

The Charlotte News

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CVU grads honored for ‘bodacious’ persistence

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Sixty years after its founding, the Champlain Valley Union High community gathered in the Patrick Gym at the University of Vermont to celebrate the school’s 2024 graduation.

As is to be expected at these annual Redhawk rites of passage, a large percentage of those gathered were tasseled and red.

In one of his final official acts as principal, Adam Bunting, who is taking over as the Champlain Valley School District’s interim superintendent on July 1, welcomed the 330 graduates.

Besides being an opportunity to celebrate the challenges and triumphs on the way to this long-awaited ceremony, Bunting said it was also a final opportunity for us to have some fun as a community.

In that spirit, he invited football coach, learning center tutor and passionate supporter of all things CVU, Rahn Fleming, to get the ceremony kicked off.

Fleming bounded up to the foot of the stage and shouted several times “rally, rally” to which the graduates and their supporters replied with increasing enthusiasm, “Champlain Valley.”

Bunting told the graduates, “When you walk across the stage today, it’s for you, but it’s not yours alone. This short walk is also for your families, your friends, your mentors, teachers and caregivers, your siblings, and even those who challenged you.”

Then, as he has done in the past, Bunting had the graduates stand and point to those in the audience who helped them to reach this milestone and yell their names. And as has happened at previous graduations, a cacophony of acknowledgements caromed off the walls and ceilings of the gym.

Veronica Miskavage followed by doing one of the most heroic things a person can do — singing the National Anthem a cappella. After the ceremony, she admitted to “shaking in her boots” beforehand, but you couldn’t tell



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

SEE **CVU** PAGE 2

The keening drone of the St. Andrew’s Pipeband of Vermont led the graduates into the ceremony.



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Livi Neilson is congratulated by the teachers after receiving her diploma.

CCS grads surprised by passage of time

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Among the soon-to-be-graduates, gathered in Charlotte Central School’s multi-purpose room before the ceremony, Thursday, that day, the day of their graduation, was the best day of their school careers.

But other than that day, June 13, field days had been good times. Many had fond memories of P.E. and advisory groups.

“I had a bunch of these kiddos for the last two years,” said Betsy Martin, eighth-grade special educator. “It’s been a great two years, and they’re ready for high school now.”

Of the ceremony that would soon follow, Martin said, “They did all the planning for what it’s going to look like, the speakers, the song, it is nice to have a lot of student involvement. It’s supposed to be their celebration.”

SEE **CCS** PAGE 2

Town employees’ share of municipal healthcare costs likely to increase

Brett Yates
Contributor

After months of discussion, members of the Charlotte Selectboard have put together a plan for saving taxpayer money on municipal employee benefits. It will come at a significant cost to the town’s workers, whose share of the bill for their employer-provided health plan appears poised to rise by 150 percent.

“There’s a lot of change coming,” said selectboard member Lewis Mudge, who presented the proposal on June 24. Its co-author, Kelly Devine, was not present for the meeting.

According to Mudge, municipal employees who currently contribute 10 percent of the cost of their health insurance premium, with the town covering the rest, will soon pay 25 percent instead. And rather than choosing among 11 plan options from BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont, they’ll likely pick one of just two: the insurer’s “Bronze Select” or its “Silver Select.”

The new cost-sharing structure will apply to municipal workers’ Health Reimbursement Arrangements as well. Currently,

Charlotte refunds 90 percent of its employees’ out-of-pocket medical expenses. Moving forward, it expects to cover just 75 percent, with “the first chunk,” in Mudge’s words, paid by the employee.

“That’s going to be a considerable hit for employees, and we recognize that,” Mudge said. “And yet we are in this difficult position of increasing healthcare costs and a mandate from the taxpayer to reduce those costs as best as we are able to.”

Discussions with employees, including an open meeting, will take place before the change becomes official. Mudge expects the board to approve a revision to the Town of Charlotte Personnel Policies by Sept. 1.

Tree fund to become 501(c)(3)

In the hope of clearing up confusion as to whether it operates as a private or municipal entity, the Rutter Family Tree Fund has applied to become a tax-exempt charity. Once the IRS has processed its paperwork, the town of Charlotte will donate some \$32,000, following a motion by the selectboard.

Seeded by a \$25,000 gift by William Rutter to the town in

2006, the Rutter Fund has paid for the planting of trees in parks and along public roadways. Until now, its finances have stayed within the municipal coffers — supported primarily, it seems, by the Rutter family but supplemented also by taxpayers, as well as other individual donors. The fund’s representatives contend, however, that the town has never had powers of administration over it, which, in their view, have always belonged at least in part to an “advisory committee” whose members do not serve as town officials.

“It never was meant to be the town’s money. It was meant to be a charitable organization,” said Robin Coleburn, one of three signatories to a June letter sent by the Rutter Fund to the town.

This spring, controversy arose as a result of a plan to install new trees on private land in Charlotte for the purpose of shading a public hiking trail. The saplings, paid for by the Rutter Fund, generated questions about whether the town was helping and advising a private landowner to plant trees that would block a

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CVU

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from her clear, bright, chill-bump-inducing performance.

Kennedy Desautels welcomed everyone by thanking the faculty and staff for making the school so light hearted, but serious when it needed to be.

“We started out as petrified freshmen consumed in a global pandemic and we’ve made it to today,” Desautels said. “We’ve matured; we’ve adapted; and we’ve grown in inches and wisdom.”

Nisha Hickok encouraged her fellow graduates to not “let the little moments pass by while you’re waiting for the big ones to happen.”

Ten years ago George Fidler moved to Vermont from England and, he said, he couldn’t be happier. Back in the land of his birth, they use a term Fidler likes — muddling through.

“It’s a good word ‘muddle.’ It’s not neat and tidy. Muddling is not walking down the street with your chin up, with your head held high. Muddling is tripping over and falling down and crawling and only scraping through by the skin of your teeth, but it is making it.”

He told his classmates that wherever they go in life, they will muddle through. It won’t be easy. It will be hard and messy, but they will all make it.

Sierra Carrier-Potter, Elizabeth Parent and Grace Thompson, leaders of the 2024 class council, announced the traditional class gift that CVU graduates present to the school. Since ninth grade, members of the class have been raising money to support the Champlain Valley school community.

The three graduates shared the news that their class had been able to raise more than \$30,000. Besides financing prom and a ball, the funds paid for yard signs for each senior, 16 Adirondack chairs that were placed around the campus, outdoor loudspeakers for games and practices, and a donation to help fund

CCS

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Graduate Nathaneal Akselrod had made an amazing moon that hung in an indoor pavilion, draped in translucent fabric with strings of light shining through. The obvious question: Was he entering high school with a thought of going into set design?

Akselrod said he was ready to go into anything. He seemed wide open to exploring possibilities.

Before Charlotte Central School’s graduation, principal Jen Roth had also said to expect a ceremony where students prevailed.

Post-COVID at Charlotte Central School, she said, graduations are more and more planned by the graduating.

“It’s orchestrated by the kids. There’s less and less adults involved in the festivities,” Roth said.

Roth was the only adult who spoke. She told the students that life is full of obstacles which she wanted them to overcome, while remaining true to themselves.

She went on to reiterate her point about the ceremony: “Tonight is about student voices and student experiences.”

Roth was followed by three student speakers, among whom there was a common

“We started out as petrified freshmen consumed in a global pandemic and we’ve made it to today. We’ve matured; we’ve adapted; and we’ve grown in inches and wisdom.”

— Kennedy Desautels

diverse student activities.

Robin Fawcett was the speaker the class of 2024 chose to address them at their graduation.

Fawcett, a theater and public speaking teacher at CVU for 29 years, is retiring after this year, so she was introduced by Storey Merrill and Asher Winsten-Pinel as graduating with their class.

She was lauded by Merrill and Winsten-Pinel for her energy, informal nature and intense energy, while Fawcett lauded their class: “You have made it through the wildest four years of any four years in my three decades of teaching at CVU.”

She said, before the class’ ninth-grade year in the fall of 2020, when education resumed after being suspended the spring before because of the pandemic with a hybrid of days of in-school and days of at-home online instruction, her doctor recommended she should not return to school because they were concerned about “a quirky blood anomaly” she inherited.

What brought her back was her students’ perseverance in practicing the craft of acting with faces muffled by sterile masks, often performing outside in the rain and snow, trying to speak above the school’s goats’ bleating, while their audience of peers sat in chairs akimbo that were sinking into the hillside.

She came back to teach in-school because of her students’ “bodacious, persevering, risk-taking” persistence.

“You have reminded me: Trying expands life, and not just for you, but for every open

mind witnessing it. Being around someone in the throes of a positive risk is inspiring. In fact, you’ve demonstrated that we are at our best with this gumption engaged,” Fawcett said. “Thank goodness I did not cloister myself away these wild four years with my embarrassing non-dimpled red blood cells. I would have missed out on all these ways you have reminded me: It is more often the bigger risk not to try.”

To honor their shared beginning, Fawcett said she wanted to go out trying, and she closed her talk by taking out a harmonica she is learning to play and attempted an Italian wandering tune. It took her two tries, but she brought the house down with her musical perseverance.

Then, from A to Z, from Derek Thomas Allen to Alex S. Zuchowski, the graduates received their diplomas, walking across the stage and into the future as their names were read by Ute Otley, social studies and head girls basketball coach, who is leaving CVU for her future as head of the women’s basketball program at Norwich University.

Clare Stackpole-McGrath gave the farewell remarks, saying that, with their diplomas, their lives are just starting.

“You were handed a golden ticket, and you get a front-row seat to the rest of your life,” Stackpole-McGrath said. “This afternoon marks a new chapter in the book of your life. You get to make it what you want. I encourage you to make it a stepping stone, a jumping-off point where new friends, new experiences and accomplishments are made.”

“It’s been a great two years, and they’re ready for high school now.”

— Betsy Martin, eighth grade special educator

theme of how distant in the future eighth grade had seemed when they entered school and yet how quickly it had come. And passed.

Story Homes said, “When I started, I would see eighth graders and that seemed so far away.”

Holmes went on to thank the parents, the teachers and the janitors for their help during the graduates’ Charlotte Central School experience.

Leigh Cullen said that in kindergarten she had been so scared of the eighth graders, a fear that was assuaged when she was given a rose by one of them. She was so happy that she and her classmates had been able to continue the tradition by giving out roses themselves to the younger students.

Theo Novak, who started at Charlotte Central School in the sixth grade, said, “After three years, it seems like home.”



Photo by Scooter MacMillan
Nathaneal Akselrod (left) and Theo Novak agreed that all of their days at Charlotte Central School had been pretty good.

“Where did the time go?” he asked rhetorically. “I’ve made friends I will probably know for the rest of our lives.”

Novak also thanked the custodians.



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Charlotte farms get sizeable chunk of agricultural grants

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

The state Agency of Agriculture has awarded more than \$1,600,000 in grants to 13 farm operations across Vermont. Two of those farms are in Charlotte.

Adam’s Berry Farm and the Grass Cattle Company were given a total of more than \$276,000 of the amount awarded, meaning that Charlotte got more than 17 percent of the money allocated across the state under the meat and produce agriculture development grants program.

The money was given for infrastructural upgrades, increasing operational efficiency, enhancing food and worker safety or improving climate resilience, the Agency of Agriculture’s food and markets division said in a release.

“These dollars will strengthen our food system while making it more affordable for our farmers and producers,” said Governor Phil Scott.

Jessica Sanford, co-owner of Adam’s Berry Farm with her husband Adam Hausmann, said the \$245,000 will help them build a facility to increase packaging and processing of their organic produce at their farm at 985 Bingham Brook Road in East Charlotte.

The grant and their continued success is a testament to the vibrant farm community in Charlotte and “to the work of the Charlotte and Vermont land trusts to get farmers on the land,” Sanford said.

They will be able to expand their production of value-added products like popsicles and sorbet made from the berries they grow.

They started farming in 2001 in Lincoln and after a couple of years moved to the Intervale in Burlington. In 2012, the couple bought the property in Charlotte and made it their home a year later.

They own 57 acres and have 35 under production.

“When we moved here, I never thought



Photo by Steve Schubart

The Grass Cattle Company is on Hinesburg Road.



Courtesy photo

Adam’s Berry Farm is on Bingham Brook Road.

we’d be in a land crunch or outgrowing our facilities,” Sanford said.

As time has gone by, Adam’s Berry Farm has turned more and more to direct sales. Ninety percent of their berries stay within 30 miles of where they are harvested. People do reach out to them to buy their produce and some is sold to distributors in places like Middlebury, Manchester, Montpelier and even New York and Boston.

