023, the difference between case numbers each year grew more pronounced, going from 88 to 131 to 115 to 141 — a 60-percent increase over the span, the records show.

Much of the rise can be pinned to increases in the number of routine rescue cases — such as when someone strays from a trail and doesn't know how to get back. Between 2015 and 2020, Vermont averaged about 68 of those calls per year, the records show. But in 2021 that figure skyrocketed to 103, according to the data. There hasn't been less than 90 cases a year since.

How we got the numbers

This reporter drove to a state office in Waterbury to read hard copies of yearly data reports that weren't available digitally, then charted out the changes.

Stella Richards, education outreach coordinator for Stowe Mountain Rescue, a team formed by the town, recalls just how much urgency people had to escape their quarantine loneliness by retreating into the backcountry. Shops sold out of mountain bikes and backcountry ski gear with little to no resupply at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, she said. And now?

"There's a whole load of toys out there that people are now going to start playing with," Richards said. For now, Richards hasn't seen it play out to the extent she expected, probably due to low snowpack in Vermont these past two years. Still, a shorter-term bump in the number of people needing rescue may be on the horizon.

Population trends could make that more likely, too. According to the Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office, the state gained over 14,000 new residents in 2021. Accounting for residents who left the state, the net gain that year was around 4,100 people."

Clymer, who along with his state job serves as deputy chief to the Stowe rescue team, said rescuers are seeing vast unpreparedness everywhere from well-known hiking spots to the backsides of ski resorts.

"There is a trend towards people being less prepared and finding themselves needing help," he said.

Because Stowe Mountain Rescue team members are highly trained in technical rescue, they respond to roughly three times the number of calls as any other rescue team in Vermont, according to Clymer. From its founding in 1980 up to 2020, the team hovered around 17 to 20 calls a year, he said. In 2020, that number shot into the 40s and has climbed in the years since, he said.

Search and rescue authorities divide calls into two classes: cases where rescuers know where the person is and



Photo courtesy Stowe Mountain Rescue

A member of Stowe Mountain Rescue with a person in a litter, a type of stretcher.



Photo courtesy Stowe Mountain Rescue

Members of Stowe Mountain Rescue performing a rescue during an evaluation in March 2024.

cases where they do not.

When someone's whereabouts are unknown, all hands are on deck. Troops are pulled out of sleep, off the roads and back from vacation. Game wardens become available, and first responders are notified. For the most part, these calls involve people with known medical conditions and those who are very young or old.

Calls where rescuers know the subject's location are widely more common. Every year since 2016, the number of this kind of rescue has been more than double that of cases involving missing people, according to state data.

When Clymer takes a call from someone in need, he tries to identify the gravity of the situation by asking questions about age, clothing, equipment, weather conditions and how many people need help. The survey is important, he

said, to prevent rescuer fatigue and treat each case individually.

Incidents usually involve more than one person. This year, close to 100 people needed help out of 40 rescue incidents Clymer had recorded as of early May. Of the people who are lost and not part of a vulnerable population, recreationalists make up a large majority.

Many of those recreationalists found themselves at the backside of Killington Resort in Brewers Brook, more than 2 miles from any access road. In January, Clymer received multiple calls a week from folks who needed assistance getting out of relatively similar spots, including a group of 23 on Jan. 20.

Most ski rescue calls come from Killington and Stowe, said Clymer, as

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Bay cleanup



Photo by Bill Fraser-Harris

Four volunteers worked this past Saturday, May 25, to clean up Whiskey Bay on Thompsons Point. These before and after photos show that a lot of driftwood was removed, making the beach much more accessible, but there's still more that could be removed. Any volunteers?

RESCUES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

they are the most popular mountains for tourists to enjoy fresh powder on the backside.

Once the snow finally came at the start of this year, Clymer said he received 13 calls in one weekend — all from Stowe and Killington. They weren't calls from experienced backcountry skiers. Instead, the calls came from resortgoers who had skied out of bounds.

Clymer said that at Killington, it is as easy as taking a lift up and then ducking a few ropes. That's what happened with the group of 23 rescued in January, who violated policy and ignored signs, a rep from Killington Ski Resort told media at the time.

What skiers like those don't realize, said Clymer, is that once they duck the ropes, they are stuck in a back bowl miles from the nearest access road.

"They just don't realize that a mile from a road is just like it was 200 years ago — and cold and dark and nobody's around," Clymer said.

Another thing most aren't aware of is just how long it takes rescuers to reach those in need, who may not be prepared for the delay.

"A lot of people think we're going to drop out of a helicopter and they won't miss their dinner reservation," Clymer said. Too many show a lack of respect

for the conditions, remoteness and harsh weather as well, he said.

From 2009 to 2018, an average of four people a year died from exposure to cold air or water, according to a 2021 report from the Vermont Department of Health, not including those who fell through ice and drowned. Between 2012 and 2018, there was an average of 110 cold-related hospitalizations and emergency department visits, the report says.

Hypothermia is a risk throughout the year, not just in winter months, Richards said. It can sneak up on people during the shoulder seasons — when it seems warmer than it is — if you get wet from rainfall and night sets in, Richards said. That's why a dry base layer and some form of protection against the elements are key items in her pack no matter the time of year.

A source of light, first aid kit, a spare power bank, food, water and warmth are other essentials Richards urges people to bring on every trip.

"Carrying certain pieces of equipment not only makes you safe, but it also turns you into a resource," Richards said.

Clymer said agencies in Vermont don't charge for rescue. Most people rescued by the Stowe Mountain agency make a donation after, Richards said.

But some people think those whose recklessness gets them stranded should pay up.

Back in February, the East Burke Volunteer Fire Brigade suffered

mechanical failures while trying to free a vehicle stuck in over 3 feet of snow up by the abandoned radar base in East Haven. Many community members took to their keyboards to push for charging the trio. So did someone from the brigade.

