

The Charlotte News

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Joslin: From solitary painter to planning standard-bearer

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

For around a decade, after Peter and Paula Joslin moved to Charlotte, not many people in town knew him and lots of people knew her.

Paula Joslin worked in the front office at Charlotte Central School soon after they moved to town until 2002 when she went to work for Eating Well, when the magazine was just starting.

Then that situation reversed. “Paula knew everybody in town. I knew nobody in town,” Peter Joslin said.

Now, he’s become more known around town after being on the planning commission, and she works from home four days a week, only meeting with other Eating Well employees one day a week at collaborative workspace Hula in Burlington.

Paula Joslin said working at Charlotte Central School was great because she had the same hours as their two children and summers off, so they didn’t have to pay for summer camps.

Their children, Nathaniel and Elizabeth, graduated from Charlotte Central School and CVU. They’re both adults now, living in New York City, where Nathaniel is also an artist.

Paula Joslin said that when she started at Charlotte Central School, it was an interesting time to be starting work at the school because Columbine had just happened. The



Photo by Scooter MacMillan
Peter Joslin is fascinated by the texture and colors of decaying tree bark and its similarity to fish scales.

school was transitioning from a sort of open-door policy to a more security-conscious policy.

Just like many other artists and musicians, Peter Joslin’s career has run on parallel paths, with essentially two simultaneous careers — one as a breadwinner and another as an artist. He wasn’t meeting many people in Charlotte because, when he wasn’t at work at his job, he was painting in his studio behind their home on One Mile Road in East Charlotte.

After getting his bachelor’s in studio art from the New England

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When floods hit Vermont’s iconic dirt roads — runoff

Maeve Fairfax
Community News Service

Vermont’s dirt roads span 8,534 miles — more than the straight-line distance between Burlington and San Francisco three times over. They contribute to the state’s rustic charm, bring tourists looking for gravel biking and are beloved by rural residents.

They are also particularly vulnerable to floods. Runoff from any type of road can harm water quality, but Vermont has some 1,300 more miles of dirt than pavement — and those dirt roads are subject to easy erosion.

With the state’s increase in flooding, those old roads are hitting waterways and their ecosystems hard. And the state is pretty much stuck with them.

“Putting in paved roads is very expensive, and we just don’t have that kind of funding in Vermont to want to do that,” said Jim Ryan, former manager of the Vermont Municipal Roads Program with the Department of Environmental Conservation.

But there are ways to improve those roads that reduce pollution and strengthen against floods.

Like paved roads, dirt roads are essentially impervious, meaning they do not absorb water, said Beverly Wemple, a University of Vermont professor who helps lead the college’s Water Resources Institute. When it rains, water washes across those surfaces, eroding sediment and running into ditches or bodies of water.

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Photo by Scooter MacMillan

A proposal was made at the Aug. 26 selectboard meeting to make the speed limit on Ferry Road 40 mph from the train tracks to the lake.

Selectboard eyes budget initiatives as that time draws nigh — again

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

As summer winds down, budget season is ramping up. As always at this time of year, the Charlotte Selectboard is working on ways to make the budget process more efficient, less grueling and less expensive.

In a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, Aug. 26, town administrator Nate Bareham, who has been shouldering the load of improving the process the last two years, talked about steps he was taking to make creating a budget work better this year.

Bareham said he plans to have a draft of the timeline for the fiscal year 2027 budget cycle ready for the selectboard’s next regular meeting on Monday, Sept. 8.

Board member Natalie Kanner had a heads up for the various town boards. She said, “Just a gentle reminder to all of our committees and commissions: They do need to submit a budget in advance on some sort of spreadsheet — and not a list of numbers on a receipt.”

And those town organizations need to come to their first budget review with those spreadsheets in hand, ready to share with the selectboard.

Bareham confirmed that he expects to have the budget “tied up” before New Years.

The budgeting process popped up again in a discussion about a committee-commission-board handbook that Bareham has been working on. Selectboard members want to clarify the role of these entities in applying for grants and the purchasing policy they should be operating under.

“Under the existing purchasing policy, there is no guidance provided as to who is able to enter into contracts on behalf of the town,” Bareham said.

Although the purchasing policy does outline that “purchasing agents” can make purchases for services, Bareham said, it could use more clarification.

He plans to send the policy changes out to the various boards, committees and commissions for review, and Kanner suggested setting a deadline for those entities to get their responses back to him.