“We’re one of the largest organic berry growers in Vermont,” she said.

Sanford said she is thankful for the support from the land trusts, but she is also very thankful for the support from Charlotte farms. Neighboring farmers have loaned them equipment and helped them move equipment, among other things.

She is optimistic about their continued success at running a family farm with two young children where both parents are working. Most farms have one spouse working at another job to make ends meet, she said.

Steve Schubart said the \$31,000 his Grass Cattle Company was allocated from the state funds will help pay for construction of a fulfillment building to increase his freezer

capacity. He is also working to expand his access to direct-to-consumer sales.

About a year and a half ago, he pivoted to almost 100 percent of his sales being direct to consumers.

He has been selling his organic, grass-fed beef and pasture-raised, non-GMO chicken and eggs at his farm at 1677 Hinesburg Road in East Charlotte, and his products will soon be selling at a second farm store in Hinesburg.

In 2016, Schubart leased 30 acres in Shoreham. With a micro-loan from the USDA Farm Service Agency he was able to begin buying land on both the north and south sides of Hinesburg Road. Micro-loans are small loans of less than \$50,000 for farmers to access low-interest loans to start a business.

Now, his farm is 162 acres, 150 of which he grazes. Schubart uses rotational grazing and gets about five grazings a season. With rotational grazing he is not mowing and cutting the grass short. He does this on the theory that, when the grass isn’t cut short and the soil exposed, the grass grows deeper taproots that can reach deeper water and nutrients.

“In August, the chances are our fields

are going to look a little greener and a little more living than the neighboring hay fields,” Schubart said. “That’s the theory anyway.”

Although this sort of regenerative agriculture may seem innovative, it is actually an older way of farming. These practices were prevalent in many Indigenous cultures and it’s the way farmers practiced farming before the 1940s and the advent of nitrogen-based fertilizers, he said.

Rather than raising hay and having to truck it as feed to cattle then trucking their manure to fertilize fields somewhere else, rotational grazing allows cattle to harvest their own feed.

“When you force animals to eat where they defecate, they’re going to get sick, just like if you and I were forced to do that. That’s the challenge with confinement agriculture,” Schubart said. “By rotational grazing, our animals don’t really ever get sick, because they live like bison.”

“Our farmers and producers continue to innovate, and these projects are impressive,” said Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts. “These investments in meat and produce will allow these businesses to produce more local and regional food for all of us to enjoy.”

SELECTBOARD

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view.

The precise nature of the future relationship between the Rutter Fund as a private charity and the town remains unclear. The fund’s new mission statement mentions the planting of trees on both public and private land. Former deputy tree warden Alexa Lewis suggested that the town’s tree warden could potentially serve on the nonprofit’s board of directors to facilitate the former, but she also wondered whether that would again muddy the division between the municipality and the organization.

“Perhaps it’s just a working relationship, without having a vote and a board seat,” Lewis speculated.

Coleburn noted that, as a 501(c)(3), the Rutter Fund will stand a better chance of receiving grants from foundations to help support its operations.

Fire & rescue expects temporary service cuts

Due to a labor shortage, Charlotte Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services has found itself unable to respond to calls at certain times. During understaffed and understaffed

shifts, Charlotters who dial 9-1-1 can expect to encounter one of the organization’s “mutual aid partners” instead, according to President John Snow, who updated the selectboard on Monday.

“Since the first of the year, we’ve operated with three of our seven full-time positions vacant,” Snow said. “But we’ve kind of hit a perfect storm in the last month and a half that has robbed us of the resilience to cope with this without having any effect on our service.”

In Snow’s telling, area college students who had filled in on a per diem basis have now gone home for the summer. The department’s own “overworked” employees have also scheduled vacations. Finally, a workplace injury has sidelined one of the organization’s four full-timers.

Sometimes, when a local emergency arises, fire & rescue has the capacity to send just one EMT, who supplies on-site medical aid while another town’s ambulance service arranges transportation to a hospital. On other occasions, it can’t muster anyone at all.

By Snow’s estimation, service interruptions will continue for “one to two shifts a week for the next month or so.” He noted that fire departments all over the region struggle with staffing “because there simply are not enough

qualified people to fill all the positions that are out there.” By his judgment, Charlotte’s has withstood the challenge better than most, despite current difficulties.

“We’re recruiting,” Snow assured town officials. “We’re using every financial incentive we can think of that isn’t a permanent cost change to try to get people in the door.”

New awning for library

Charlotters who attend the Grange on the Green summer concert series can anticipate an improved view of the band on sunny evenings in July, thanks to the upcoming installation of an awning on the Charlotte Library’s porch.

“The sun has been a huge problem, so I contacted Kris and Sarah Larson, who own Otter Creek Awnings. They live in Charlotte,” Francis Foster recounted on behalf of the Charlotte Grange. “They came up with a beautiful awning solution.”

Private donors will cover the cost. According to Foster, the awning has a life expectancy of 25 years and can stay up in the winter. She hopes to see it installed before the Buck Hollers’ performance on July 11, scheduled for 5:30 p.m.



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Sun on horizon: Solarize Charlotte 2024 helps save on energy bills

Jim Hodson and Rebecca Foster
Contributors

The town plan, resoundingly approved with 82 percent of the vote in 2019, calls for Charlotte to meet 25 percent of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2025, 40 percent by 2035 and 90 percent by 2050.

This year the town itself made big advances toward this goal by installing the large renewable energy project — a 100-kilowatt solar system installed by SunCommon — on the new town garage building.

With a desire for all Charlotters, not only the town, to benefit from renewable energy, the Charlotte Energy Committee has run a solarize program for the last two years.

Solarize Charlotte 2024 has expanded from last year and is now working with four locally owned solar installers and offering a minimum, pre-negotiated 3 percent discount. Using a simple form on the Charlotte Energy Committee website, town residents can request a free assessment from any or all of the vendors, compare proposals from each installer and then choose the one that best suits the opportunity.

Getting solar assessments doesn't require a financial commitment. At the very least, Solarize Charlotte participants will learn something about their property's

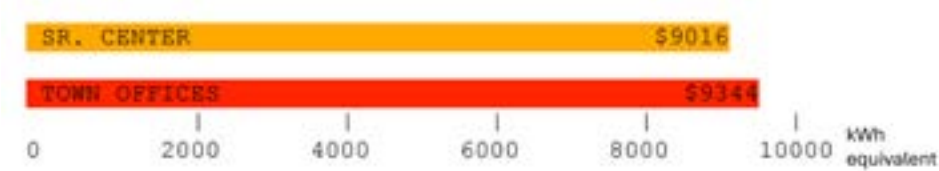
solar potential, their energy use and how generating renewable energy reduces electricity costs and mitigates the volatility of fossil fuel prices.

If you have a roof or field with sun exposure, the economics of residential solar almost always work in the long term. The combination of tax incentives from the Inflation Reduction Act, the Charlotte Energy Committee discount and Efficiency Vermont financing options often save thousands of dollars over the life of the system.

The Solarize Charlotte 2024 participating companies include All Earth Renewables, Building Energy, Green Mountain Solar and Harvestar Power. They provide a wide range of green energy solutions in addition to solar, from weatherization and heat pump installations, to roof- or ground-mounted solar.

Last year, the energy consumption mix of Charlotte's town-owned properties was almost 40 percent electric.

With the addition of the town garage solar panels, which went online on Earth Day, the town's current electricity needs will be met with lower-cost, renewable energy. To meet town goals, however, the town of Charlotte will eventually need to replace its carbon intensive heating and cooling systems with more efficient heat-pumps and generate more electricity to run them. These changes will bring greater



efficiency, cost savings, cleaner indoor air, greater comfort and decarbonization of the town's energy footprint. This win-win-win concept of replacing inefficient systems with efficient renewable sources, while saving money and decarbonizing, can be employed for almost any Charlotte resident with access to private or community solar programs.

While the goal for the town to generate almost all of its own electricity might seem daunting, in fact it requires very little area, just 0.4 percent of the town's 26,505 acres, whether rooftop, parking garage or field. (See graphic.)

By continuing to promote the benefits of the Solarize program, the Charlotte Energy Committee hopes the town and its residents will engage in a virtuous cycle of encouraging each other toward greater renewable energy production. To learn more visit charlotteenergy.org/solarize.

(Jim Hodson and Rebecca Foster are members of the Charlotte Energy Committee.)



Commentary

Need to do better at implementing Charlotte town plan

John Quinney
Contributor

Assembling our town plan took an enormous investment of time and talent from volunteers, town employees, consultants, the planning commission and selectboard.

It seemed to pay off. In November 2019, the plan was approved with 82 percent of the town vote.

Since then, our town plan has, by and large, been ignored by town leadership.

According to the town website, "Town plans are meant to be guides to the future ... (to) include a set of priorities and goals for

what can (or should) be done to achieve the future the community seeks."

The problem lies in the phrase "what should be done."

Our town plan includes an implementation table that lists "actionable strategies ... and proposes their estimated timeline and the municipal party or cooperating entities responsible for undertaking the task." (see pages 1-64 to 1-74 in the town plan)

There are 71 tasks listed. Various groups of volunteers, town employees and regional nonprofits are assigned responsibility for completing these tasks. The conservation commission has full or shared responsibility

for 15 tasks; the selectboard has 44.

Let's dig a little deeper. The energy committee, for example, is assigned 19 tasks. There are another 10, linked to the energy-related goals in the town plan, that are not included in the implementation table.

This list of "what should be done" is wildly unrealistic for the energy committee, a group of seven volunteers with an annual budget of only \$4,500. The same goes for the tasks assigned to other town organizations; they lack the resources needed for the tasks they've been assigned.

There is some progress being made on low-budget or no-budget tasks. The energy committee's Solarize Charlotte program (see related story above) is focused on an important town plan goal: "after reducing total energy consumption per capita by more than 33 percent by 2050, Charlotte will meet 90 percent of remaining energy needs from renewable sources by 2050." (See pages 1-53 to 1-63 in the town plan.)

Results to date are encouraging. Charlotte solar installations are at about 36 percent of the 2050 goal with 26 years remaining.

Let's return to the town plan for a moment. Some view goals in the town plan as aspirational, and that they become real only if a volunteer group or individual takes them on.

I would like to challenge this perspective.

In both the business and nonprofit worlds, strategic plans provide a framework for annual planning and budgeting. Each year, teams are organized, budgets are assigned and progress against plan goals is monitored. Strategic plans are living documents;

Charlotte's town plan is not, as far as implementation is concerned.

The planning commission deserves some credit here. Late last year, they took the initiative to review progress on some of the town plan implementation tasks (pages 1-64 to 1-74 in the town plan). They didn't get very far, finding that people are busy, and there was little follow up on town plan assignments.

As we enter the fiscal year '26 budget season (for the year starting July 1, 2025), I urge the selectboard to ask each organization requesting town funds to select two or three of their town plan goals and to provide an estimate for the resources required to achieve these goals.

Not all tasks will make it through the budget development process, but this approach would be an excellent start.

Then, in 2026 at around this time, we might see a report in The Charlotte News that features progress made on dozens of town plan goals, not just one renewable energy goal.

Our next town plan is to be completed by 2026. This time, we must do better, especially where implementation tasks and responsibilities, monitoring progress and annual resource allocation are concerned.

(John Quinney is a member of the board of directors of The Charlotte News. The views expressed here are his own and not necessarily those of the board or the organization.)

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Charlotte hires new director for recreation department

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

On Monday, June 17, the Charlotte Selectboard held a special meeting which had been planned to be just 45 minutes. The majority of the meeting consisted of two executive sessions.

The first executive session ended shortly after it began with the board returning to open public meeting and, with Lewis Mudge absent, the four board remaining members voting unanimously to offer Zac Farnham-Haskell a position as the town’s new recreation director.

The rec director position was open because Nicole Conley stepped down to take a job in the Colchester parks and recreation department. Conley will be manager of that town’s new recreation center.

A couple of years ago, Conley had been part of a committee advocating for Charlotte to build a community recreation center.

Farnham-Haskell has worked for the Bristol Recreation Department’s teen center and skatepark since last year, according to its website. He grew up in Essex Junction and graduated from the University of Vermont. During high school and college, he participated in soccer, track and field. He has worked as a teacher, administrator and behavior specialist.

He has accepted Charlotte’s offer at a

salary of \$45,500 and starts July 8.

The four board members also voted unanimously to hire town road commissioner Junior Lewis to replace the pump station for the bathrooms at the town beach. The work is to be done for not more than \$14,000.