A post from the group's Facebook page said the crew would only support rescues when requested by an emergency agency or someone involved was suffering from a medical issue or injury. "Any rescues made that are found to be of willful ignorance or disregard, the individuals will be responsible for the cost of the recovery. The tax payers should not hold the burden of others ignorance," the post read. (Town administrator Jim Sullivan said the local agency would still respond to any incident.)

New Hampshire has been asking negligent hikers to repay the cost of their rescue since 2008 and is one of the few states that does so. Every year, authorities there send roughly 6 percent of the hikers they rescue a bill, citing negligence or a lack of preparation, according to Backpacker magazine.

But Richards said charging for rescue might make people hesitate to call for help, leading to dangerous emergencies that could have been prevented.

"If people know that they're going to face a bill, they are going to think twice before calling," Richards said.

Clymer and Richards both stressed the importance of creating a judgment-free zone to break the stigma around seeking

help. About once a week, Clymer is on the phone with someone who has lost the trail, giving them verbal instructions on how to get out safely. In these fairly simple rescues, something could easily go wrong if the person in need waits to call.

"The earlier we are involved in a situation that has gone wrong for whatever reason," said Richards, "the simpler it is."

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



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Stronger Together

‘Stronger together’ is a core tenet of Charlotte Grange

Linda Hamilton
Charlotte Grange

Naming this monthly column from Charlotte Grange “Stronger Together” was intentional. Not only is “stronger together” a core tenet of Grange as a community organization, the principle of cooperation and mutual support implied in the phrase is the core driving force of the living world. Ecologically and evolutionarily we not only benefit from the cooperation and mutual support all around us, we literally depend on it.

I recently read the 2022 book “Sweet in Tooth and Claw” by Kristin Ohlson. It is a follow-up to her pioneering 2014 book “The Soil Will Save Us: How Scientists, Farmers and Foodies Are Healing the Soil to Save the Planet.” Both are easy to read and fascinating science-based explorations of functional connections among living organisms.

The earlier book focused on who lives in or on soil, how they interact with each other and with physical and chemical components of soil. Readers see clear evidence that it’s not just “dirt” and it’s certainly not inert.

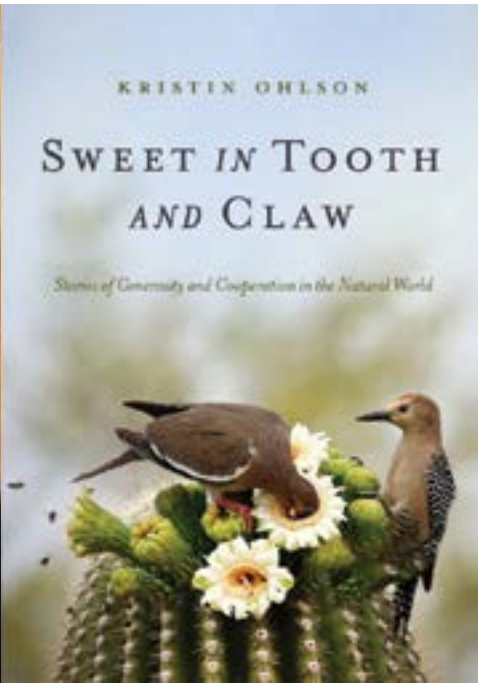
Healthy soil is teaming with life, literally. “Teams” of micro- and macro-organisms, fungi, bacteria, plants and animals are interacting in mutually beneficial ways which support and promote essential life processes. Ohlson focuses on the ability of healthy soil to sequester atmospheric carbon and make this element available to plants, making it possible for them to grow. She gives examples of farming and ranching practices adapted to maximize this process and speed up carbon sequestration and slow global warming. In 2014, this was cutting-edge, pragmatic

thinking, and still is. The subtitle of “Sweet in Tooth and Claw” is “Stories of Generosity and Cooperation in the Natural World.” By the end, Ohlson has relegated to history Charles Darwin’s theory that the living world is essentially a constant and fiercely competitive bloody battle for survival. Widely read English poet Alfred Lord Tennyson helped popularize Darwin’s generalization when, in the mid-1800s, he wrote movingly that “nature is a world of strife and conflict and violence, red in tooth and claw.”

That’s quite a chilling concept. Nevertheless, survival of the fittest became the world view of western culture. It fit in conveniently with American pride in rugged individualism and the sense that it was manifest destiny, for those who could, to dominate and use fellow humans and all of the natural world for personal gain.

This became an accepted cultural norm in the U.S., persisting for a regrettably long time, with disastrous consequences. In addition to horrific human abuses, for more than a century it allowed disregard for Nature and large-scale destruction without compunction. Only after human rights advocacy and the environmental protection movement grew strong enough in the mid-1900s, did that theory begin to lose its grip on the American psyche.

Since then, our perception and understanding of Nature has deepened radically in Western culture. With careful study of ecological systems and more sophisticated tools for that study, the aggressive survival-of-the-fittest theory has mostly been debunked. Of course, there is routine competition for food, space and reproductive opportunities in the natural world. But as Ohlson



documents, we now know there is vastly more cooperation and what we would call generosity going on, and those are in fact the driving forces in the natural world. It’s really about survival of life because of those who are prepared, fit and able to be of benefit to their ecological communities. And I personally believe it’s no accident that is also a key characteristic of thriving and resilient human communities.

Many ancient and Indigenous people have understood this from the beginning of their societies. Americans are only just opening their eyes to it, and to some the view is less than welcome because it calls for changing to a less selfish relationship with Nature.

Ohlson invites us to explore with her the fascinating cooperative world of

trees, mushrooms, beavers, bees, bacteria, flowers and more, learning from a wide variety of ecosystems and people around the globe. The stories are all the more amazing because they are real. And they deepen our understanding of the natural world we are a part of and how essential robust biodiversity is to the survival of life. It’s not all about competition. Indeed, life persists and can only thrive through cooperation and mutual support.

(Linda Hamilton is a member of Charlotte Grange, honoring our agrarian roots and helping build a resilient future for all. More at charlottegrange.org.)