“It’s incumbent upon us to work with the committees, to make sure that they’re prepped and ready for the budget season,” board member JD Herlihy said. If there’s an issue with a budget, the board should make sure that “it’s a failure of us, not a failure of them.”

Kanner made a motion to approve the handbook contingent upon amendments from the staff, but Frank Tenney was the only board member who voted against this motion.

“I’d like to know what I’m approving,” he said.

But, chair Lee Krohn said that, if there are substantial changes, the proposed handbook will come back to the selectboard to consider again.

Also relating to the budget process was a discussion of how grants should be applied for.

“As I was kind of going through the process of making this handbook, the clerks and I noticed that there is no strong grant management policy that has been adopted by the town,” Bareham said.

This led him to a review of grant management policies from other Vermont and New England towns.

Krohn said it sounded like Bareham was suggesting that the board revisit the idea that any committee chair can be a purchasing agent.

In the proposed handbook, Bareham suggests a change to policy so that chairs must submit grants that would use more than \$1,000 of town money or require matching funds to be preapproved by the selectboard

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JOSLIN

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College in New Hampshire and working for 10 years fine-art printing — while still painting — he began to feel stuck. So, he applied to the Yale School of Art. He feels fortunate to have gotten into the oldest art school connected to an institution of higher learning in the United States and an Ivy League School to boot.

After his master’s degree in 1985, he and Paula were both working in fine art printing in Connecticut. In fact, that was where they met. Her degree is also from Yale but in art history. Paula and Peter Joslin moved to Vermont so he could take a job at Stinehour Press in Lunenburg in the Northeast Kingdom.

Stinehour was a boutique printer that specialized in fine art reproduction. It was right in his wheelhouse.

When he got the Stinehour Press job, it seemed like a great deal, Paula Joslin said. In Connecticut, they were both working with two kids, daycare and a mortgage. It seemed like a great opportunity.

But it wasn’t easy. “It was a big deal moving away from our entire family, and I’m an only child,” Paula Joslin said.

Her mom was a single mother, so moving away was rough.

They moved to Guildhall on the Connecticut River in the middle of nowhere. There wasn’t much to do, she said, which was OK because they didn’t have money to do anything anyway.

Then a year and half after their move, Peter Joslin was laid off when Stinehour Press’ business “went south” and most of the fine-art printing moved overseas.



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Peter Joslin contemplates some of his paintings in his studio on One Mile Road in East Charlotte

He heard that Lane Press in South Burlington was looking for somebody to manage their prepress. Peter Joslin got the job and stayed for 22 years. There were two homes for sale in Charlotte that they could afford, and they bought one of them.

“All during that time, I painted as I could,” he said. “I always knew that I would get back to devoting all my time to it.”

Since retiring around 10 years ago, that’s

what he has done. And, since stepping down as chair of the planning board almost four years ago, he’s been able to be even more devoted to his art.

He decided to apply for the planning commission after plans were announced to put a farm across the street from their home that would be operating 24 hours a day, seven days

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SELECTBOARD

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before applying for those grants.

“We need to know what grants are being applied for,” board member Lewis Mudge said. “It’s definitely happened where we were made aware, after the fact, that there were strings attached, which have a financial implication to the town. It’s baffling and shocking.”

Another initiative Bareham has been working on is developing memorandums of agreement with organizations that are separate from but an important part of the town, like the senior center, the fire and rescue service and the library. At the suggestion of Kanner, the rec department was added to this list.

Bareham said the effort was intended to clarify the working agreements between these entities and the town, to codify how staff is employed and how those organizations’ boards “interplay” with the selectboard.

At the Aug. 26 meeting, the first of those memorandums of agreement to be discussed was the senior center’s.

Mudge said that in reviewing the senior center’s charter he was happy to see the welcoming language.

“There’s a lot of people from a lot of towns around here that really enjoy the stuff that’s going on in the senior center, so it’s important to highlight the broader community,” Mudge said.

In response to a question from Tenney about who decides on the senior center’s programming, Lane Morrison, chair of the senior center board, said the board and director Lori York work together on ideas for programming, but York does the majority of

that work.

“I think Lori has done a great job in bringing in lots of diverse, interesting programs and keeps the place quite happy,” Morrison said.

Morrison also applauded the work Bareham had done on the memorandum of agreement in memorializing the 25-year history of the senior center.

The selectboard unanimously approved the memorandum with the caveat that it would be updated to include changes that had been discussed at this meeting.

Once again, parking and speeding on Ferry Road were discussed at the selectboard meeting.