The second executive session was planned for 15 minutes, but it ran for around an hour. The announced reason for the closed session was to discuss a formal complaint against a public officer.

When that session ended, the board did not take any action.

Board member Kelly Devine said the executive session was called because of two complaints against a member of the development review board. Because the matter is “a relatively new situation in Charlotte,” she said the board felt it should seek advice from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

“Not only do we want to be able to deal with this current situation fairly, but we also want to be sure to have a process in place should this happen again,” Devine said.

As the board’s schedule permits over the next several months, it plans to hear from both people who made the complaints as well as the person who the complaints were directed at, she said.

The board unanimously approved having board member Frank Tenney be “the point person” for the selectboard in the matter.

Around Town

Congratulations

Charles W. Sprigg of Charlotte was named to the Community College of Vermont spring president’s list.

Melissa Krusell and **Malcolm G. Ziter** of Charlotte were named to the Community College of Vermont spring student honors list.

Angela Fortin of Charlotte was named to the dean’s list for the spring semester at Quinnipiac University.

Stuart Robinson of Charlotte was

named to the Champlain College president’s list for the spring semester. He is majoring in filmmaking.

Amelia Anair who is majoring in accounting, **Jadin Brown** who is majoring in animation, **Heloise Guyette** who is majoring in psychology and **Brennan Murdock** who is majoring in game design, and who are all from Charlotte, were named to the Champlain College dean’s list for the spring semester.



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Community Roundup

New website helps locate Vermont pick-your-own farms

Visiting a pick-your-own farm is a great experience. It’s fun and healthy for the whole family, and you get the freshest possible products. Pick-your-own also is a way to enjoy the outdoors and appreciate the working landscape. Find a farm to visit by going to vermontpickyourown.org.

The new website will help you find out what is in season and where to pick. Hosted by the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association, vermontpickyourown.org lets you search by crop and location to find what you’re looking for. The listings describe what farms have to offer and when these crops are available along with hours of operation. The descriptions are written by the farmers, and they keep them up to date.

Strawberry pick-your-own is in full swing now across the region. As the growing season progresses, a wide array of crops will become available for customers to harvest. Blueberries, raspberries and flowers come later in the summer. Apples and pumpkins arrive in early fall, and Christmas trees can be cut starting in November. Some farms offer unusual pick-your-own crops like elderberries and herbs.

VT Folklife taking applications for traditional arts apprenticeships

Vermont Folklife is holding its 33rd year of its Vermont traditional arts apprenticeship program (vtfolklife.org/apprenticeship-program). The program supports the continued vitality of Vermont’s living cultural

heritage. Information about the program is available in 14 languages spoken within the state, including Dari, Pashto, Somali, Nepali, Spanish and Ukrainian.

The Vermont traditional arts apprenticeship program provides stipends of up to \$2,000 to master artist and apprentice pairs to cover the time, materials and travel expenses associated with learning an art form. Applications from master artist and apprentice pairs will be accepted through July 21.

Last year’s cohort consisted of 18 apprenticeships, including Judaic ritual weaving, granite carving, Burundian dance and song, Scottish dance and fiddle and Nepali sarangi playing. The almost 400 apprenticeships supported since the program’s inception in 1992 represent a broad spectrum, from the arts and cultural practices of Abenaki, Yankee and Franco-American regional cultures, to the arts of Somali Bantu, Tibetan, Bosnian, Bhutanese Nepali and other communities from immigrant and refugee backgrounds.

Master artists and apprentices apply together and jointly plan when, where and what they expect to accomplish during the apprenticeship. Apprenticeships can take the form of anything from short-term, intensive sessions to meetings spread over a year. This program supports master artists and apprentices who have already decided to work together. Vermont Folklife staff do not match apprentices and master artists.

Information about the program is available in 14 languages on the Vermont Folklife website or by contacting Kate Haughey at khaughey@vtfolklife.org or 802-388-4964.

Food Shelf News

Change, the only constant, visits Charlotte Food Shelf

Maj Eisinger
Contributor

It has been said that the only constant is change. This is particularly true at this time in the history of the Charlotte Food Shelf, which began over three decades ago with Kristine Gerson and Marty Dietchie marshaling a van to distribute food after Charlotte Central School drop-offs.

The van soon found a parking place in the Charlotte Congregational Church lot for distributions. The Congregational Church graciously offered a haven for the food shelf in its basement, and van life morphed to a space shared with an oil tank, painted to resemble a spotted cow.

Church members soon put up shelving and painted, the Allen family donated its first refrigerator and a used freezer was gifted by an anonymous donor. The food shelf was then able to store and distribute vital perishables like milk, bread and eggs.

Programs soon expanded beyond food distribution. The Shoe-in Program for kids' shoes began with seed money from the Abeles family, a Pet Food Shelf began with seed money from Phylis Kroll. Holiday basket programs were started by Charlotte Central School, and alliances with the Grange and with local farmers brought clothing donations and local produce to food shelf families.

In 2008, the food shelf began to offer assistance for emergencies such as utility shutoffs, housing and medical needs. The food shelf operated under the diocese of the Catholic Church, until federal law dictated that umbrella nonprofits incorporate as 501c entities. This initiated the new moniker, Charlotte Food Shelf, Inc.

Today, the food shelf is entirely run by volunteers and remains dependent on community donations. It supports multiple Charlotte families with healthy food and the assistance provided by the other programs, and represents a vital part of our community's safety net.

As Karen Doris steps down after 31 years of service, including 26 years as director and five years as board president and CEO, we honor her significant contributions to this safety net. This safety net is woven with dedication, compassion and an amalgam of seemingly small actions: the multiple trips in her family car to Costco for food shelf supplies, collecting boxes of clothes for food shelf kids in her basement, baking banana bread to feed volunteers filling holiday baskets, delivering food to those who couldn't make it to the food shelf themselves, donations and budgets, procuring food and stocking it, anticipating community needs, planning and expanding services. These tell the tale of 31 years of change and dedication to a labor of love. We thank Karen for nourishing a culture of generosity and care. She has inspired amazing community volunteers, including her husband Bill Doris, whose work is integral to the food shelf's mission.

Cindy Tyler, stepping down after five years as treasurer, should also be honored for her dedication, attention to detail and generous



Photo by Maj Eisinger

From left, Karen Doris is retiring as president of the Charlotte Food Shelf and Cindy Tyler is retiring as treasurer.

spirit. Cindy has always multitasked and fulfilled several different volunteer roles besides treasurer, including organizing and delivering food to shut-ins, serving as a distribution volunteer and assistance committee member, and helping to coordinate shopping efforts. The food shelf remains indebted to her.

Karen and Cindy's service and dedication to the organization and its mission have been indispensable.

In July, board appointees will include Margaret Sharpe as president, Giles Anderson as secretary and Michael Russell as treasurer. Nancy Bloch will continue as vice president and Mike Yantachka as director.

Amidst change we note, with gratitude, the constancy of community support. Generous donations from the Barnes Family Charitable Fund, Jocelyn Schermerhorn, Frances Foster, Elizabeth Bassett and John Pane are much appreciated. A generous grant from the Shelburne Charlotte Hinesburg Interfaith Project (SCHIP) is gratefully received. We thank Ellen Greek for her donation in honor of Louise McCarren. Louise McCarren is also remembered with a generous gift from the National Life Group, whom we thank. We appreciate the donation from Sheila Santero in loving memory of Louise McCarren and Ed Amidon. We are also grateful to Nick Debenedetto Jr. and family for their donation in memory of "favorite uncle" John Paul Lavigne. Donations from Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Kathleen Nolan and Hannaford's Hunger Bag Program were also received with gratitude.

The food shelf is grateful for the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters grant again this year, and collaboration with Frog Song Farm as one of our partners has begun. The goal of the grant is to support local producers, while providing fresh, local products to our families at the food shelf.

Thanks also to all those backyard gardeners who planted with a plan to donate to the food shelf. Those who grow can still plant a row.

Summertime and Grange events are jumpin’

Linda Hamilton
Charlotte Grange

Summer is here, and Charlotte Grange has lots of family-friendly events planned both around town and based at our historic Grange Hall at 2858 Spear Street in East Charlotte Village.

The Grange is again offering a series of four free musical concerts called Grange on the Green on the town green at the town hall on Ferry Road in West Charlotte Village.

It’s open seating on the grass with plenty of room to spread out your picnic blanket and set up lawn chairs with a good view of the musicians playing from the library porch.

If you pack in a picnic, be prepared to pack out all your trash and recyclables.

Adam’s Berry Farm frozen fruit pops will be for sale by the local 4-H group. Each Thursday concert is 5:30-7 p.m., with the senior center across the street as the rain venue. These concerts are cohosted by the Charlotte Library.

Grange on the Green is possible thanks to series sponsors Shearer Audi-Acura-VW and Otter Creek Awnings. Here’s the line-up:

- June 27 — Will Patton Quartet will perform Manouche jazz and Brazilian styles as well as straight-up bebop and many original compositions. Concert sponsored by Cumbancha.
- July 11 — The Buck Hollers will give us high-energy, up-tempo tunes and heartfelt, soul-stirring ballads. Concert sponsored by Philo Ridge Farm.
- July 18 — Carole Wise shares original compositions and well-known folk music. Concert sponsored by Point Bay Marina.
- July 25 — Forest Station and Friends plays lively bluegrass music. Concert sponsored by Lake Champlain Chocolates.

Another warm-weather series is the monthly Charlotte Walks, which offer the opportunity to become more familiar with Charlotte’s public trails, plus meet and chat with other Charlotters along the way.

Every third Friday, Charlotte walkers meet at a different town trailhead at 8:30 a.m. Walks generally last about an hour and are led at an adult walking pace. July 19: Pease Mountain; Aug. 16: Plouffe Lane; Sept. 20: Quinlan Bridge and Garden Tour Part Two.

Visit charlottegrange.org for trail and

exact meet-up location each month. Sign up in advance if you’d like to be contacted if weather changes plans by emailing charlottegrangevt@gmail.com.

Back by popular demand is the Veggie Share, 5:30-6:30 p.m., on three Tuesdays during the summer. The Veggie Shares will be July 23, Aug. 27 and Sept. 24 at the Grange Hall.

Bring surplus you’ve harvested from your garden to share or swap with neighbors. No money is exchanged and all are welcome to take home bounty from local gardens even if not bringing any.

Each Veggie Share event will include a brief demonstration by a local food producer or homesteader. Any remaining surplus will be distributed through the Charlotte Food Shelf.

No time or space for a vegetable garden? No problem, thanks to the wonderful array of local CSAs (community-supported agriculture) and farmstands selling directly to the public. Watch for the 2024 version of the Grange’s popular map of Charlotte farms with location and profiles of who is offering what around town, coming soon as an insert in The Charlotte News.

And what would summer be without taking time to hang out with family and friends, especially younger ones?

Besides outdoor activities, summer is a great time for reading out loud to little ones or reading quietly alone. Thanks to volunteers Susan Ohanian and Cindi Robinson and support from Charlotte Senior Center and Flying Pig Bookstore, the Grange maintains an active little free library in front of its building, featuring books for children and youth.

You can borrow and return; you can borrow and keep; or you can donate books your family has already enjoyed. Open all day, every day. Check it out!

For more information about the Grange, go to charlottegrange.org. And to stay current on these and other Grange activities, sign up on the website for the monthly e-newsletter.

The Charlotte Grange strives to honor our agrarian roots and help build a resilient future for all. Members meet the third Tuesday of the month for either a business meeting or potluck supper. If you’re curious about becoming a member or helping with any programs, email charlottegrangevt@gmail.com.

fruit and juice are particularly useful in the summer.

Food is provided at 403 Church Hill Road, behind the Charlotte Congregational Church, on the second and fourth Wednesday (4-6 p.m.) and second and fourth Saturday (9-11 a.m.) of each month. For emergency food, to schedule drop-offs or if you cannot come to the food shelf due to illness, please call 802-425-2402.

Charlotte Food Shelf also provides limited utility, rent, medical, dental, school supplies and other emergency assistance to residents of Charlotte and North Ferrisburgh. If you or someone you know is facing unexpected hardship, help is available. Simply call 802-425-2402 or fill out a request form. Request forms are available during food shelf open hours or at charlotteucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf.

Butterfly posing



Photo by Alexandra Z. Lazar

A red admiral butterfly landed on a strawflower plant and waited patiently for its photo to be taken.