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Sacred Hunter

Profound lessons learned from a Winooski rainbow

Bradley Carleton
Contributor

I am standing in the Winooski River just a couple of miles upstream from the town of Jonesville off River Road. I'm not giving any secret spot away if I tell you that it's just upstream from the railroad trestle. Everyone knows about this spot.

What most people don't know is the thundering silence of the rapids, surrounded by the steep walls of stone just across the interstate, as dusk sets in. There is a mystical nature to the sky as the sun sets to the north and thunder rumbles in the distance after a rainstorm.

With the swift water just a few steps away, my feet seek stability in the sand between the rocks. I anchor my upstream foot and lean into the current. Looking up against the royal purple- and sage-colored sky, I see a hatch of yellow drakes beginning to burst through the tense surface of the undulating water. I can see them pushing their bodies upward toward the darkening sky, illuminated by the remaining light above the trestle. The tempo of the hatch begins to reach a crescendo as the darkness surrounds me.

I can hear the plop, plop ... plop of fish rising to swallow the large yellow flies all around me. I can distinguish the sound of the river in the background splashing against the big boulder in the center of the pool. It sounds like a thirsty dog lapping at his water bowl. The plopping sounds build in intensity. Soon, everywhere I look, there are flashes of silver against the blackened water. I raise my old LL Bean rod over my

head and begin a long thrust behind me, letting out the weight forward five-weight floating line load the rod, bending the tip backwards.

The rod has become an extension of my own arm. I feel the flex and pause to let the line catch up to the back of the loop, then thrust forward with my forearm, bending at the elbow. The sensation of the line whipping through the guides and the quiet sound of air being split by its acceleration is like an angel's whisper of a song, playing above my head. I retrieve a section of my line as it flies forward, to build more speed by denying the physics of forward thrust, and thus further increasing the speed. For those who know the double haul and have practiced many hours, they will understand that the physics of such a strategy can be felt in the hand and the shoulder if done properly.

On my final cast, I hear the fly whiz by my head and rocket out into the darkness. If my projected trajectory is accomplished, the fly will land at the tail-out of a strong ripple in the middle of the river, where a large fish has been feeding heavily. I cannot see the fly, nor can I see the rise, but I hear the voracious gulp.

For a moment I am not sure if he has hit my imitation, or if he has chosen another true drake in the hurricane-like hatch, but before I can wonder for more than a second, my reel begins to spin. The rod tip bends powerfully toward the surface, and the spool is now whining a high-pitched whistle.

I can feel the tremendous tug on the rod and bow to him, letting him have all the line he wants to run to the far side of the river. I cannot see him, but suddenly hear a loud splash. He is diving and straining against the line rolling off the reel. I cross my left hand under the bottom of the spool and gently apply pressure, palming it to provide more resistance to his fight.

Just when I think he is tired and I have been able to retrieve about 20 yards of line, my rod bends in a strong arc. He is now extremely near to me. Maybe 20 feet. I reach back behind my head with my left hand to grab the net hanging on a magnetized clip between my shoulder blades. It takes but a moment to realize my mistake.

As he nears me, he feels the pressure of the rod bending hard and he senses the physics of this equation trying to lift him up from his aquatic environs. He senses the additional pressure and turns abruptly to sprint away from the unseen danger. The reel begins to whine again, when he suddenly jumps high out of the water, and even in the darkness, I catch a flash



A rainbow that did not get away.

Photo by Bradley Carleton

of silver as he dives down into the depths once again. This time he runs downstream and uses the current to increase his speed, much like I used the double haul against him. Then in one swift and powerful turn, he spins back into the fastest current just below the boulder.

My line goes limp and my heart sinks to the depths of a fisherman's despair.

Fortunately, in fishing, especially fly fishing, the heartache dissipates a few hours later and the appreciation for the formidable fight of a magnificent Winooski rainbow will remain in my memory for the rest of my life.

Once again, the Great Spirit has shown me the humility that I need to keep me in a state of wonderment of this most precious planet on which we all dream of one day recognizing the incredible run we've been given. And one day we, too, will be released from our tethers to this splendid earth.

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



The Town of Charlotte TOWN MEETINGS AND AGENDAS

Visit charlottetv.org
for more information

Recreation Commission
Monday, June 3, 5:30 p.m.

Trails Committee
Tuesday, June 4, 6:30 p.m.

Charlotte Energy Committee
Wednesday, June 5, 7 p.m.

Planning Commission
Thursday, June 6, 7 p.m.

Selectboard
Monday, June 10, 6 p.m.

Development Review Board
Wednesday, June 12, 7 p.m.

To Advertise in
The Charlotte News
Contact ads@TheCharlotteNews.org

Gardening

Screen garden soils for lead

Debra Heleba
University of Vermont Extension

Whether you are new to gardening or have been growing your own vegetables for years, you probably understand the importance of getting your soil tested for nutrient levels and soil pH.

But have you ever thought about having your garden soil screened for lead?

Although this bluish-gray metal occurs naturally in soil in small amounts, typically less than 41 parts per million (ppm), higher levels in garden soils may necessitate a range of actions to limit exposure, especially among children who are at increased risks to the health effects of lead.

If you live in the Burlington or Rutland area, you can have your garden soil screened for lead for free at one of the upcoming walk-in clinics called SoilSHOPS, thanks to a partnership among the University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener program, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The first clinic will be held on May 25 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the University of Vermont Horticulture Research Center, 65 Green Mountain Drive, South Burlington, in collaboration with the Friends of the Hort Farm's Bloom Time Festival.

Or bring your soil sample to the Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St. in Rutland on June 1, 9 a.m.-noon. This event will be held in conjunction with the annual plant sale by the Rutland chapter of the master gardener program.

Visit go.uvm.edu/gardensoilleadscreening to learn more. You do not need to register in advance. There is a limit of three samples per family. Trained volunteer health educators will be on site at these walk-in clinics to provide detailed information based on screening results.