Mudge said he had met with Mike Dunbar, who owns the property just west of the post office where the Charlotte Family Health Center had planned to go. Mudge said Dunbar was open to the possibility of the property being used for 20 parking spaces, but he needs to talk to his partner.

Mudge said he and Bareham are going to meet with the town planner to “come up with some rough sketches” where 20 parking spots might be feasible.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, resident Libby Laino proposed lowering the speed limit on Ferry Road to 40 mph west past the railroad tracks all the way to the ferry. She said this was a dangerous stretch of road with rises and curves with limited sight lines.

“I’m on that road every single day, running, biking and walking my dog, and it is an extremely dangerous situation,” Laino said.

She has had to jump off the road, and seen others jumping, too, to avoid being hit by speeding cars. Laino said. “It’s 50 all the way down to the ferry. It’s absurd.”

She said she has talked to many people

living at the western end of Ferry Road, and they all support changing the speed limit to 40 mph.

Bareham is also working on two ideas that were percolating at this year’s town meeting — affordable housing and making town meeting more accessible.

At the town meeting, an advisory motion was introduced by Nancy Wood, the founder of this newspaper, for the selectboard to investigate ways to increase affordable housing, using money the town already has to help make that happen. There is over \$100,000 in affordable housing funds.

To that end, Bareham said they have been reaching out to nonprofit organizations that work on developing affordable housing.

“Our goal is to schedule time at an upcoming regular selectboard meeting to have representatives from these organizations present information and possible strategies on how Charlotte can effectively implement an affordable housing program,” he said.

Bareham said the selectboard is also planning to look at suggestions that would make town meeting more accessible. Two ideas that have been suggested repeatedly are a return to providing childcare and holding a potluck or some kind of lunch during the meeting.

Kanner said it was critical to make town meeting accessible and to begin discussions about this as soon as possible.

“I think the primary thing that we need to be thinking about and planning for is just making this next meeting accessible for people with dependents who need care,” Kanner said. “It’s pretty critical that we give the people, who we’re going to task with putting it together, the time that they need to do it.”



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- Reporting on how other towns have addressed challenges similar to our own.

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DIRT ROAD

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Phosphorus likes to bind to sediment, meaning it gets swept away too. In excess, it fuels harmful algae blooms, as is the case in Lake Champlain where runoff has deposited high levels of the nutrient. Large sections of the lake are on the federal impaired waterways list.

Phosphorus aside, those sediments can hurt aquatic ecosystems where plants and animals struggle to survive in water choked with dirt and debris.

Wemple’s research helped bring attention to dirt road runoff at a time when Vermont was focusing more and more on water quality.

A 2008 lawsuit alleging poor pollution control forced federal and state officials to revise plans for Lake Champlain. State lawmakers passed the Vermont Clean Water Act in 2015, anticipating stricter standards. Those came a year later when federal officials tightened limits on phosphorus in the lake.

People wanted a better understanding of where the phosphorus was coming from.

Funded by the Lake Champlain Basin Program, Wemple studied the impact of Vermont’s transportation network on water quality.

Tropical Storm Irene hit while research was underway, allowing Wemple’s team to also see what happens to Vermont’s roads when they flood, she said.

The study, released in 2013, proved erosion from dirt roads was a significant source of sediment in waterways and confirmed phosphorus attached to the sediment was polluting Lake Champlain. It also included research on ways to keep water off roads and reduce runoff.

“That research essentially gave us the first piece ... of scientific evidence of the importance of our road network as a source of pollutant transfer but also of the potential for some fairly straightforward practices to minimize that pollutant runoff,” Wemple said.

After the new phosphorus regulations, the state created a permit program that set road standards for towns. It aimed to reduce erosion contributing to phosphorus pollution.

Towns must record the condition of their roads and key characteristics, such as whether they connect to water and whether they use storm drains, or ditches and culverts, for drainage. Over half the roads in Vermont connect to waterways, the state says.



Photo by Maeve Fairfax

Eric Barker, right, talks with neighbor Peter Motolo as the latter grades a dirt road in Underhill.

The Agency of Natural Resources says open-drainage roads, those with culverts and ditches, are often gravel and produce the most phosphorus. Those roads are where the bulk of the standards are applied.

Towns must upgrade roads not up to code. For a dirt road, this usually means improving drainage: lining ditches with stones and vegetation to filter out sediment.

There are also improvements to the road itself. Crowning a road, or lowering the sides so the high point is in the middle, helps it shed water, as does removing berms and ruts that trap water. Another element: properly sizing culverts, the tunnels that allow water to pass underneath roads.