Congratulations to the 2024 Charlotte Central School graduates

Naomi Strada
(Summarized by Tom Scatchard)

The community wishes the Charlotte Central School graduates all the best in their future endeavors. This year’s graduates are Charlie Adams, Nathaneal Bennett Akselrod, Alexander Andersson, Noah M. Blucher, Hazel Buchwald, Mavis Carr, Will Patton Cartwright, Aviana Centeno, Keller Companion, Leigh Cullen, Owen Daley, Rory J. Donahue, Patrick Stanley Donegan, Arthur Edwards, Solveig Chloe-River Feiker, Simon Ronald Mills Goldenbogen, Manya Lindsey Graczyk-Picard, Adela Grimm, Reed William Herlihy, Dahlia Anne Herrington, Story Alexander Holmes, Sawyer Arlington Jennings, Ellie Johnson, Odin Kallock, Ethan Hale Mazur, Wesley Ethan McManis, John Thomas Miner, Orly Nathan, Olivia Neilson, Theo Novak, Kayden Nelson O’Connell, Declan Pagnucco, Clover Emerson Rehbein, Kenneth T. Santor IV, Owen Scriver, Evie Smith, Myles Solomon, Kiley Sorrell, Peyton Sweet, Parker Trono and Seba Zeigfinger.

A message from assistant principal Amanda Riggelman

I hope this message finds you all well. It is with mixed emotions that I write to inform the community I have accepted an opportunity in a neighboring district leading curriculum and instruction work, which means that I will not be returning to Charlotte Central School next year.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served as assistant principal. Working with the incredible students, staff and caregivers has been an incredible privilege and a source of immense joy for me. Collectively there have been so many accomplishments to celebrate this year creating a supportive, nurturing and safe environment for all of our students to learn and thrive. It has truly been an honor to work alongside such dedicated professionals.

Please know that this decision was not easy; the memories and relationships I have formed during my time here will always hold a special place in my heart and I hope to stay connected with the special community here.

Positive behavioral interventions and supports pennies

At the end of every school year, the pennies earned from the positive behavioral interventions and supports program are added up. Then a handful of local charities are selected for students to vote on to choose where to give a donation.

This year, the students selected the Humane Society of Chittenden County as the winner. While there hasn’t been time to count all of the pennies, past years have raised anywhere from \$200-\$250 dollars to give away.

Congratulations to all of the Charlotte Central School students for “taking care of themselves, taking care of others and taking care of this place.”

FOOD SHELF

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Donations from community gardeners, such as spinach, lettuce, green beans, play a vital role in ensuring a supply of nutritious, fresh food. Produce can be donated beginning at 3 p.m. on distribution Wednesday.

Monetary donations are appreciated, tax deductible and can be addressed to: Charlotte Food Shelf, P.O. Box 83, Charlotte VT 05445. An easy, new way to donate is through the Paypal button on the website address below.

The following donations of nonperishables are always helpful: peanut butter, snack bars, coffee, condiments, crackers, canned soups, spaghetti sauce, breakfast cereals, toilet paper and paper towels. Individual containers of

Worldwide harmony



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Make Music Day started on the summer solstice over four decades ago in France. Also known as World Music Day, the event is now celebrated in 120 countries and more than 1,000 cities across the world. Last year, Make Music Day was celebrated with almost 4,800 free concerts in 117 U.S. cities, including Charlotte. On this June 21, there were around 25 participants on the library porch, almost equally divided between musical performers and audience members enjoying the northern European tunes they were playing.

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Until John Deyo knocked a fly to South Burlington centerfielder Sam Mazza-Bergeron for Champlain Valley Union’s final out, hope had remained high, both among the Redhawks’ faithful and the team they love, that somehow the miraculous would occur and CVU would come back from a 6-2 deficit to repeat as state champions.

But it was not to be. The Redhawks had to settle for second place in the state on Saturday, June 15, at Burlington’s Centennial Field. With the passage of time the players will surely come to embrace what an amazing accomplishment this was, but that realization was blotted out on this afternoon by the pain of losing. Someday, these Redhawks will take pride in their legacy. The seniors had been part of a program that won two state championships, came in second and made it to the semifinals during their four years of high school. And although CVU lost, they had made history. Elise Berger came in to pitch in the bottom of the seventh, becoming the first female to pitch in a high school state title game in Vermont history.

It is thought that Berger is only the second female to take the mound in a title game in the country’s history. After the game, assistant coach Sam Fontaine was shedding tears of sadness for the loss mixed with tears of joy for what the team had accomplished this year and over the past.

Towards the end of the season, the

Redhawks, who had only one loss at that point, went through a string of three shutout losses. Fontaine said to come back from that setback to get to the title game was “humongous.” Over his 11 years with the Champlain Valley program, Fontaine has been part of seven teams that made it to the state championship. “Yes, the players change, the coaches change, but the success stays and that’s special,” he said. “It is the hardest thing to go out and win a state championship, and then go and win another.” CVU’s downfall came in the first inning. In the bottom of the first. A James Chagnon triple with the bases loaded scored three runs for the Wolves. Then, Nick Kelly was hit by a pitch, the second batter hit in the initial inning by CVU’s usually sure-handed Stephen Rickert. Cedric LaMothe followed with a line drive to left that scored Chagnon to put South Burlington up 4-0. A grounder by the Wolves’ Andre Bouffard and a CVU fielding error brought home two more scores and the Redhawks were looking at a 6-0 deficit. Rickert was CVU’s first batter in the top of the second and he appeared to have gotten his mojo back, hitting a double to left. But he was left stranded. In the bottom of the second, Rickert had regained his swagger, making an amazing behind-the-back catch on a sharply hit ball and following with a throw to first for the third out. His catch and throw had the crowd cheering. Many had seen Rickert

Sports

Champlain Valley baseball stumbles in state title tilt



Photos by Judy Stroh

Although the Redhawks lost, Champlain Valley Union High made history on Saturday, June 15, when Elise Berger became the first female ever to pitch in a state title game in Vermont.

Sports



Girls warm up in their pink attire for a 5K run in Essex in early June. Photo by Lee Krohn

Girls on the Run Vermont celebrates 25th anniversary

Rachel Desautels
Girls on the Run

Girls on the Run Vermont, a statewide nonprofit organization for girls in third-eighth grade, wrapped up its 25th anniversary season that served 1,683 girls across the state.

Twenty-five years ago, 15 girls at Vernon Elementary School enrolled in the Girls on the Run program. Since then, the program has served 39,000 girls and is thriving.

Program participants, alumnae, coaches, parents, board members and supporters attended two statewide 5K events in June to enjoy the non-competitive, community-based events on June 1 at the Champlain Valley Exposition in Essex Junction, and on June 7 in Manchester.

Proceeds from the 5K events benefit Girls on the Run Vermont’s Every Girl Fund. This fund helps to ensure that every girl in Vermont can participate. This year’s 5K events brought together a combined 4,000 attendees, including program participants, family, friends and community members.

One participant at each 5K event was honored and presented with the Girls on the Run Vermont Rick Hashagen Alumni Scholarship Award in the amount of \$2,500. Cordelia King from Fairfax was recognized in Essex and Alexandra Gregory of Dummerston was recognized in Manchester. These scholarships are renewable for up to three more years and offer up to \$10,000 in total to support their education post high school.

Find out more about Girls on the Run Vermont at gotrvt.org.

CVU BASEBALL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

pull off a similar fielding feat before, most notably in last year’s state championships when Rickert made the same play to avoid being hit by a speeding ball, while still making the out.

With two outs in the top of the sixth, Travis Stroh hit a line drive to center that scored Aaron LaRose, and finally CVU was on the board 6-1.

Russell Willoughby followed with a double that scored John Deyo, but the Redhawks’ rally went no farther than 6-2, and that was where the score stood at the end of seven innings.

After the game, coach Nicky Elderton conceded that it was an emotional game, but said they knew it was going to be emotional whether his team won or lost.

“South Burlington’s a heck of a team, and they played really well,” Elderton said. “We played well. We had one bad inning.”

Elderton said making history by putting

Berger in to pitch had nothing to do with that decision.

“I’m not worried about all that stuff. She’s just another ballplayer,” Elderton said. “She’s been so successful for us all year. So, no matter who we put in out there, we knew we had full trust in their abilities.”

Although Berger gave up a single to the first batter she faced, she sat down the next three batters she faced.

After the game Berger, ever the competitor, was visibly upset about the loss and agreed with her coach about the significance of her performance.

“For me, it was just another game, another inning,” she said, although she did admit she was honored her team trusted her to take the mound in that situation.

Rickert gave up four hits and four walks while striking out three in his five innings on the mound.

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Big plans for Champlain Valley Expo to build capacity

Jessie Forand
Junapr

The Champlain Valley Exposition, a Vermont institution, along with its community partner Higher Ground, is working to bring more music to Essex Junction, with an ultimate goal of revamping the grandstand and growing its appeal as a venue.

The announcement comes in tandem with the news of a benefit concert in September, featuring Strafford native Noah Kahan on the Midway Lawn. All proceeds from the event will go to Kahan’s mental health charity, The Busyhead Project.

Representatives from the Champlain Valley Expo plan to ask the Essex Junction City Council on June 26 to approve 15 additional sound waivers. The results of that request were not known at press time. The community was invited to a forum on June 18 to learn more in advance of this.

Additional waivers would allow the site to host approximately three concerts per month from May through September in addition to the 20 currently produced annually.

The added income from these events will empower a growth plan to revitalize the grandstand, which is structurally sound but aesthetically outdated. It will

also fund efforts to address impervious surfaces to meet new state stormwater regulations — which comes with an estimated \$1.5 million price tag.

An estimated \$12 goes directly to the community for each ticket sold, meaning that local hotels, restaurants, coffee shops and retail businesses will benefit from the proposed growth plan.

If approved for additional sound waivers, the Champlain Valley Expo will for the specific events have exemptions from Essex Junction’s sound ordinance.

“This partnership and the work we’re doing is a win-win-win,” Champlain Valley Expo executive director Tim Shea said. “It’s great for the community, it’s great for music lovers and performers, and it ensures the longevity of Champlain Valley Expo, which is synonymous with our city — the Ferris wheel is on the city’s municipal logo, that’s how connected we are.”

In addition to what can only be described as the “Essex Era” for Taylor Swift, who performed at the site in 2007, Champlain Valley Expo highlights include a 2011 benefit concert from Phish, which brought more than 12,000 people — and more than \$1.2 million for Tropical Storm Irene recovery efforts. The Champlain Valley Expo also hosts a number of local non-profit and public safety events at either a free or reduced charge.



Courtesy photo

The Champlain Valley Exposition has more than 100 years of history in Essex Junction.

Wind damage



Photos by Lee Krohn

Thunderstorms and high winds on Thursday, June 20, knocked down trees in Charlotte, including on Ferry Road (above) and on Greenbush Road (below).



Outdoors

Know how cyanobacteria blooms look to keep family and pets safe

Ben Truman
Vermont Department of Health

Wondering what’s floating in Vermont’s natural waters? Though the spring brought heavy pollen accumulation on some bodies of water, now is the time to be on the lookout for cyanobacteria, especially as you are looking to escape the heat.

With the official start of summer and warm weather, blooms of cyanobacteria (also known as blue-green algae) have begun to appear, and health officials want you to know what these potentially hazardous blooms look like so you can avoid them.

Cyanobacteria are tiny microorganisms that are a natural part of freshwater ecosystems. Under certain conditions, cyanobacteria can multiply quickly, create blooms on the water’s surface and wash up along shorelines. They can produce toxins harmful to humans and animals.

Swimming or wading in water with a cyanobacteria bloom may cause skin rashes, diarrhea, a sore throat, stomach problems or more serious health concerns.

“Exposure to cyanobacteria can harm your health. It can be especially dangerous to children who accidentally swallow the water when playing, and for pets that may drink from the shoreline or swallow the cyanobacteria when licking water off their coats,” said Bridget O’Brien, an environmental health scientist with the Department of Health.

Know what a bloom looks like

Cyanobacteria blooms are usually green or blue-green and can make the water look like pea soup or spilled paint, but they can be other colors and consistencies too.

See a video and photos of what is — and isn’t — a cyanobacteria bloom at healthvermont.gov/cyanobacteria.

“It’s important to know what you are literally getting into,” said O’Brien. “Cyanobacteria blooms thrive in warm water, and as water temperatures rise, there will be more blooms showing up on lakes, ponds and beaches. If the water looks discolored, or even if you’re not sure if it’s

a bloom — play it safe and find a different spot.”