You only need to collect one sample from

a large garden. If you have multiple, edible gardens in different locations, sample these separately. Note that for soil lead screening, ornamental flower gardens do not need to be tested unless they include edible plants.

You can also submit a soil sample to the University of Vermont Extension agricultural and environmental testing lab (go.uvm.edu/soiltest). The lab will run a basic soil test for \$17, which provides information on pH, available macronutrients and micronutrients, organic matter and other soil components, along with fertility and lime recommendations.

A heavy metals test (including lead) is available as an add-on or on its own for \$15. Results include possible management options if needed.

So, how do you take a soil sample?

If sampling a large area, collect soil from 5-10 random spots throughout the area. For small beds, choose three spots at random.

Dig down to 6-8 inches deep in each location, and then combine the soil samples in a clean container. Be sure to remove any pebbles, roots or other debris.

You will need to let the sample air dry. Do not use a hair dryer, oven or flame. Once dry, scoop 1-2 cups of the mixed soil and transfer to a clean one-quart zipper or slider storage bag.

Wear gloves when collecting your soil sample. If taking more than one sample, rinse your shovel and container between samples. For multiple samples, label each bag so you know which test results apply to which area.

For questions about soils, soil testing and gardening topics, contact the master gardener helpline at go.uvm.edu/gardeninghelp. Helpline volunteers also are available to take phone calls on Thursdays, 9 a.m.-noon through Oct. 31 at 802-656-5421.

(Debra Heleba is community horticulture program director for the University of Vermont Extension.)



Image by Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

Gardeners interested in having their garden soil tested for lead should follow this illustration to collect their soil sample.

Reasons for flowers in the vegetable garden

Deborah J. Benoit
University of Vermont Extension

There's no denying they're pretty, but did you know there are practical reasons to plant flowers among the vegetables in your garden?

Pollination is a vital component in a successful vegetable garden. Planting flowers is like ringing the dinner bell for bees, butterflies and other pollinators. They'll be attracted to the flowers and stay to visit the blossoms on your vegetables, contributing to a bumper crop.

In addition to attracting pollinators to food crops, flowers can also help deter pests. Some flowers can act as a trap, luring pests away from food producing crops. Plant "trap plants" apart from the vegetables that they are intended to protect so pests are lured away.

Pick up starter-sized flowers along with those for your vegetable crop when you visit your local nursery or start them from seed at home if you plan ahead in the spring. Many can be direct sown in the garden once all danger of frost has passed.

Starting flowers from seed can be a money saver since, unlike vegetables that you may

only want one or two of each type, you can use the same variety of marigold or sunflower throughout the garden, making use of more seeds in each packet.

When you select the flowers to add to your vegetable garden, consider choosing varieties that are edible. They make great additions to salads and other dishes. The petals can be candied and added to desserts. Just be sure not to use pesticides or other chemicals on any flowers that you intend to consume and rinse well before eating.

If you're ready to try planting flowers alongside the veggies in your garden, it makes sense to plant annual flowers to accompany annual vegetables. At the end of the growing season, you can clear the garden without being concerned about disturbing the roots of perennials overwintering there. Spring planting is simpler because you won't need to take into account where the perennials are located and work around them.

Since most vegetable crops require full sun, select flowers that will thrive in a sunny location. Also consider the height and amount of ground the mature plants will cover.

A row of sunflowers (*Helianthus*) along the

north side of the garden will not only attract pollinators, but the tall, rigid stalks can double as a support for vining crops such as pole beans or peas.

Nasturtiums (*Tropaeolum majus*), with their bold color and funnel-shaped flowers, can attract hummingbirds, who are not only pollinators but will help control flying insect pests in the garden. In addition, nasturtiums can serve as a trap plant for cabbageworms, white flies and aphids. Trailing varieties can be used as groundcover. Flowers and leaves are edible, and harvesting flowers or dead-heading will help extend the blooming period.

Marigolds (*Tagetes*) are another edible flower that does more than attract pollinators. They also attract predatory insects such as lacewings, parasitic wasps and ladybugs that help control pests. In addition, they can serve as a trap plant to lure pests such as slugs away from vegetable plants.

Like the flowers mentioned above, zinnias (*Zinnia*) will add a splash of color to your vegetable garden and attract bees, butterflies and other pollinators. The petals are edible. Cut the flowers to enjoy indoors or deadhead spent flowers to promote continued blooming.



Photo by Arodsje/Pixabay

Sunflowers are great pollinator plants and have tall, rigid stalks that can double as a support for vining crops such as pole beans or peas.

Whether you plant a border of flowers around your vegetable garden or interplant flowers among your vegetable crop, planting flowers and vegetables together creates a diverse garden that's not only pretty, but healthy and productive as well.

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

Explore Lake Champlain on UVM research vessel

Ashley Eaton
Contributor

Interested in learning more about Lake Champlain and its history, culture and geology? You can by taking part in one of the Summer on the Lake excursions, offered by University of Vermont Extension and the Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program, beginning June 18.

Educational boat trips aboard the Marcelle Melosira, the university’s research vessel, will focus on one of two different themes, Lake Champlain Live or Stories of the Lake. The cost is \$30 per person with each trip limited to the first 20 people who sign up.

For details or to register, go to <https://go.uvm.edu/boat-trip>. Trips fill up fast, so early registration is advised. Children must be at least 8 years old to participate, and anyone under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Lake Champlain Sea Grant is committed to educating as broad an audience as possible through these lake trips. The participation fee covers the cost of fuel and personnel time. A limited number of scholarships are available for those with financial constraints. Please contact seagrants@uvm.edu to ask about this option.

All trips will depart from the south side of the Rubenstein Lab/Echo Building at 3 College St., Burlington. Please plan to be at the boat at least 15 minutes before your departure time for a safety talk and to sign a waiver.

The Lake Champlain Live trip will be

offered on June 18, 4-6 p.m., and July 25, 10 a.m.-noon. This excursion will focus on lake science and current research on Lake Champlain.