“We were able to document that many of these practices are quite effective in both reducing erosion and making the transportation network more flood resilient,” said Wemple.

Through the Agency of Transportation’s Better Roads Program, towns can apply for grants to cover projects.

Making improvements also helps protect from floods, said Ryan. Working as a deputy stream engineer in the aftermath of Irene, and doing “flood forensics” after the 2023 floods, he found that up-to-standard roads came away in better shape.

Where there was damage, the culprit was

most frequently culvert size, he said. Often the issue stemmed from small culverts under driveways or over intermittent streams. In heavy rain, culverts have to handle more water than usual. If they’re too small, they flood or get blocked by debris, leading to a domino effect where one failed culvert takes out several others down the road, Ryan said.

Municipalities are slowly updating their roads. Ryan said Vermont towns have an average of 25 miles of roads running directly into waterways and are upgrading about a mile a year.

Flood resilience can get a boost right away, but maintenance is ongoing.

“There’s no finish line there. The road grader always has to go out and put a proper crown on the road, remove the grader berm, lower the road’s shoulders and clean out the ditches,” Ryan said.

His observations are set to be tested: Wemple just began a two-year study on the impact of the road permit program on flood resilience in 2023 and 2024.

“We hear anecdotally ... that it looks like places where we’ve upgraded the storm water infrastructure on roads, there were fewer damages,” she said. “But we don’t have the scientific evidence to back that up yet.”

Wemple said people often ask, “Should we just pave the roads?”

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a week, with huge barns, 2,500 dairy cows and a half-acre manure pit. They were far from the only people opposed to the farming operation, and it didn’t happen.

“I pretty much paint every day. In the summer, not as much, because outdoor things are going on. But in the winter, I’m pretty much in here seven days,” Peter Joslin said, as he gave a tour of his studio and his many paintings on its walls and stored on shelves.

His style of art is representational which means his art is of objects or scenes from the real world, unlike non-representational art, which is focused on colors, textures or shapes. The aim of representational art is to capture something outside of the painting itself.

“I’m trying to create something that’s really real and authentic, not real per se, but that you recognize it as real for its own sake,” Peter said.

He thinks that appreciating art is like appreciating poems; you might not know exactly what it is, but you know what it

means.

These days he is primarily working in oils, although for several years over a decade ago, he was working with watercolors. Peter Joslin made the switch because he doesn’t like to put glass on his paintings because it “kind of distances” the viewer from the painting, but when viewers touch watercolors, it causes problems.

He is a fly fisherman, and for many years he painted fish. He was fascinated by their colors and scales. Then he discovered that trout markings seem to be echoed in tree bark, and he became fascinated by the texture of decay and growth of tree bark.

Many of the paintings he has been doing are 12-by-24 inches. This size of canvas has captivated him because it’s almost the same dimensional size as an iPhone screen.

He believes he was attracted to painting because making things with his hands is important to him.

“There’s a certain freedom in that I decide how it looks ultimately,” Peter Joslin said. “At the end of the day, it’s my decision as to how it looks and when it’s done, for better or for worse.”



‘Moss on Stone’ by Peter Joslin

One factor is uncertainty about which is worse for water quality. Wemple said there’s not much difference between paved and unpaved.

But there’s also what she called “the societal question.”

“Many of us in Vermont are quite attached to our rural landscapes and those unpaved roads,” she said. “And if we paved them, people would drive a lot faster. And we’d lose some of that rural ideal that we are really attached to.”

Eric Barker lives on a dirt road in Underhill close to where he grew up. When he chose where to raise his family, a dirt road was a priority.

“I don’t even think we looked at a single lot on pavement,” he said.

His driveway requires a lot of care, and his car has gotten stuck in the mud at inopportune times, but he said it’s worth it.

“I think you have to have the right vehicles, and I think you have to have the right mentality,” he said. He values the privacy his home allows for his family and the sparse traffic.

Dirt roads also draw tourism. Waterford resident Fritz Fay is president of Northeast Kingdom Gravel. The organization’s mission is to bring dollars to the Kingdom by mapping gravel biking routes and attracting tourists.

The sport has exploded in recent years, and Fay said Vermont, with its sprawl of dirt roads, is ready made for it.

Big events and concentrated trails can overwhelm small towns, and locals often resent that, Fay said, but gravel biking is gentler.

The Northeast Kingdom has witnessed that scenario in East Burke with the popular Kingdom Trails. Gravel biking brings in a few people at a time across multiple towns, Fay said.

“It’s scattered, and that’s an advantage,” he said.