The health department has a cyanobacteria tracker where people can check reported conditions along Lake Champlain and various inland lakes in Vermont. The map shows where cyanobacteria blooms have been reported recently, but it can’t tell you what the conditions are currently at your favorite swimming area. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/35jby578>.

People can also report and upload photos of suspected cyanobacteria blooms using the Tracker’s online form. The reports are reviewed by experts from the Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation and the Lake Champlain Committee. Confirmed reports are posted on the cyanobacteria tracker.

Bloom conditions can and do change quickly, and not all locations are monitored. Vermonters should learn what blooms commonly look like, and always pay attention to any posted warning and closure signs. People can also check with their town for conditions at locally managed beaches.

If you think it’s a cyanobacteria bloom:

- Avoid contact with the water.
 - Do not let pets or livestock swim in or drink the water.
 - If you come in contact with cyanobacteria, rinse off thoroughly as soon as possible.
 - Talk with your health care provider if you have concerns about possible exposure.
- Learn more about cyanobacteria and how to stay safe in the water:
- healthvermont.gov/cyanobacteria
 - healthvermont.gov/summer-safety-tips
 - Department of Environmental Conservation at <https://tinyurl.com/5x4ywn26>
 - Lake Champlain Committee at <https://tinyurl.com/jnk9a472>
- The Lake Champlain Committee coordinates a program of volunteer cyanobacteria monitors. To get involved, email <mailto:lcc@lakechamplaincommittee.org>.



Photo by Vermont Department of Health
Cyanobacteria can make dogs and humans sick or may even be fatal.



TIME FOR GARDENING!



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Outdoors

Four experts to show how to get rid of invasive plants

Jamey Gerlaugh
Contributor

Sustainable Charlotte, the Charlotte Conservation Committee and the Charlotte Library are hosting a workshop on invasive plants at the next Green Drinks gathering on Tuesday, July 9, 5:30-7 p.m. (rain date July 10) near the pollinator gardens at the corner of Roscoe and Lewis Creek roads in Charlotte. Four experts will help with identifying, understanding and managing these plants. Various tools and techniques used in removal work will be demonstrated and all can try their hand on removing onsite plants. Speakers will include:

- Julie Parker Dickerson, master gardener and creator of the many Pollinator Pathway gardens in East Charlotte (pollinator-pathway.org/towns/charlotte) will talk about why invasives are

concerning and what to plant in their place.

- Andrea Morgante, conservationist and professional landscaper, will share her professional experience helping landowners deal with invasives through a variety of methods.

- Debra Sprage, Monkton Conservation Commissioner, will talk about volunteers clearing Monkton public lands of invasives.

- Mark Dillenbeck, Charlotte’s former tree warden, will talk about his experiences in dealing with invasives on his land.

One goal of the workshop will be to explore the creation of a system for volunteers to work together on tackling invasives on each other’s properties.

There will be appetizers and non-alcoholic beverages. Bring a folding chair, work gloves and bug repellent.



Courtesy photo

Ann Johnston Miller and Jaime Schulte of the Monkton Conservation Commission tackle buckthorn in the woods behind Monkton Central School.

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Outdoors



Photo by Jessica Louisos

A Lewis Creek Association project team visits with landowners at a potential tree-planting site.

Lewis Creek Association develops projects in Lewis Creek watershed

Kate Kelly
Contributor

The Lewis Creek Association and landowners have partnered to improve water quality in Lewis Creek.

With funding from a Watersheds United Vermont Project Development Block grant from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, the association prioritized projects in 2023, then sent letters to landowners, visited properties and investigated potential projects from river corridor easements to tree plantings to removing old bridge abutments.

The Lewis Creek Association has now prepared two high priority projects for the next step, which is applying for grants for more design work or implementation. One of these projects is a tree- and shrub-planting project along a creek in Hinesburg, for which the association has

received funding to complete this fall.

The other project is a gravel road in Starksboro that has been eroding, dumping sediment and pollutants into Lewis Creek. If the grant is approved, it will allow Lewis Creek Association to hire engineers to design road fixes.

Learn more about Lake Champlain’s water-quality problems and what landowners can do to improve water quality in a 17-minute presentation at bit.ly/lca-wq-videos. These include slowing water down, spreading it out and sinking it into the ground. These are the three ‘S’ words that are central to Lewis Creek Association’s Ahead of the Storm program. Learn more about this program at bit.ly/lca-aots. It is crucial that we all do our part to improve water quality in small ways.

(Kate Kelly is program manager of the Lewis Creek Association.)

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The Charlotte News

New campaign aims to stop spread of invasive pests

Lisa Halvorsen
University of Vermont Extension

For many Vermonters and out-of-state visitors, summer means camping, hiking and taking part in other outdoor recreational fun. However, these activities can all spread invasive plants, insects and diseases, unless steps are taken to minimize damage to the environment.

University of Vermont Extension; the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation; and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets have teamed up to inform and educate outdoor recreationists about what they can do to prevent the introduction or spread of these pests through their new Arrive Clean, Leave Clean campaign.

The purpose of this outreach campaign, launched in June, is to encourage anyone who spends time outdoors to follow three steps when leaving the woods. These are to clean their gear, check their vehicles for egg masses or other life stages of spotted lanternfly and not to move firewood.

“Although the spotted lanternfly has not been reported in Vermont, it has been confirmed in neighboring states, including New York and Massachusetts,” said Ginger Nickerson, forest pest education coordinator. “All life stages of this invasive pest can hitchhike long distances on vehicles and infest new locations, thus the need to be vigilant.”

The same is true for other invasive species not yet detected in Vermont as following the same three steps will help prevent their spread. These species include oak wilt, a fungal disease that has killed millions of oak trees nationwide; the Asian longhorned beetle, which attacks maple trees; and the hemlock woolly adelgid, which will decimate entire stands of hemlock, leading to loss of deer habitat and cooling of streams for trout.

“Invasive plants, insects and pathogens can be spread unknowingly by people,” Nickerson said, “changing the forest landscape as we know it. Although we can’t do anything about the spread of invasive species by birds, animals and wind, many pathways are under human control, including through outdoor recreation.”

Because invasive plant seeds and insects can lodge in dirt in boot or bike treads, or hide in the folds of clothes or gear, it’s important to clean all gear before and after heading outdoors to avoid dispersing insects or their eggs to new areas.

Consider keeping a brush in your vehicle to brush off boots, clothing, bicycles and gear, especially any gear that has been stored outdoors, before heading out on a trip, and when returning from the forest.

If you have traveled to a state where spotted lanternfly is established, Nickerson recommends inspecting your vehicle before returning to Vermont. The adults especially like to lay eggs on rusty metal, so carefully examine wheel wells and other areas on vehicles. The egg masses look like patches of dried mud and are not easy to detect.

One of the most common ways invasive pests are spread is by campers moving firewood long distances, whether within Vermont or from outside the state. Most insect eggs or diseases are too small to see, or are hidden inside the log, so campers and hunters can inadvertently introduce a forest pest to a new area. Although convenient to bring firewood from home, to avoid transporting pests, buy or gather firewood close to where it will be burned or buy certified treated firewood.

To learn more about the campaign and measures to control invasives, go to vtinvasives.org/arriveclean.



Photo by Kenneth R. Law, USDA APHIS PPQ/bugwood.org
The spotted lanternfly will lay its dried mud-like egg masses on any surface including wood and metal.



Photo by Rebekah D. Wallace, University of Georgia/bugwood.org
Although the spotted lanternfly has not yet been found in Vermont, all life stages of this invasive pest can hitchhike long distances on vehicles and infest new locations, which is why it is so important to leave outdoor experiences with clean vehicles.



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In the Outdoors

Defeat the heat by savoring Vermont opportunities

Elizabeth Bassett
Contributor

One morning last week, before 6 a.m., our thermometer read 75 degrees. The humidity hovered just below 70 percent. The official heat wave would not kick in for another six hours.

After my morning tea, I headed to Mt. Philo. It is unusual, a little past 7 a.m., to find the parking lot nearly half full. As I started up the road, I knew or recognized nearly every person I met. There was a near-festive air.

“I’m headed home to hole up before the onslaught,” said one.

“Enjoy the cool morning,” quipped another, wiping sweat from her eyes.

It occurred to me that we were behaving as if a blizzard were bearing down. In winter, it’s off to the store to tuck in milk, bread, bananas and perhaps some treats for the days ahead. Extra batteries for good measure. There was an air of excitement, and dread, as we awaited temperatures soaring into the mid-90s with crushing humidity.

I own a copy of “The Vermont Weather Book,” which now feels like a historic artifact. Published in 1985 by the Vermont Historical Society, this slim volume by David Ludlum considers Vermont’s weather from earliest records. The book cites historic events by month, location and type: snowstorms, tornadoes, tropical storms, hurricanes and floods, as well as cold and heat waves.

Ludlum chronicles events many will recognize: the Year Without a Summer, 1816; New England Hurricane of 1938; the Great March Blizzard of 1888; Vermont Flood of 1927 (after which many of the state’s now-crumbling bridges date); and the 1932 Total Eclipse of the Sun. Other less familiar entries: the luminous snowstorm of 1817; snowballs in the air in 1854; and a lengthy list of tornadoes. During three decades between 1854 and 1884, snow was measured on the ground in May in more than 20 of those years.

The shortest section of the book, four pages, is devoted to heat waves. While the mercury reached 105 degrees in Vernon on July 4, 1911, most of the heat waves and records were temperatures in the 80s and 90s. In the 20th century through 1975, 22 days notched temperatures of 100 degrees or more across the state.

When we’re not enduring a heat wave, make sure to savor our summer days. The region brims with opportunities. A couple of outings should be on your radar:

Rail trails

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, at 93 miles, is the longest rail trail in New England, connecting 18 towns from St. Johnsbury to

Swanton. A year-round, gravel trail with a maximum grade of 3 percent, it connects to other networks including the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail and many local and long-distance routes like the Long and Catamount trails: railtrails.vermont.gov/trails/lamoille-valley-rail-trail.

Vermont state parks

More than 50 state parks spread across Vermont. The park website is a rich source of information and maps. It enumerates amenities like lakes, pools, boating, playgrounds, nature exhibits, trails and camping from primitive to cabins and cottages. Vermont State Parks have a lot to offer: vtstateparks.com.

Vermont historic sites

Some historic sites are worth the journey, others perhaps worthy of a detour. I’ve never visited a Vermont Historic Site and not been the richer for it. Bennington Battle Monument inspires a state holiday each August. Mount Independence offers 6 miles of trails, some accessible, in a spectacular setting and a small museum at one of the country’s most significant Revolutionary War sites.

East Point or Rattlesnake Hill was renamed Mount Independence after the Declaration of Independence was read to assembled soldiers. A sophisticated three-tier defense system and 12,000 troops persuaded General Guy Carleton to abandon a British assault in the fall of 1776. Meanwhile, a large community of soldiers and their families, nearly as large as the population of Boston, lived there.

While the ground will never be excavated, visitors can walk past remains of a 600-bed hospital, officers’ barracks and enlisted men’s quarters, blockhouses, a storehouse, watch huts, a likely powder magazine and numerous military components: star fort, horseshoe battery, crane site, masting point and bridge site. In addition, there is evidence of the Native American past.

The museum offers contemporary features like videos as well as a collection of artifacts found at the site. Items on display include a 3,000-pound cannon made in Scotland in the 1690s, log timbers from the “Great Bridge” between Mount Independence and Fort Ticonderoga and an engraved powder horn owned by a soldier at the mount in the 1770s. In addition, there are remnants of domestic life: fish hooks, eating utensils, buttons, medicine vials, hoes, axes, shoe soles, keys, cufflinks and belt buckles.

We’re on notice: heat and humidity will likely return. Don’t let it ruin your summer. There’s plenty to explore in the outdoors.



Photo by Don Shall

View of Fort Ticonderoga from Mount Independence. During the Revolutionary War, both hills were denuded of trees to ensure a clear line of sight.

GRANGE ON THE GREEN

Thursdays
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Charlotte Town Green (rain location: Senior Center)

Hosted by the Charlotte Library and the Charlotte Grange with thanks to our Concert Series Sponsors: Otter Creek Awnings and Shearer Audi-VW-Acura.