Participants will get a chance to be a limnologist (a scientist who studies inland waters) and learn how these scientists take chemical, biological and physical measurements of the water to improve their understanding of the lake and its watershed. They also will tow for and identify plankton, sample sediment from the lake bottom, assess water samples for

invasive species and monitor water clarity, conductivity, temperature and depth.

After an interactive introduction to the lake’s geology, on the Stories of the Lake trips, participants will travel to Red Rocks Park, Lone Rock Point, Rock Dunder (culturally significant to the Abenakis) and the Horse Ferry shipwreck near North Beach to view cultural,

geologic and historic landmarks.

Lake Champlain Sea Grant staff and Chief Don Stevens of the Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk Abenaki Nation will share stories about cultural and historically significant landmarks, indigenous creation stories, first peoples’ history and their relationship with water as well as the lake’s naval history after European settlement. Dates for this excursion are July 15, 5-7 p.m., and Aug. 2, 10 a.m.-noon.

If questions, contact Lake Champlain Sea Grant via email at seagrants@uvm.edu or call 802-777-9130. To request a disability-related accommodation to participate, email or call at least three weeks prior to your trip.



Small space gardening



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Ted Roberts digs up spent tulip bulbs at the Charlotte World War I monument at the Old Brick Store in preparation for the summer. He was joined in the effort by Alexandra Lehmann, who is the ideas part of their team. Lehmann plans a cottage garden with a wicker chair, vegetables and perennials to demonstrate that people can make an incredible garden in a very small space.

Calendar

Send us your events 2 weeks in advance to: news@thecharlottenews.org

Music with the Museum
Thursday, May 30, 6 p.m.

Rokeby Museum will hold Music with the Museum, an evening of food and music from The Meat Packers at the Ferrisburgh Town Community Center. The event will include a silent auction to raise funds for Rokeby Museum’s educational programming, sharing the stories of the people who lived and worked at Rokeby. Get tickets at rokeby.org/music-with-the-museum. If you can’t attend, please consider supporting the museum with a donation at rokeby.org/support.

Richmond Farmer’s Market
Friday, May 31, 3-6:30 p.m.

The market opens on the Volunteer’s Green in Richmond and runs through Oct. 11. Opening day will feature live music 4-6 p.m. from folk-rock band Ox Child playing original music. There will also be a portable mini-golf course.

Organ concert
Friday, May 31, 7 p.m.

The Shelburne United Methodist Church, 30 Church St., in Shelburne will have an organ concert on May 31 with organist Mark Miller, an associate professor of church music and composer in residence at Drew University in Madison, N.J. The concert will feature music by African American Composers, works by New England composer Ned Rorem and more. No charge but donations will be accepted.

‘Keeping It Inn’
Friday-Saturday, May 31-June 1, 7:30 p.m. & Sunday, June 2, 3:30 p.m.

A solo show about how functionally dysfunctional families start with well-intended choices that usually lead to unraveling consequences, written and performed by Cindy Pierce, will be presented at Main Street Landing, 60 Lake Street, Burlington. Tickets \$25. For tickets and more information: cindy-pierce.com/keeping-it-inn.

Early Birder morning walks
Sundays, June 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, 7-8:30 a.m.

Spring and early summer mornings are terrific for birding. Who’s singing, calling, nesting or flying around the Birds of Vermont Museum? Discover birds on an early morning ramble in the museum’s forest and meadows. Walks are led by experienced birders familiar with Vermont birds. Bring binoculars and good walking shoes. Boots are definitely in order. Don’t forget bug spray and tick repellent. Park at 900 Sherman Hollow Road in the museum parking lot. Suggested donation: \$10-\$15. Register at sevendaystickets.com/organizations/birds-of-vermont-museum.



Courtesy photo

The Richmond farmers market starts up for the season on Friday afternoons with fruit, vegetables, berries, baked goods, prepared food, live music, crafts, ice cream, cotton candy, bread, honey and more.

Vermont Eats
Thursday, June 6, 5:30 p.m.

The Vermont Historical Society and the Lost Mural project are teaming up for Vermont Eats, a fundraising dinner that puts a focus on the food of Vermont’s immigrant communities. Last year was a dinner in Barre featuring that city’s Italian heritage. This year the dinner will feature Burlington’s Lost Mural Project and will take place at the Ohavi Zedek Synagogue. The dinner will examine the city’s Jewish immigrants who formed a closed-knit community in the 19th and early 20th centuries centered on a trio of synagogues in what’s now the Old North End and was known as “Burlington’s Little Jerusalem.” Proceeds will benefit the Vermont Historical Society and the Lost Mural Project. Tickets cost \$50 and are on sale on the Vermont Historical Society’s website at vermonthistory.org/vt-eats.

Lake seminar
Friday, June 7, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Learn about impacts of recent floods on Vermont’s lakes and how to better protect Vermont’s waters and make our lakes more resilient at this year’s online seminar by the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds. Vermont has some of the cleanest lakes in the country, but they are threatened by increasing heavy rain events. The seminar is a free virtual event open to the public but you must register to receive the link at vermontlakes.org/event/2024-fovlap-lake-seminar.

Free Shelburne Museum admission
Friday, June 7, 5-7 p.m.

A summer tradition at Shelburne Museum

returns with free admission on the first Friday of the summer months. From June through August, visit galleries, enjoy a picnic on the grounds, stroll through gardens and enjoy a musical performance. June 7 will feature Andriana and the Bananas. Andriana Chobot is a Burlington singer-songwriter performing indie-pop rock compositions with jazz influences.

Tag and Book Sale
Saturday, June 8, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

There will be a tag and book sale at Wake Robin at 200 Wake Robin Drive in Shelburne on June 8 rain or shine. Cash or check preferred. No pets allowed. Info: wakerobin.com.