The benefits go beyond drawing cyclists, though.

“If all these roads were paved, it’d be one less kind of unique thing to come to Vermont (for),” he said.

(Via Community News Service, a University of Vermont journalism internship.)



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Commentary

Help restore the historic Grange Hall in Charlotte

Frances Foster
Contributor

If you live in Charlotte, you have undoubtedly heard about the numerous Grange activities that have been promoted in the last few years. The mission of the Grange is to honor our agrarian roots and help build a resilient future for all.

I like to think of the Grange as our own Charlotte booster and public service club. You do not need to be a member to do any of the activities, and they are all free but donations are accepted. We run events such as monthly walks on Charlotte trails, free coffee and muffins monthly, Poetry at the Grange, the Grange on the Green concert series presented weekly in July, a clothing drive for farmworkers and a different clothing drive for children of clients of the food shelf. There are many other activities which you can check out on the website.

The historic Lyceum Schoolhouse located at 2858 Spear Street has been home to the Charlotte Grange for 67 years. The building was constructed in 1870 as a debating hall but quickly became one of the small, local schoolhouses serving the children of Baptist Corners until 1949 when the local schools were consolidated. The building was ultimately purchased in 1958 by the Charlotte Grange which then gave the organization a permanent home.

Through the generosity of many, and in partnership with the Grange's 501(c)(3) fundraising arm, Friends of the Lyceum Schoolhouse, work to restore and stabilize the building is underway. The exterior has been painted and repaired, the historic windows in the main hall restored, and the fuel tank and furnace replaced. Yet much remains to be done and we could use some help.

Our planned work for this fall and next spring is to complete the exterior of the building. This includes the construction of an Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible ramp on the north side of the building connecting to a new door. This ramp is critical to ensure accessibility for all and to make sure we have a safe secondary fire exit on the first floor. We also plan to restore the historic front door which is in bad



condition, construct new stairs and handrails and remove the old and unsafe wooden ramp that is currently in front of the building. The parking lot will be extended and graded and drainage issues that have plagued the building will be fixed. Once this is all finished, we will have completed most of the pressing issues on the outside of the building.

The estimated exterior construction cost is about \$63,000, and more funding is required to finish the project. We have raised \$33,000 so far but we are asking community members to consider helping us. Friends of Lyceum Schoolhouse is a nonprofit devoted to raising money for the restoration of this building. Any donation to the Friends of Lyceum Schoolhouse is tax deductible.

We hope community members will want to help the Grange in the restoration of this historic building in East Charlotte. The building is part of the Vermont State Historic Register district known as Baptist Corners and is eligible for inclusion in the National Register for Historic Places.

To help with this project you can either send a check to: Friends of Lyceum Schoolhouse, P.O. Box 236, Charlotte, VT 05445 or donate through the Grange website via Pay Pal at charlottegrange.org/grange-hall.

For more information, email us at friendsoflyceumschool@gmail.com or call Frances Foster at 802-343-0633.

Weed's in the Garden

Savoring summer's ending, preparing garden for winter

Joan Weed
Contributor

We're in that melancholy time of the gardener's year. The school bus goes by in the morning now, and summer's dress is fading.

Late-summer blooms brighten the garden still, with phlox, rudbeckia, asters, goldenrod. My thread-leaf Japanese maple is brilliant. I see red berries on shrubs, smilacina (false Solomon's seal), Cornelian cherry, viburnums. Looks like winterberry shrubs will be loaded down with red berries this winter.

Soon the gorgeous fall foliage Vermont is known for will be showing off. Can pumpkin spice be far behind?

Baskets and boxes at the farm stand are overflowing with beautiful tomatoes, plums, apples, eggplant, string beans, corn and potatoes. Dahlias are flush with big showy blooms. Japanese anemones have bees buzzing excitedly.

Fall chores are beckoning especially this year, which left us high and dry after a lush spring of rain for weeks on end. Time to trim the spent hosta stalks, free up the pathways from overgrown foliage. Watering must go on for containers and window boxes.

Iris can be cut back to fans of a few inches. I like to leave grasses for winter interest and the seed heads of rudbeckias for the birds. Leaving some duff in the gardens provides shelter for insects and especially pollinators.

Order or pick up spring-blooming bulbs, even a few, for a treat that you'll have forgotten about till March. Garlic can be planted as the air chills.

Time to gather herbs for drying, freezing or making compound butters or pestos. I also like to make mint syrup for drinks and fruit salad. While gathering, don't forget to gather seeds of favorite annuals or perennials. So far I have some packets of purple Lauren's Grape annual poppies. I sprinkle columbine and yellow foxglove seeds where they grow in the garden.