June 27: Will Patton Quartet
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July 11: The Buck Hollers
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July 18: Carol Wise
Original music and well-known folk music. Concert sponsor: Point Bay Marina

July 25: Forest Station & Friends
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Sacred Hunter

The road less traveled led to a friendship unparalleled

Bradley Carleton
Contributor

When I was in my teens, my best friend and I were seeking adventures and, being steeped in the traditions of our teachers at Vermont Academy, we were immersed in outdoor education. We learned entomology and how to read the rivers and mountain streams for the miracles that crawled at our feet. We turned over rocks and studied the variations of mayflies, stoneflies and caddis flies. We were immersed in studying what water temperatures were the preferred for rainbows, browns and brookies. We dissected one of the rainbows to learn what particular insect they were feeding on and what was hatching from the aquatic world beneath us. We learned to match the hatch and how to mend a line to overcome the crossing currents.

As a rebellious teen, I struggled to find anything that could hold my attention. Flyfishing was the first activity that fascinated me enough to do so. This was when I first recognized that my spirit required constant stimulation from the natural world.

I was a terrible ball player. Baseball, football, soccer — you name it, and I managed to embarrass myself regularly. Fast forward 20 years, and after sowing my wild oats in New York City for a decade, I found myself taking all night drives back to the only place that ever felt like home, Vermont. I had attended a Ducks Unlimited dinner in a fancy venue in Greenwich, Conn., and, for the first time, I was exposed to wildlife art.

I was captivated by a painting by artist Chet Reneson of Lyme, Conn., titled “The Bay Gunners.” It captured two men standing outside of their Barnegat Sneakbox boat in a tidal marsh with a strong wind blowing snow sideways.

They were tucked in behind a rough blind camouflaged with cattails. Their guns were in their hands. I could feel the stinging wind on their frost-covered faces. The artist captured the visceral moment of these two men, unprepared for the flock of bluebills screaming into the decoy spread on the opposite side of the blind. They were clearly unprepared for the opportunity. I stared at the painting longingly, knowing that I could not afford the price but promised myself that one day, I would live this dream.

This magical piece of artwork spoke to the deepest part of my soul. I knew how I wanted to live out the rest of my life. I moved home to Vermont and began to wander in a jagged forward progression toward my dream.

For many people who lived conventional lifestyles based on gaining financial stability at the expense of pursuing their passions, I was an outlier. To the embarrassment of my peers and family, I fumbled toward my dream life with singular focus. My spirit cried to engage with nature through flyfishing, waterfowl hunting, ice fishing, turkey hunting, foraging and a childhood love of deer camps.

I had no idea how I was going to get there. I only knew that I had to, in order that my spirit would find the connection that made me feel whole. Like I belonged. I took so many wrong turns trying to balance a conventional lifestyle with my needs. I was a banker, a stockbroker and a restaurant host. With each of these attempts to conform, my spirit would wither.

Eventually, at the ripe age of 65 years old, I surrendered. I had been a part-time waterfowl guide for 28 years and would frequently call in “sick” when, during the full moonlight, I heard the Canadian geese flying over my house. If I learned that the



Photo by Bradley Carleton

Chessie, the best duck dog Bradley Carleton has ever owned

hexagenia hatch was flooding the cool night air rising off the river, I knew what had to be done.

I met friends along the way who shared these passions and became the kind of friends that you could trust with your life. They understood the intrinsic value of watching a brook trout slam an elk hair caddis in a remote mountain stream. They understood the intense vocal connection when communicating with a boss tom turkey. They knew how to become the lonely hen and knew when to putt, purr and cluck. These people knew how to appreciate the stark beauty of stick season, the sting of whitecaps on our faces when the north wind sprays over the bow as we cross the bay in the dark on our way to the blind.

I am grateful for having chosen an unconventional lifestyle. This is the path that led me toward a life that feels like I am living in the painting I identified with so

many years ago. A couple of years ago I met a kindred spirit, a most generous older gentleman, Tom, who shared his love of all things outdoors. His stories cemented a friendship unparalleled. I went to his home recently. He had been cleaning out his office. There were stacks of books and paintings leaning against a wall in his garage.

Tom turned to me and said, “I have something for you.” He handed me, not one, but two Reneson paintings. The second one he handed me left me breathless. The print was titled “The Baygunners.” I knew in the very depths of my spirit that the “road less traveled” was, indeed, the right one.

(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.)

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Gardening with native plants

Nadie VanZandt
University of Vermont Extension

Stunning landscapes abound all over the world, each one a testament to the captivating beauty of its native plant life. A flamboyant royal poinciana (*Delonix regia*) in bloom in its African natural habitat is a breathtaking sight that cannot be replicated elsewhere. Likewise, the majestic expanses of sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) forests can be appreciated only in eastern North America, their place of origin.

Introducing native plants into your existing landscaping brings a host of benefits. Native plants thrive in their natural habitat and need little care once established. Like plants in a forest, they flourish in their specific local ecosystems and climatic conditions.

At the same time, native plants support ecosystems by attracting wildlife, including birds and native pollinators, providing them with nutritious sources of food.

In addition, native flowering plants, trees and shrubs protect the environment by absorbing and filtering runoff from heavy precipitation thereby preventing the harmful pollution of waterways.

Incorporating native plants into your landscape takes a little bit of planning. You will need to identify the environmental characteristics of your garden such as sun exposure, drainage and soil type to help you choose the plants best suited for these conditions.

Take the time to learn about your native flora by visiting local parks or public gardens landscaped with native plants. Nature preserves in your area are also a great source of inspiration. There you can observe how specific plants associate with others and how they perform in conditions like those on your property. This may help you decide which plants might grow well in

your garden. At first, you will spend as much time and energy planting and caring for native plants as you do non-natives, but as your native plants get established, you will appreciate lower water bills and less maintenance. You also will eliminate the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

You can update your landscaping in phases as money and time permit. Consider incorporating what the Audubon Society calls Vermont’s “superstars” because “these plants are more powerful than others when it comes to supporting pollinators and birds.”

For example, oak, black cherry, birch, red maple and serviceberry, all Vermont natives, are each host to hundreds of species of insects and caterpillars that provide nutritious food to birds.

The same applies to native shrubs like alder, dogwood, blueberry and shrub willow. In addition, superstar native perennials include joe pye weed, asters, goldenrod and sunflowers.

You can plant nursery-grown potted plants anytime during the growing season to ensure the plant’s roots get established before winter sets in.

Prepare your planting area as you would for any nursery plant by following the specific recommended guidelines.

Use organic mulch to reduce weed pressure, but do not smother the plants and keep the mulch away from the plant’s crown. Choose a mulch that breaks down and improves soil structure such as compost, well-rotted manure, shredded leaves or pine needles. However, keep in mind that mulch may prevent ground-nesting bees from accessing the soil to make their nest.

Maintain your plantings with good watering habits until they are established, which takes about three years. By then, your native plants should not require as much water or mulch. Moreover, you won’t need to fertilize them as they are meant to grow unaided in their native soil.

Planting native species will transform your garden into a haven of birdsong. It will



Photo by DivaDan/Pixabay

Introducing native trees into an existing landscaping benefits birds such as cedar waxwings, which feed on berries of black cherry and other fruit trees.




Photo by Nadie VanZandt

Goldenrod is considered one of Vermont’s “superstars” as this native flower is an excellent source of food for pollinators and birds.

become a sanctuary for birds and a peaceful retreat all while protecting the environment. For more information regarding native plants, visit the University of Vermont Extension master gardener garden resources web page (go.uvm.edu/garden-resources).

(Nadie VanZandt is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener from Panton.)



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Recreation Commission Meeting
Monday, July 1, 5:30 p.m.

Trails Committee Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, July 2, 6:30 p.m.

Independence Day Holiday - Town Hall Closed All Day

Regular Selectboard Meeting
Monday, July 8, 6:30 p.m.

Charlotte Energy Committee Meeting
Wednesday, July 10, 7 p.m.

Gardening

Tips for garden photography

Deborah J. Benoit
University of Vermont Extension

As much as we might wish that May lilacs or June peonies would last forever in our gardens, they're fleeting pleasures. One of the best ways to preserve those wonderful moments and revisit them in the future is by photographing your garden.

If you don't take pictures because you've been disappointed in the past, try again. Capturing quality images once required complicated cameras or special equipment. These days, you don't even need a "real" camera since most cell phones come equipped with one capable of taking high-quality digital images. If your phone doesn't, there are digital cameras available ranging from point-and-shoot models to those that allow customized settings and changeable lenses.

So, what does it take to take great garden pictures?

First, don't settle for just one. Take multiple photos. Digital photographs offer you the option to take a dozen or more photos of that perfect rose. If you're concerned about how they turn out, do a quick check for framing and composition while still in the garden. Poorly focused or badly composed digital photos are easily deleted.

Second, be patient. Keep an eye out for interesting images. Take a stroll through the garden, camera (or phone) in hand, and really look at everything.

Bumblebees, butterflies and more elusive visitors to the garden, such as dragonflies and hummingbirds, may photobomb your pictures and can result in some great compositions. If you see a potential subject, stand quietly, ready to snap a picture. Your patience will likely be rewarded.

Third, change your perspective. Take a close-up. Maybe a distance shot. Or a higher angle looking down on your subject or a lower one looking up. Try different viewpoints. Get closer. Step back. Use the zoom feature to get up close without being

close. Imagine the possibilities.

Next, pay attention to the light. Just as some plants prefer morning sun to the heat of the afternoon, taking pictures in the early morning can result in better-quality photos than those taken in the middle of the day. Lighting makes a big difference in how your pictures come out.

While bright sunlight might seem preferable, it can wash out colors or create unwelcome dark shadows in photographs. Instead, try taking pictures in early morning or early evening for better colors and less intense shadows.

An overcast or partially cloudy day with its soft, diffused light can also result in better images. In addition, taking pictures after it rains can provide the opportunity to capture the sparkle of raindrops on flowers or foliage.

The time of day and the position of the sun also will affect where shadows fall. Nothing can ruin an otherwise good picture like the photographer's shadow unintentionally cast across its subject.

For variety, consider taking photographs facing the sun, backlighting the scene. Using a tree or building between the camera lens and the sun itself allows its light to highlight your subject without adverse glare.

Add interest by changing the composition of your photos. Place your subject off center. Use a piece of garden art as a focal point. Capture the texture of foliage highlighted by the sun across its surface.

Sometimes snapping pictures may take more than patience or creativity. Using a tripod or solid surface such as a fence post for support can help steady your camera, preventing blurry pictures.

So, the next time you head out to your garden, take along your camera or phone, and snap a few pictures. You'll be glad you did.

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



Photos by Deborah J. Benoit

Filling the frame with a single color or texture of a plant will make close-up photos more dramatic.



Lighting and shooting plants, such as these hop vines reaching for the sky, from different angles can make a big difference in how well photos turn out.



The vibrant color of red flowering quince pops against a gray cement background, creating an interesting image.

Green Mountain Bicycle Club rides for July; things to remember

Contributed

Here is the Green Mountain Bicycle Club's rides for July. Please remember these important things about riding with the club:

- All riders must fill out one waiver of liability per season.
- Although it isn't mandatory, we ask cyclists to sign up online prior to doing a Green Mountain Bicycle Club ride.
- All riders must wear helmets and obey the rules of the road. Please do not ride two abreast if there is traffic in either direction.
- In the event of inclement weather, ride leaders will notify those who have signed up in advance and post to the listserv if the ride is being cancelled no later than two hours before the start of the ride.
- Riders below the age of 18 must have a signed waiver from a parent.
- E indicates an easy ride, M is for moderate, and S is for strenuous.
- Rides begin promptly 15 minutes after the meeting time.
- All riders should carry some basic tools including a pump or CO2 cartridge, tire levers and a spare tube or patch kit.
- Social rides are more leisurely versions of the mapped ride — usually the shorter route — with longer food breaks. Always contact the social ride leader before the ride to make sure those versions of the ride are taking place.

All riders are required to sign our annual waiver which is available at thegmbc.com. We also request, but do not require,



cyclists to sign up for each individual ride so our ride leaders know how many people to expect.