Covered bridge meeting
Saturday, June 8, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Vermont Covered Bridge Society is holding its spring meeting for members and interested covered-bridge enthusiasts at the Charlotte Senior Center. Vermont Covered Bridge Society bi-annual meetings move around Vermont and are held in towns where covered bridges are located. Charlotte is home to three covered bridges: Holmes Creek, Quinlan and Sequin. For more info: vermontbridges.org. At the end of the meeting around 2:30, there will be a caravan tour of the town’s three covered bridges.

Grab-and-Go meal
Tuesday, June 11, 11 a.m.-noon

Age Well and St. Catherine’s of Siena Parish in Shelburne are providing a to-go meal 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. until noon on June 11. A \$5

donation is suggested. The menu is meatloaf with gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, wheat bread with butter, apple crisp with topping and milk. A \$5 donation is suggested, but not required. To order a meal email or call by Wednesday, June 5, to agewellstcath@gmail.com or 802-503-1107. If this is a first-time order, please provide your name, address, phone number and date of birth.

Gallery tour and outdoor yoga
Tuesday, June 11, 5:30-7 p.m.

Enjoy a Shelburne Museum tour and art-based meditation in the exhibition Lorna McMaster: Stewarding a Seed Collection, followed by an all-level, outdoor yoga class led by Lynn Alpeter. Bring your own yoga mat. \$10 for museum members; \$15 for non-members; advance registration required at <https://tinyurl.com/y6zb4jva>. Additional tours and mindful yoga — Tuesdays, July 2, A Grand Spectacle in the Great Outdoors: Elliot Fenander’s Circus Photography; Aug. 6, All Aboard: The Railroad in American Art, 1840-1955; Tuesday, Sept. 10, New England Now: Strange States.

Age Well luncheon
Tuesday, June 18, 11:30 a.m.

St. Catherine of Siena and Age Well are offering a luncheon for anyone 60 or older in the St. Catherine of Siena Parish Hall, 72 Church Street, in Shelburne. The check-in time is 11:30 a.m. and the meal will be served at noon. There is a \$5 suggested donation. The menu is roast beef au jus, cheddar mashed potatoes, broccoli florets, dinner roll with margarine cup, strawberry short cake with cream and milk. Register by June 12. Call 802-662-5283 or email kbatres@agewellvt.org. Tickets are also available at the Age Well Office, 875 Roosevelt Highway, Suite 210; Colchester. Restaurant tickets will be available for distribution for a suggested \$5 donation.

Criterion practice
Tuesdays, June 18 & July 9, 6 p.m.

The Green Mountain Bicycle Club will sponsor practice criteriums at Watertown Hill in Colchester. Those with lower or no ranking ride for 35 minutes starting at 6 p.m. Faster racers, who are ranked Category 1, 2 or 3, race for 45 minutes starting at 6:45 p.m. Practice criteriums are different from other races in that cyclists ride for a specified time and are scored on how many laps they complete. The entry fee is \$10 and \$5 for juniors and full-time college students. No race license is needed. Registration opens at 5:30 p.m. and closes 10 minutes before the start of the race. For information email andre.sturm@earthlink.net.

Library News

Lots of kits and equipment for summer activities at library

Margaret Woodruff
Director

Summer beckons with the warmer temperatures and blooming gardens. Take advantage of these outdoor-friendly days with some of our kits and equipment.

Enjoy a game of pickleball, disc golf or corn hole with a set from the library. Dig in the dirt with our gardening kit. Track the pollinators with the new pollinator citizen science kit. Learn about the lake with the Watershed Explorer Kit.

Information about these and all of the Library of Things collection can be found at <https://bit.ly/49zx7lt>.

Other summer activities the library is looking forward to are:

- Summer Reading Kick-Off with Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences, Wednesday, June 26, 1 p.m.
- Grange on the Green, first concert, Thursday, June 27, 5:30 p.m.
- Friends of the Library Book Sale, Sunday, July 14, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Donation drop-off times and information at <https://bit.ly/3UXM7nl>.

Children’s programs

Preschool story time Tuesdays & Fridays, 10 a.m.

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

Preschool play time Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

Play in the preschool years enables children to explore and make sense of the world around them, as well as to use and develop their imagination and creativity. We’ll be exploring the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks and Play Doh. These are a few of the open-ended projects planned for Wednesday morning play-based 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.

Gallery talk Tuesday, June 4, 5 p.m.

Karin Small, local artist, shares her vision and creative process in this informal gallery talk featuring her work on display through the end of June.

Mystery book group Monday, June 17, 10 a.m.

In “The Shape of Water,” Silvio Lupanello, a big-shot in Vigàta, is found dead in his car with his pants around his knees. The car happens to be parked in a part of town used by prostitutes and drug dealers, and as the news of his death spreads, the rumors begin. Enter Salvo Montalbano, Vigàta’s most respected detective. With his characteristic mix of humor, cynicism, compassion and love of good food, Montalbano battles against the powerful and corrupt who are determined to block his path to the real killer. Copies

available at the circulation desk.

Mount Philo’s 100th birthday Tuesday, June 18, 7 p.m.

Celebrate Mount Philo’s 100th birthday with Judy Chavez and learn the story of the amazing act of generosity that created Mount Philo State Park and started the entire Vermont State Park system. Chaves is the author of “Secrets of Mount Philo: A guide to the history of Vermont’s first state park.” There will be historic photos and maps, chill-inducing then-and-now comparisons, turn-of-the-last-century writings and a cast of admirable characters.

Better Together book club Wednesday, June 19, 7 p.m.

Consider joining this open group that discusses books related to parenthood. In “I’ll Show Myself Out,” The New York Times bestselling author and Emmy Award-winning writer and producer Jessi Klein’s second collection, she hilariously explodes the cultural myths and impossible expectations around motherhood and explores the humiliations, poignancies and possibilities of midlife. Copies available at the circulation desk. The audiobook is available on Hoopla. Registration appreciated, but not required at susanna@charlottepubliclibrary.org.