Here, we've gathered apples for sauce and jelly. This is a prolific year for stone fruit and berries. Looks like apples will provide a plentiful harvest also. Corn chowder



Photos by Joan Weed
New England asters



Dolgo crabapple jelly with cinnamon



Asters purple dome



Japanese anemone

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Around Town

Condolences

Lorna Etta Jimerson (née Zeitlin), 80, of Charlotte, Vermont, passed away peacefully at home on July

27, 2025. She is survived by her husband, Dr. Robert Jimerson; daughters Amber, Katrina and Becky; sons-in-law Todd Smith and Mike Minchin; six grandchildren; and her beloved dog, Willow. She was predeceased by her parents, Ruth and Israel Zeitlin, and her brother, Mark Zeitlin.

Born in Philadelphia, Lorna earned degrees from the University of Pennsylvania; California State University, Long Beach (M.A. in Psychology); and the University of Vermont (Ed.D.). She engaged in researching school choice, rural education and equity. Her compassion made her a superb therapist, and while working at the Counseling Service of Addison County, she helped develop an innovative in-home approach to supporting struggling families.

An avid lifelong learner, Lorna taught in the classroom, supported her own children's

learning at home and brought that same dedication to her community through advocacy. Elected to the Charlotte School Board, she advanced into a leadership role, also serving on the Champlain Valley Union High School Board and representing her district to the Vermont State School Board. She worked tirelessly to ensure every child had the opportunity to learn and thrive.

Her public service extended beyond education. Lorna volunteered for Madeline Kunin's historic gubernatorial campaign and championed environmental conservation, women's rights and public media.

Outside of her professional and civic commitments, Lorna enjoyed spending time with her children and grandchildren, whether on the slopes of Mad River, sledding in the backyard or hiking through the forest. Her passions also included coaxing both vegetables and flowers from Vermont's finicky soil and weather, spending time with barn animals and her large dogs, pursuing endless knitting projects, listening to Bob Dylan and savoring Ben & Jerry's ice cream. She will be remembered not only for her accomplishments, but also for her warmth, wit and the way she made others feel loved, valued and heard.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Vermont Land Trust or Vermont Public/NPR.



Lorna Etta Jimerson

WEED'S

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is on the menu with smoky Vermont bacon to start. Still time to enjoy a fresh tomato sandwich with mayo and lots of pepper or a BLT. I have been obsessed with quick pickles of cucumbers this summer. Such a refreshing snack in the fridge any time. Next will be pickled beets.

All this plenty beckons us to the kitchen for warming soup and stew, roasted chicken, Mom's meatloaf or "Sunday gravy."

Are you overrun with cherry tomatoes? One way to preserve the delicious fruits is to roast them for about 30 minutes with some fresh herbs like thyme or oregano, garlic cloves, salt and pepper and all tossed with olive oil. After cooling down the roasted vegetable, pulse it in the food processor or blender for a wonderful sauce to freeze for those under 30-minute suppers on pasta. Other vegetables can be added like onions, peppers, cauliflower or eggplant.

I'll also be freezing corn cut from the cobs for chowder and corn pudding from my mom's recipe. Peppers are easy to freeze. I don't prepare in any way except to dice or cut in strips to combine with sausages or make Western omelets or add to soups all winter. Berries are best frozen on a flat sheet pan and when firm placed in containers or bags. Muffins, smoothies, pie or coffee cake will be a winter treat.

My mind is busy, as you can see, working quickly to keep the season in memory by saving its good tastes, helping our pollinators and enjoying the garden's beauty for months to come.

Food Shelf News

As summer draws to a close, lots of thank-you's

Katherine Arthaud
Contributor

As we head into the end of summer and look ahead to fall, the food shelf would like to take the time to say a whole lot of thank-you's to our many supporters.

We thank the following for their generous donations: Anne and Edward Castle, Julian Kulski, Alexandra Lehmann, Dr. David Gary Fassler and Kevin Pumiglia.

We would like to also thank the following for donating fresh produce: Blake Goldburg, Bradley Carleton, Arlene and Steven Marks, and Amos Baehr.

Thank you so much to Ann Kelton for donating frozen meat and to Dick St. George for fresh eggs. Thank you to the Red Onion for baked goods and to Hillary Maharam and Sarah and Poet from Shelburne Community Garden for the lovely fresh flowers. And to any who left produce and/or supplies of any kind, who we may have missed, we thank you for your generosity and support.