Date: Tuesday, July 4
Ride: Salisbury Ice Cream Social
Meeting Time: 1 p.m.
Meeting Place: Middlebury area — Three Mile Bridge
Leader: John Bertelsen — 802-864-0101/ jo.bertel@gmail.com
Co-Leader: Karla Ferrelli — 802-864-0101/ karla.ferrelli@gmail.com

Date: Saturday, July 6
Ride: Gravel — MUP #1- Dirt roads in the Hinesburg Charlotte area including Guinea, Bingham Brook and Garen roads
Meeting Time: 9:15 a.m.
Meeting Place: Charlotte Elementary

School
Leader: Brian Howard — 802-304-0610 or bjhowd@gmail.com
Co-Leader: Ed McSweeney — 802-522-5505 or dmcs32@gmail.com

Date: Sunday, July 7
Ride: Willsboro Wanderer — 40 (E/M) and 55 (M/S) options of hilly terrain on low-traffic roads in New York. The lunch stop for both rides is the same location and there is the option for ice cream before boarding the ferry to head back to Vermont. Bring money for the ferry and food stops. The shorter version of this ride skips the big hill out of Willsboro.
Meeting Time: 8:30 a.m. for the 9 a.m. ferry
Meeting Place: Old Champlain Flyer parking lot, Ferry Road, Charlotte, NOT the ferry parking lot

Leader: Kevin Batson — 802-825-2618 or kevbvt@gmail.com
Co-Leader: William Regan — 571-730-8160 william.regan.802@gmail.com

Date: Sunday, July 16
Ride: Not Quite Quebec — 51 (M) and 64 (M/S) rides on low traffic roads near the Canadian border. The route crosses the Missisquoi River twice and travels along the shore of Lake Carmi.
Meeting Time: 8:45 a.m.
Meeting Place: Tractor Supply Company at exit 20 off I-89
Leader: Dave Merchant — 802-825-3808 or merchant59@gmail.com
Co-Leader: Joyce McCutcheon — 802-734-4999 or mellowmiti@aol.com

Date: Saturday, July 20
Ride: Gravel ride TBD
Meeting Time: 9:15 a.m.
Meeting Place:
Leader: Brian Howard - 802-304-0610 or bjhowd@gmail.com

Date: Sunday, July 21
Ride: Pleasant Valley Voyager — The 30-mile (M) short loop takes appropriately-named Pleasant Valley Road. The 50-mile (M/S) version adds Hogback Road which is equally beautiful.
Meet Time: 9:15 a.m.
Meeting Place: Brown's River Middle School
Leader: Matt Kuivinen - 802-881-9045 or mattkui@earthlink.net
Co-Leader: Ed McSweeney — 802-522-5505 or edmcs32@gmail.com

Date: Sunday, July 28
Ride: Possible rain date TBA
Meeting Time: 8:45 a.m.

Calendar

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

Hooked on Rugs silent auction, Thru Saturday, Aug. 31, noon
The Henry Sheldon Museum is exhibiting 30 hooked rugs that were handmade by longtime Sheldon Museum staff and community member, Suzanne Douglas, for a fundraiser to

benefit the museum. All bidding will take place in person or by phone at 802-388-2117. Bidding closes at noon on Saturday, Aug. 31. The rugs can be viewed at henrysheldonmuseum.org/hookedrugs.

Grange on the Green
Thursday, June 27, 5:30 p.m.
This summer's first Grange on the

Green takes place on June 27 with the Will Patton Quartet playing various styles of music including Brazilian and bebop.

Bird monitoring walk
Saturdays, June 29 & July 27, 7:30 a.m.
Join the monthly monitoring walk to record birds on the Birds of Vermont Museum's property. Please bring your own binoculars and dress for the weather. Free, suggested donation

\$5-\$15. Register at sevendaystickets.com/organizations/birds-of-vermont-museum.

'Light' debuts in Essex
Friday, June 28, 7 p.m.
"Light" opens on Friday, June 28, at 7 p.m. at the Masonic Lodge at 2756 Essex Road in Essex, N.Y., the season-opening performance of the Essex Theatre Company. The production is in collaboration with Bell Fire Arts (bellfirearts.org). For \$15 you can get a boxed dinner and drink provided by the Pink Pig Cafe and River & Rails Market and Deli and picked up at the Barn Door Tavern before the show. Tickets at essextheatre.org. For information: 518-526-4520 or info@essextheatre.org.

Art exhibit
Saturday, July 1-30
Brenda Myrick's exhibit Stillness in Motion will run at Village Wine and Coffee in Shelburne July 1-30. There will be an art opening celebration Saturday, July 13, 4-6 p.m. with complementary wine and small bites. For more information: 802-985-8922 or

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CALENDAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

brendamyrickart@gmail.com.

**VSO at Shelburne Museum
Thursday, July 4, 7:30 p.m.**
Celebrate the Vermont Symphony Orchestra's 90th birthday with fireworks at the Shelburne Museum and an evening of music by Sufjan Stevens, Margaret Bonds, Vermont's own Erik Nielsen, John Philip Sousa marches, John Williams' E.T. score and more. Gates open at 5:30 p.m. Concert begins at 7:30 p.m. Buy tickets at cart.flynnvt.org/18749/18752.

**Butterfly and bug walk
Saturday, July 6, 10 a.m.–noon**
Beetles, butterflies and so much more. Join Vermont Entomological Society naturalists and entomologists for an exploratory stroll on the Birds of Vermont Museum grounds. Bring magnifying glasses and an insect net if you have one. Binoculars can be helpful. Do bring your water bottle and dress for outdoors. Pack a lunch and picnic after the walk. Register at sevendaystickets.com/organizations/birds-of-vermont-museum. Free but donations welcome.

**Joni Mitchell Tribute
Saturday & Sunday, July 6 & 7, 6:30 p.m.**
Singer-songwriters Celeste Krenz, Liz Barnez and Rebecca Folsom have shared the stage many times over the years and rejoin to pay tribute to Joni Mitchell's best-loved songs at the Essex Theater in the Masonic Lodge in Essex, N.Y. The show starts at 6:30 pm. and ends in time to catch the last ferry back to Charlotte. Tickets are \$20 for students, \$30 for adults and can be purchased at essextheatre.org.

**Grab and Go meal
Tuesday, July 9, 11 a.m.-noon**
Age Well and St. Catherine's of Siena Parish in Shelburne are providing a meal to go for anyone age 60 and older on July 9. The meal will be available for pick up in the parking lot at 72 Church Street. A \$5 donation is suggested. The menu is glazed chopped pork and ham patty with pineapple sauce, mashed sweet potatoes, green beans, wheat roll, oatmeal craisin cookie and milk. To order a meal contact by Wednesday, July 3, at either agewellstcath@gmail.com or 802-503-1107. If this is a first-time order, please provide: name, address, phone number and date of birth. If you haven't filled out a 2024 congregate meal registration, please bring a completed registration form with you or send one to: Age Well; 875 Roosevelt Highway, Suite 210, Colchester, VT 05446. Or fill one out at meal pick up. An Age Well representative will be available to obtain the suggested \$5 donation for restaurant tickets to dine at one of the participating restaurants. More information on this program is at agewellvt.org.



Lucitano is one of the works of art by Brenda Myrick on exhibit at Village Wine & Coffee in Shelburne July 1-30.

**Charlotte Beach Party
Saturday, July 13, 5 p.m.**
The annual town party will be at the Charlotte Town Beach. It is a pot-luck picnic with dinner served at 6 p.m. Please bring an item to share, your own utensils and beverages, and carry out all of your trash. No dogs, and free parking after 4 p.m. There will be local products courtesy of burgers from Fat Cow Farm, salad from Stony Loam, dessert from Adam's Berry Farm, Stones Throw Pizza and, courtesy of Elizabeth Moore of Ridgeline Real Estate, gelato from Backyard Bistro. As in the past, Fortin's Lawncare & Landscaping will be grilling and the Mystic Party Band will be performing. Questions: billandeva@gmavt.net. The rain date is the next day, Sunday, July 14.

**Age Well luncheon
Tuesday, July 16, 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 egg salad, coleslaw, spinach salad, Italian dressing, dinner roll, Congo bar, pears and milk. Entertainment by Gerry Ortego on guitar. Register by July 10. Contact Kerry Batres at 802-662-5283 or kbatres@agewellvt.org.

**Grange on the Green
Thursday, July 18, 5:30 p.m.**
Nick Carter and Carol Wise will perform on the Charlotte Town Green as part

of the Grange on the Green summer series. They will be playing originals as well as well-known folk music.
**Music at the Beach
Wednesday, July 24, 5 p.m.**
Picnicking before the Vermont Symphony Orchestra and Skylark perform at the Charlotte Town Beach begins at 5 p.m., Wednesday, July 24. The music starts at 6 p.m. It's free with a season beach or a paid day pass. If it rains the concert will shift to the Charlotte Senior Center. Questions: billandeva@gmavt.net.

**Grange on the Green
Thursday, July 25, 5:30 p.m.**
The final Grange on the Green concert will feature Forest Station & Friends

playing lively bluegrass music.
**Farm Stand Together
Sunday, July 28, 1-3 p.m.**
Farm Stand Together is holding a family event at Adam's Berry Farm on July 28. There will be Americana music from Shady Rill, balloon artist Big Blue Trunk, face painting, baked goods and drinks for sale (proceeds support Farm Stand Together), a raffle for a hand-stitched tote from New Duds and pick-your-own blueberries and popsicles for sale from Adam's Berry Farm. Farm Stand Together distributes \$40,000 via gift cards to 300 food-insecure families to use for buying goods at 13 farm stands in order to eliminate barriers to food choice.

**Festival of Fools
Friday-Sunday, Aug. 2-4**
Burlington's Festival of Fools returns for the first weekend in August with dozens of internationally acclaimed street performers, musicians and other artists, including Moon Hooch, an explosive horn-and-percussion trio from Brooklyn; Street Circus, a circus spectacle with an award-winning show that has traveled the world, won awards and entertained millions of people; Billy Kidd, a magician who excels at sleight-of-hand, close-up magic and stage magic; and Mutts Gone Nuts, talented four-legged performers whose hilarious dog hijinks leave audiences howling for more.

**Vergennes Day
Saturday, Aug. 24, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.**
Vergennes Day is an annual celebration featuring over 60 vendors in the city park. The event includes live music on the bandstand, a pancake breakfast, Lions Club chicken barbecue and the Little City Road Race. For the kids, there is a bubble pit at the fire station and horse and wagon rides. There will be merchant sales and more throughout the Little City. More at vergennesday.com.



Orange Tabby Cat by Suzanne Douglas is one of 30 hooked rugs being sold by silent auction as a benefit for the Sheldon Museum in Middlebury.

Library News

Make date at library to meet Mo Willems’ Pigeon at ECHO

Margaret Woodruff
Director

Check out a summer full of adventures at the summer reading program at the Charlotte Library June 24-29. Pick up summer reading logs, check out the program offerings and make a date to meet the Pigeon in the Mo Willems show at ECHO Leahy Museum in Burlington.

Books for the book sale

The Friends of the Library will be collecting books for the 10 a.m.-2 p.m., July 14, porch book sale on:

- Tuesday, June 25, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 26, 4-7 p.m.
- Saturday, June 29, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Tuesday, July 9, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 10, 4-7 p.m.
- Thursday, July 11, 3-5 p.m.

Please drop off books only at the times above.

Bring gently used, recent or classic books to the back door of the library adjacent to the Program Room. The library doesn’t accept mass paperback books (the small ones), text books, reference books, older cookbooks or older travel books. Current cookbooks and travel books are accepted. Donations are limited to two boxes or bags per person.

If you have questions email Marie Norwood at marie.norwood@norwoodhome.net.

Music on the porch Monday, June 24, 10 a.m.

Music on the library porch with Chris Gribnau and Lisa Henry. All ages encouraged to attend.

Preschool story time Tuesday, June 25, 10 a.m.

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

PreK play on the porch Wednesday, June 26, 10 a.m.

Play in the preschool years enables



Fraya Smith weeds carefully around the flowering iris in the library’s educational garden.

Photo by Susanna Kahn

children to explore and make sense of the world around them, as well as to use and develop their imagination and creativity. Come explore the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks and play doh.

Raptor road trip Wednesday, June 26, 1 p.m.

If you had wings like a hawk, where would you fly? Birds of prey are found all over the world, in all kinds of environments, so why don’t we follow them? Join us on an imagined journey across the United States and encounter some raptors in their ecosystems. Learn about the habitat needs of each species, as well as their range and behavior in the wild. Who knows whoooo we’ll encounter?

Babytime Thursdays, 9:30 a.m., & first Saturdays, 10 a.m.

Babytime is an unstructured hour at the library for parents, caregivers and babies so they can play and chat. 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.

Very Merry Theatre Thursday, July 4, noon

Come to the town green for an Independence Day performance. The Very Merry Theatre will present “A Little Princess.” Bring low lawn chairs, water and sunscreen. –The library will not be open on July 4; only the restrooms will be available.

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.

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, July 10 & 17, 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 Garden Circle Fridays, 8:30-10 a.m.