Library garden tour Thursday, June 20, 6 p.m.

Visit the library garden with University of Vermont Extension master gardener Karen Tuininga for a tour of the beautiful and fragrant pollinator garden and the rain garden. No registration required and all are welcome. Bring a friend. Refreshments will be provided.

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, June 5 & 19, 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
For the latest information about programs, books and activity kits, sign up for the newsletter at <https://tinyurl.com/n5usd25r>.

The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets regularly on the first Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. The next meeting takes place on Thursday, June 6. Contact the library or visit the library website (charlottepubliclibrary.org) for more information.

Send us your photos!



Charlotte events, people or places.
We want to publish your photos.
Email them to:
news@TheCharlotteNews.org

The Charlotte News

Senior Center News

Heartfelt thank you to all the plant sale volunteers

Lori York
Director

A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers who helped prepare for the Charlotte Senior Center annual plant sale, the families who donated plants and those in the community who stopped by to shop. The plant sale is a big fundraiser that helps support the maintenance of the senior center.

In past years, the Friends of the Charlotte Senior Center have used the money raised from the plant sale and the annual fund appeal to purchase computer equipment, furniture, replace the carpeting and build the senior center entrance addition.

June artist exhibit

Following the advice of one of her teachers, Judy Tuttle has chosen to include water as a subject in almost all her paintings. In her exhibit at the senior center, My Water World, her waterscapes include oceans, lakes, rivers, ponds and puddles done in watercolor, pastel or oil.

Peter's Playlist

Wednesday, June 5, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Join in as Peter and Helen Roseblum, the popular duo from Hinesburg, return to the Senior Center for a performance featuring oldies from the 50s, 60s and 70s. They will sing and strum from their large playlist that includes folk songs, romantic ballads, blues and rock. Free. Registration recommended.

Lake Champlain Chocolates Thursday, June 6, 1 p.m.

In Making a Difference Locally & Globally, Allyson Myers will be talk about Lake Champlain Chocolates' impact in the local and global communities. Lake Champlain Chocolates became a certified B Corporation in 2018. The company is driven by a passion to change the world one chocolate at a time. Myers is a lifelong Vermonter who joined the company in 1993. Free. Registration is recommended.

Tai chi for arthritis

Thursdays, June 6-27, 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Try out this new class for the benefits of a tai chi practice that includes 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. Eliza Hammer is a certified instructor and has studied with the founder of the Tai Chi for Arthritis Association. Email Hammer at belizahammer@hotmail.com if you have questions. Cost: \$40 for the four-week session. Register and pay by June 4.

Lost Mural project

Wednesday, June 12, 1 p.m.

The Lost Mural project began in 1986 when a Jewish mural painted in 1910 from the old Chai Adam Synagogue in a building on Hyde Street in Burlington was covered by a wall to preserve it for future relocation. The Lost Mural was uncovered in 2013 and moved to Ohavi Zedek Synagogue on North Prospect Street in 2015. Conservation and restoration was completed in 2023. This illustrated presentation will explain the Lost Mural's preservation, relocation, conservation and restoration. A visit to view the Lost Mural and learn more about its history will be scheduled for interested parties at a later date. Free.

Registration recommended.

Birding trips

Wednesday & Thursday, June 12 & 13, 9 a.m. departure

There is a wide range of birding habitats in Chittenden County. Join avid bird watcher Hank Kaestner and learn to identify the various bird species and habitats right here in Vermont. Trip departs promptly at 9 a.m. This month Kaestner will offer two birding trips. Group size is limited to 20 participants. Free. Registration required.

Wednesday, June 12, a birding hike at Charlotte Park & Wildlife Refuge, a 2 1/2 mile hike up and down that's not for the weak-hearted.

Thursday, June 13, a birding walk for those not inclined to attend the park hike. This birding trip is a slower-paced trip.

Women's kayak trips

Second & fourth Friday mornings

Kayak trips for active women who share a love for exploring local lakes, ponds and rivers. Trips listed are tentative, dependent on water and weather conditions. To register your interest, email Susan Hyde at susanforsterhyde@gmail.com to be placed on a list of paddlers. Free, but registration required.

June 14, South Slang in Ferrisburg.

June 28, Upper Otter Creek past Middlebury.

Italian for Beginners II

Fridays, June 14-July 19, 10-11 a.m.

Have you taken Italian in the past? Are you interested in continuing your study of Italian? Join this Beginner Level II class to explore the beauty of the Italian language and culture. Questions about whether this class is the correct level, please contact Nicole Librandi at nicolelibrandi2@gmail.com. Cost: \$60. Registration and payment required by Monday, June 10.

'Happy Little Trees'

Saturday, June 15, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

If you've always wanted to try watercolor but were too intimidated, this is the class for you. This month Ginny Joyner will demonstrate different ways to paint trees in the landscape. There will be plenty of time to practice and create a chart to take home for reference. Class limited to 10 students. For more information about Ginny Joyner, please check out her website: ginnyjoyner.com. Cost: \$40 plus \$6 supply fee. Registration and payment required by June 12.

Merrymac Farm Sanctuary

Wednesday, June 19, 1 p.m.

Merrymac Farm Sanctuary became a nonprofit organization in the spring of 2023. It has grown from a handful of folks to a village of volunteers, visitors and donors. It provides a permanent, happy home to over 130 homeless or otherwise abandoned farm animals. The rescues include horses, donkeys, sheep, goats, pigs, turkeys, chickens, ducks and bunnies. Representatives will talk about what they do as a sanctuary, tell a couple of animal stories and share information about how you can get involved. Free. Registration is recommended.

Learn pickleball for seniors

Saturday, June 22, 10-11 a.m.

Curious about pickleball? Playing pickleball allows you to work on your



Photo by Lori York

From left, Bill Pence, Lila Webster, Abbey Pitcavage, Windsong Kervick and Polly Price helped prep for the annual plant sale.