We would also like to extend thanks to our assistance committee (Sherri Browdy, Laura Crandall and Lorraine Koffman), who selected sturdy, attractive backpacks for all our school-age kids so they were well equipped heading back to start a new year of school. And thank you, Lorraine Koffman, for donating school supplies.

Some great news: The food shelf was able to purchase an additional large freezer using

some of our grant money. This freezer will allow us to increase our stock of meat, chicken and pork, and thus, better serve our families. We are very grateful to Peter Carreiro, who is housing the freezer at Rise and Shine for us, which will provide convenient access close to the food shelf.

The Charlotte Food Shelf Inc. annual meeting will take place Wednesday, Oct. 1, at 7 p.m. at the Charlotte Congregational Church.

Our schedule:

- Wednesdays 4-6 p.m. and Saturdays 9-11 a.m. (second and fourth of the month, unless otherwise noted)
- Wednesdays, Sept. 10 and 24 (Donations can also be brought in on Wednesday distribution days.)
- Saturday, Sept. 13 and 27.

Applications for grant assistance are at the food shelf and on the website. Applicants must live in Charlotte or North Ferrisburgh.

If you would like to donate to the Charlotte Food Shelf, you can use your PayPal account or your credit or debit card. If you prefer to donate via check, you can make checks payable to Charlotte Food Shelf, Inc. and mail to: P.O. Box 83, Charlotte, VT 05445. For more information, call 802-425-2402.



Photo by Margaret Sharpe

Summer produce and flowers at the Charlotte Food Shelf.

A convenient way to support the food shelf is to sign up for monthly donations through PayPal, which will allow you to spread your donations out over the year.

The Charlotte Food Shelf is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization. Gifts are tax deductible within the guidelines. You can also contribute by using the QR code or by going to <https://tinyurl.com/2e8yz2zz>.

For any other inquiries please email Peggy Sharpe at ckmj@comcast.net.



Back to School!

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Education

The new school year begins at Charlotte Central School

Naomi Strada
(Summarized by Tom Scatchard)

The first week of school at Charlotte Central has been full of smiles, waves and small wins — students finding their way, classrooms settling into routines with both students and adults learning the choreography of a new year. The energy in the halls has been joyful and steady.

The start of the 2025-26 school year begins with the Charlotte Central School administration, faculty and staff sharpening their focus on engagement. Systems and experiences are being built for students, staff and families that reflect the four Champlain Valley School District pillars of engagement:

- Identity — Understanding and valuing self and others
- Connection — Building meaningful relationships and support systems
- Proficiency — Developing skills and knowledge with awareness of progress
- Direction — Gaining a sense of purpose through relevant learning experiences that connect to interests, goals and future pathways.

The goal of the four pillars is to help every student and staff member grow in identity, connection, proficiency and direction. The real excitement comes in

designing experiences that bring these pillars to life.

This year Charlotte Central School is launching several school-wide initiatives that reflect these pillars and aims to shape experiences for staff, students and caregivers. Here’s some of what’s underway:

- Hiring an activities director to expand and organize more non-athletic clubs which will complement the athletics program and provide new after-school opportunities for younger students. More details will be shared in September.
- Weekly in-school and choice-based clubs for all middle school students.
- Morning movement opportunities during “ease in” time for K-4 students who want to start the day by moving their bodies to settle their minds.
- A second world language teacher this year will allow the school to offer Spanish language and culture instruction for students both in the middle school and beyond.
- Continued work to revitalize the light and sound equipment on the Charlotte Central School stage, ensuring the performance space supports student productions and community events with high-quality sound and lighting.
- A new partnership with Very Merry

Theatre to produce the middle school musical and potentially build a long-term tradition.

- Personalized staff learning opportunities during some of the Wednesday professional learning time that will help center their ideas, strengthen relationships and benefit students.
- New staff working groups are poised to launch this year. One is a Rowland Foundation Fellowship committee exploring Project-Based Learning in upper elementary through middle school. Another begins with third to fifth grade math educators, with the potential to expand. Other groups will emerge from opportunities for more choice and collaboration during regular professional learning times.
- Monthly invitations for caregivers to come into Charlotte Central School when their child’s grade is leading an all-school meeting, helping

to strengthen the home-school connection.

- Adding a new informational meeting, welcome to middle school, for caregivers of incoming fifth-grade students before school begins and exploring this fall how to expand this to other grades in the future.