Enjoy tending gardens and seeing them respond? Like friendly conversation while you pull weeds? Appreciate learning from others’ gardening experiences and sharing your own? The Garden Circle of volunteers who tend the library’s educational gardens would love to have you join the Friday morning group work. Experienced and new gardeners welcome. Come every time or as often as you can. Sign up at seeds@charlottepubliclibrary.org, and you’ll be contacted if plans change due to weather, etc. Coordinated by garden stewards Karen Tuininga and Linda Hamilton.

Note: The Charlotte Library will close at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, July 3, and be closed on Thursday and Friday, July 4 and 5, for the Independence Day Holiday.

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>.

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

The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets the first Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. unless otherwise rescheduled. Due to the Independence Day holiday, the next meeting is rescheduled for Wednesday, July 25, 6 p.m.

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

Figuratively, literally, senior center is cool summer space

Lori York
Director

The heat and humidity of summer have arrived. If you are looking for a cool space to spend your summer days, consider joining activities at the senior center. A perfect opportunity to make new friendships while enjoying the cool air conditioning. There is a wide range of activities offered for active and engaged seniors age 50 and older. Join a language conversation group, play board or card games, participate in an exercise class or go on a birding or kayak trip.

The senior center is looking to offer a weekly chair yoga class starting in the fall. If you are a certified instructor who is interested in offering this class at the center, please reach out to Lori York at lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Outdoor activities

Birding trip Wednesday, July 17, 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. Group size is limited to 20 participants. Free. Registration required.

Women's kayak trips Second & fourth Friday mornings

These kayak trips are for active women who share a love for exploring Vermont's many local lakes, ponds and rivers. Trips listed are tentative, dependent on water and weather conditions. To be placed on a master list of paddlers to receive trip information, email Susan Hyde at susanfosterhyde@gmail.com. Free. Registration required.

Community events

July artist exhibit

Husband and wife Tom Wright and Liza Woodruff will be exhibiting their artwork at the senior center from July 1-31. Wright is a fine artist creating abstract paintings with mixed media on paper and wood using mythological and psychological imagery. He attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and has exhibited in both Boston and Vermont. Woodruff is a children's book illustrator and artist. Work in this show will include nature-themed silkscreen prints inspired by the Vermont landscape.

Alzheimer's caregivers support group Wednesday, July 10, 4-5 p.m.

Are you caring for someone with Alzheimer's? Do you know someone who is? Please join us for the monthly Caregivers Support Group on the second Wednesday of each month from 4-5 p.m. The meetings provide a safe place for caregivers, family, and friends of persons with dementia to meet and develop a mutual support system. For additional information please contact Susan Cartwright: cartwright.susan1@gmail.com.

Programs

Beginner watercolor workshop Saturday, July 27, 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 will demonstrate a variety of ways to paint trees in the landscape. There will be plenty of time to practice and create a chart to take home for future reference. Class limit 10 students. For more information about Ginny Joyner, please check out her website: ginnyjoyner.com. Cost: \$40.00 plus \$6.00 supply fee* Registration and payment required by June 12. *The supply fee is paid directly to the instructor.

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

Backgammon is a tactical table game with a 5,000-year history. The group welcomes players at all levels. If you have questions, please contact Jonathan at jonathanhart1@gmail.com. Cost: \$3. No registration required.

Brain games Fridays, 2-4 p.m.

There are many ways adults can stimulate their brains to increase mental health, improve memory skills and contribute to overall well-being. Research finds that positive interaction with others and engagement in stimulating group activities sharpens cognition and increases memory ability. Join to play various games, share laughter and enjoy one another's company. Some games are available, but also feel free to bring your own games. Free. No registration required.

Creative arts & crafts group Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-noon

Come create, experiment, share ideas, encourage others and have fun with the creative arts & crafts group on Wednesday mornings. Bring whatever creative endeavor you're working on, enjoy doing or thinking about trying out — painting, drawing, writing, scrapbooking, coloring, origami, cardmaking, knitting — the opportunities are limitless. Any questions, call Katie Franko at 802-425-6270. Free. No registration required.

German conversation Tuesdays, 3-4 p.m.

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

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

Join Phyllis Bartling in this pilates class for folks 55+. It includes upper-body strength work with hand weights and mat exercises. You will work core muscles to improve balance, strength, and posture. Cost: \$10 a class. No registration required.

Samba-canasta Tuesdays, noon, & Fridays, 12:30 p.m.

Samba is a new version of canasta that has quickly become very popular due to its variety of melds, which keeps the game interesting. If you are curious to learn how to play Samba, call Sandy Armell at 802-425-3248. Free. No registration required.

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



Photos by Lori York

A group gathers on Tuesday afternoons at the senior center to play Shanghai mahjong.



Essentrics, a full-body exercise class that focuses on stretching and building strength and mobility, is very popular at the senior center.

New to or experienced in the Shanghai style of mahjong, you are welcome to join this informal get-together. For questions email Nan Mason: anne.mason@uvm.edu. Free. No registration required.

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

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

Meals

Menus are posted on the website at 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 is \$5. No registration required.

Weekly Age Well Grab & Go meals

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

Write Ingredients

Peanut butter, bologna, cheddar cheese sandwiches not on menu

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

The Monday Munch at the senior center 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. menu is bacon cheeseburger sliders, Montreal style slaw (no mayo), chips, dip, strawberry shortcake and lemonade.

All are welcome. There is no charge, but a \$5 donation is suggested.

According to “Einstein’s Beets: An Examination of Food Phobias,” Hubert Humphrey’s favorite sandwich was peanut butter, bologna, cheddar cheese, lettuce and mayonnaise on toasted bread with lots of catsup on the side. Fear not! Volunteer cooks at the Charlotte Senior Center will go with what Helen Mirren ate after receiving an Oscar — a burger.

In White Castle lore, in 1921, Billy Ingram launched a family-owned business with 5-cent, small, square hamburgers so easy to eat, they were dubbed sliders. In 2014, Time Magazine declared the chain’s “original slider” the most influential burger of all time.

The bacon cheeseburger was reportedly invented in 1963 by someone who worked at an A&W restaurant, making it a newcomer in food lore.

Probably no one is surprised that the “Escoffier Cook Book” contains no entry for “slaw,” but near “slaw” in the index I spotted a food unlikely to appear on any Monday Munch menu at the Charlotte Senior Center — sheep’s tongue.

In “The Art of Eating,” M. F. K. Fisher advises, “If we are going to live on other inhabitants of this world, we must not bind ourselves with illogical prejudices, but savor to the fullest the beast we have killed.”

After mentioning the regrettably long time it takes to cook tongue, she offers recipes for beef brains and kidneys. Having cooked beef tongue, I can affirm her note about this long cooking time. Tasty, it’s definitely not for those who want the convenience of TV dinner fare.

Here’s a great small comment on food

cachet from “Baking with Kafka” by Tom Gauld:

“‘Dammit! This case is going nowhere,’ thought the detective, as he studied the evidence pinned to the wall and lit his first cigarette of the day, poured his first coffee of the day, blended his first avocado and kale smoothie of the day.”

Cabbage was plentiful at Monticello. In his meticulously kept “Garden Book,” Thomas Jefferson records planting 18 varieties of cabbage in 30 different locations.

A popular food item, wild strawberries played an important ceremonial and medicinal role in the lives of Native Americans. Besides the berries, the leaves, runners and roots were used frequently in medicinal applications. The Navajo in particular considered strawberries to be an important medicinal resource. According to Cherokee legend, the strawberry was associated with love and happiness.

Read “The Cherokee Legend of the First Strawberry” here <https://tinyurl.com/up34dc2j>.

Although not plentiful in most 18th-century Virginia gardens, strawberries abounded at Monticello, ranking as one of Thomas Jefferson’s favorite fruits. In 1767, harvesting strawberries from his garden at Shadwell, Jefferson noted in his “Garden Book” that “100 fill half a pint.” Clearly, we now enjoy a much larger berry than the Alpine strawberry flourishing at Monticello.

Fully aware that there were slaves and servants at Monticello, still I am working hard to restrain myself from comparing Jefferson’s meticulous record of garden happenings with contemporary politicians’ daily social media rants.

Madame Tallien (nee Juana María Ignacia Teresa de Cabarrús y Galabert), a prominent figure in the court of Emperor Napoleon, seems to be remembered today for adding the juice of 22 pounds of strawberries to her bath water. Like the Cherokee, she regarded the fruit as having healing properties. But this woman who bore 11

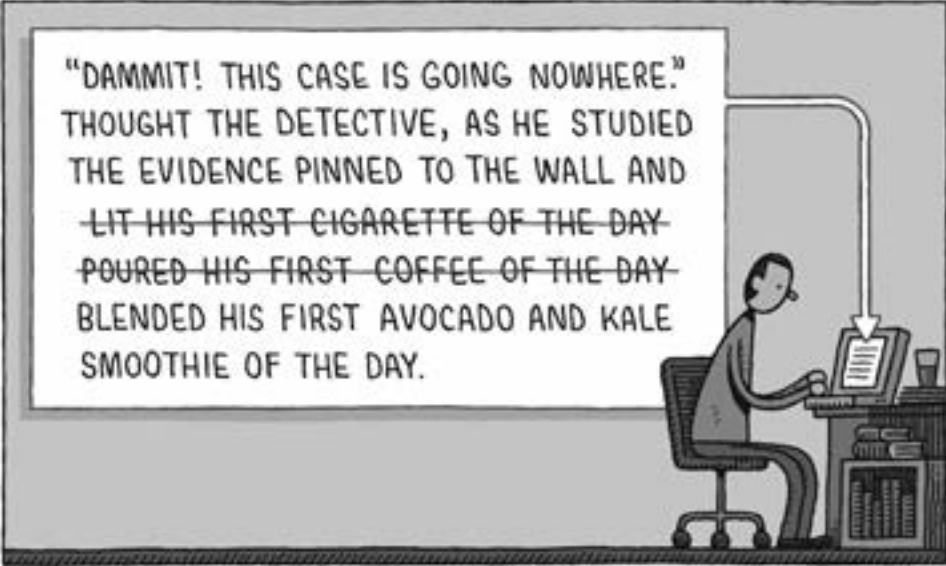


Photo by Tom Gauld

children and featured as a prominent character in Baroness Oreyzy’s “The Triumph of the Scarlet Pimpernel” should be noted for more than her bath water.

The “short” in shortcake refers not to the cake’s height but to a cake with a crumbly scone-like texture. The earliest printed mention of the descriptive term “short,” as in shortcake, appears in “The Good Huswifes Handmaide for the Kitchen,” a period recipe book published in London in the late 1500s.

Strawberries were first included in a recipe for “strawberry cake” in a Columbus, Ohio, newspaper in June 1845. Then, the recommendation was to cover the berries with a hard sugar-and-egg white icing.

Mary Todd Lincoln held strawberry parties in Springfield, Illinois, to rally supporters to her husband’s cause. And she chose a gown covered with embroidered strawberries for her portrait as First Lady. See it here: <https://tinyurl.com/mvdatyt9>.

Of late, there’s been considerable attention given to the need for social contact, so to celebrate strawberry season, skip the strawberry bath and go to Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center. Enjoy strawberry shortcake along with conversations with friendly people.

Noting the Charlotte Senior Center advisory board’s “reach out” to our community children, two new books that celebrate the Monday Munch dessert have been added to the Little Free Library for Kids at the Charlotte Grange, 2858 Spear Street.

“Cook-a-Doddle-Doo” picks up where the Little Red Hen left off. Her great-grandson is hungry. Tired of eating chicken feed every day, he finds “The Little Red Hen’s” cookbook and decides to make strawberry shortcake.

In “The First Strawberries,” award-winning Native American storyteller Joseph Bruchac retells the Cherokee legend explaining how strawberries came to be, accompanied by acclaimed illustrations.

Enjoy “Strawberry Fields Forever” at https://youtu.be/HtUH9z_Oey8.

Monday Munch, July 8: To be announced. Check the senior center website at charlotteseniorcentervt.org/lunch/meals.

FREE!

LIVE MUSIC!
by Mystic Party Band

CHARLOTTE
BEACH
PARTY

POTLUCK & BBQ

Saturday, July 13 at 5 p.m.
Dinner served at 6 p.m.

Rain Date: Sunday, July 14

Please bring an item to share, your
own utensils & beverages.

Local food served courtesy of:
Fat Cow Farm: Burgers, Misty Knoll: Chicken
Stony Loam: Salad
Adam's Berry Farm: Dessert
Stones Throw Pizza

Grilling by Fortin's Lawncare & Snowplowing
Gelato by Backyard Bistro courtesy of
Elizabeth More with Ridgeline Real Estate

Send questions to billandeva@gmavt.net

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