Photo by Lori York

From left, Madeline Palobini, Mary Donnelly, Polly Price and Rosemarie Cartularo pitched in to help with repotting for the plant sale.

balance, agility, reflexes and hand-eye coordination without putting excessive strains on your body. Pickleball is a wonderful alternative for older players, who used to play tennis but have limitations such as hip, shoulder, knee or other joint problems. Bring folding chairs to watch how it is played. Afterward, there will be an opportunity to try it. Wear comfortable clothing and sneakers. Paddles will be provided. If you enjoy the sport, the Charlotte Library has pickleball supplies that can be checked out. Questions? Call or text 802-425-4567. Free, but registration required. The rain date is June 29. Free, but 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.

Weekly Age Well Grab & Go meals

New day for pickup starting in June. Pick up on Wednesdays, 10-11 a.m. at the Charlotte Senior Center. Registration is required by

Monday by 8 a.m. for the Wednesday meal. \$5 suggested donation but not required. To register, call 802-425-6345 or email meals@charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

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
Tracy Brown, coordinator, tbrown@charlotteseniorcentervt.org
212 Ferry Road, Charlotte
802-425-6345
charlotteseniorcentervt.org
Follow the senior center on Facebook or Instagram at charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Extreme sandwiches not a staple of senior center menus

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

The menu for the Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on June 3 is lasagna, garlic bread, garden salad, cream cheese bars with fruit and whipped cream.

As Isabella Beeton observed in her famous 1861 book, “Mrs. Beeton’s Book of Household Management,” cream cheese isn’t really cream. “It’s milk dried enough so that it can be cut with a knife.”

Today, cream cheese is often made from a mixture of cream and milk. Often, but not always. Read on.

Despite its name, Philadelphia Cream Cheese was invented, not in Philadelphia, but in Chester, New York. In 1872, William Lawrence, a Chester dairyman wanted to make Neufchâtel, a French cheese. He put in too much cream, and the result was a cheese more spreadable than Neufchâtel. It was called “cream cheese.”

Neufchâtel is spreadable but has a grainy texture. It’s similar to Italian ricotta cheese but not as extreme as cottage cheese curds. It contains no cream.

In 1880, the name “Philadelphia” was added to Mr. Lawrence’s creation because the Philadelphia area had the reputation for high-quality dairy farms.

Philadelphia Cream Cheese is manufactured by Kraft Heinz, and they provide a timeline for their product:

- 1872 cream cheese invented in New York.
- 1880 “Philadelphia” brand name adopted and foil wrapping begins.
- 1939 Philadelphia brick introduced.
- 1950 cheesecake introduced as a mainstream dessert in the U.S.
- 2023 plant-based spread introduced in three varieties: original, strawberry and chive and onion.

Philadelphia plant-based spread contains no gluten, lactose or artificial dyes. Here are the plant-based spread ingredients: water, coconut oil, modified potato starch, faba bean protein, contains less than 2 percent of maltodextrin, salt, guar gum, lactic acid, sorbic acid as a preservative, natural flavor and citric acid.

Philadelphia Cream Cheese ingredients: pasteurized milk and cream, salt, xanthan, carob bean gum and cheese culture.

From cucumber sandwiches to sushi bake, to pimento cheesecake, a “cream cheese” search in The New York Times yields 3,299 entries. In The Magazine, Judge John Hodgman (somewhat reluctantly) acknowledges the right of the pumpkin-spice cream cheese on a bagel to exist.

Judge Hodgman wasn’t in Boston when making this pronouncement. Leading up to Super Bowl XXXIX, a Boston baker, learning that a Philadelphia donut shop had banned Boston-cream-pie-themed treats, announced a retaliatory ban. No Philadelphia-brand cream cheese products in his shop.

That story ran in the Boston Globe, along with 1,745 other entries for cream cheese, including ultra mac-and-cheese, smoked bluefish pate and parsnip cake with orange cream cheese frosting.

In November 2023, The Guardian ran an article with this intriguing headline: “From compressed yeast to cream cheese and cornflakes: one man’s search for the world’s greatest sandwich.”

Barry Enderwick estimates that he’s recreated more than 700 sandwiches. With some recipes dating B.C., most are modern. One of the five sandwiches he rates worst is cheese sandwich No. 2 (1912) — pub cheese (a type of cream cheese), parmesan, salt, pepper, anchovy paste and tarragon vinegar. In Enderwick’s words, “The amount of salt made it taste like a salt lick. Just awful.”

Another sandwich Enderwick rates as vile is the 1946 goblin sandwich — Brazil nuts, deviled ham, Worcestershire sauce and avocado, served in a doughnut.

On a scale from 1-10, he gives the goblin sandwich a zero, noting that ham and avocado in a doughnut taste exactly as one might imagine.

One last word on unusual sandwiches: Joseph Mitchell, whose stories about ordinary people created extraordinary journalism in the pages of The New Yorker, described the sandwich favored by the proprietor of McSorley’s Old Ale House in New York City, “He liked to fit a whole onion into the hollowed-out heel of a loaf of French bread and eat it as if it were an apple.”

I mention these creations just so people partaking of Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center can know once again how fortunate they are that the volunteer cooks there use a real food know-how to produce great-tasting meals.

Harvard Common Press is coming out with a book of Enderwick’s sandwiches in November, “Sandwiches of History: The Cookbook: All the Best (and Most Surprising) Things People Have Put Between Slices of Bread.” It promises to be the good, the bad, the beautiful and the ugly of the sandwich world.

Celebrate the emergence of June with “June Is Bustin’ Out All Over” from “Carousel” by Rogers and Hammerstein. As is typical of musicals of that era, there is impressive acrobatic dancing along with the singing at youtube.com/watch?v=l3AVmPj24.

Monday Munch, June 10

The cooks are still planning.

Reminder: Invite a child you care about to choose a book from the great collection at the Little Free Library for Kids at The Grange, 2858 Spear Street. This reach-out to kids is sponsored by the Friends of the Charlotte Senior Center.



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