All of these are ways Charlotte Central School is making adjustments to how engagement is built for students, staff and the community.

Donate movement equipment

Matt Kent, Charlotte Central School’s kindergarten-fourth grade physical education and wellness teacher, is reaching out to the community for donations of equipment which will benefit students across all grade levels.

CCS continued on page 7

School birthday



Courtesy photo
Sage Bagnato (head of school), Brea Schwartz (director of faculty), Libby Macdonald (director of admission) and parent Kristen Vincent were part of the Vermont Day School’s celebration of its 10th anniversary.

CCS
Continued from page 6

The school is hoping to expand the movement opportunities provided for students and one way the community can help is by donating gently used equipment or sneakers that your family may no longer need, including:

- Scooters (flat ride-on boards with handles)
- Balance toys (balance boards, stepping stones)
- Wiggle boards or wobble cushions
- Pogo sticks or hop balls
- Small gymnastic equipment (tumbling mats, balance beams)
- Obstacle course components (tunnels, hoops, agility items)
- Helmets (if donating ride-on gear)
- Velcro catch sets
- Lightly used sneakers (clean and in good condition, a variety of youth sizes).

Donations can be placed in the labeled container located in the front vestibule of the school. This makes it easy for families to contribute without adding to the workload of our front office staff.

All items should be in good working condition and safe for student use. These donations will support our schoolwide focus on coordination, teamwork, creativity and a lifelong love of movement.

Safety checklist to follow with school starting again

Jennifer Costa
American Red Cross

With Vermont students back in the classroom, the American Red Cross offers this checklist to help ensure children stay safe as they travel to and from school this year. Remember: It’s a community effort.

If your student is younger or going to school for the first time, teach them:

- Their phone number, address, how to get in touch with their parents at work, how to get in touch with another trusted adult and how to dial 911.
- Not to talk to strangers or accept rides from someone they don’t know.

If your child walks to school, teach them to:

- Walk on the sidewalk. If no sidewalk is available, walk facing traffic.
- Stop and look left, right and left again to see if cars are coming.
- Cross the street at the corner, obey traffic signals and stay in the crosswalk.
- Never run out into the street or cross between parked cars.

If your student takes the bus to school, teach them to:

- Get to their bus stop early and stand away from the curb while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- Board the bus only after it has come to a complete stop and the driver or attendant

has instructed them to get on. And only board their bus, never an alternate one.

- Stay in clear view of the bus driver and never walk behind the bus.

If your student rides their bike to school, teach them to:

- Always wear a helmet.
- Ride on the right in the same direction as the traffic is going.
- If you drive your child to school, teach them to always wear a seat belt. Younger children should use car seats or booster seats until the lap-shoulder belt fits properly (typically for children ages 8-12 and over 4 foot 9 inches) and ride in the back seat until they are at least 13.

If you have a teenager driving to school, make sure they:

- Use seat belts.
- Don’t use their cell phone to text or make calls and avoid eating or drinking while driving.

If you are considering getting your student a cell phone:

- Download the free Red Cross first aid and emergency apps to give them access to first aid tips for common emergencies and real-time weather alerts. Find the apps in smartphone app stores by searching for the American Red Cross or going to [redcross.org/apps](https://www.redcross.org/apps).

If your student is joining a sports team,

make sure they:

- Wear protective gear, such as helmets, protective pads, etc.
- Warm up and cool down.
- Watch out for others.
- Know the location of the closest first-aid kit and automated external defibrillator (AED).

Back to school checklist for drivers:

- Slow down.
- Yellow flashing lights indicate the bus is getting ready to stop — slow down and be prepared to stop. Red flashing lights and an extended stop sign indicate the bus is stopped, and children are getting on or off.
- Motorists must stop when they are behind a bus, meeting the bus or approaching an intersection where a bus is stopped.
- Motorists following or traveling alongside a school bus must also stop until the red lights have stopped flashing, the stop arm is withdrawn and all children have reached safety. This includes two- and four-lane highways.
- If physical barriers such as grassy medians, guide rails or concrete median barriers separate oncoming traffic from the bus, motorists in the opposing lanes may proceed without stopping. Do not proceed until all the children have reached a place of safety.

Water finds a way: Ruins of 200-year-old Cabot dam to be cleared

Elise Coyle
Community News Service

Between houses and greenery in the heart of Cabot, the Winooski River now runs unrestricted. Rubble along the banks serves as the sole reminder of what once was — a dam that powered industry in the town for decades. The Clark Sawmill Dam, the most common name for the dam about 5 miles downstream from the source of the river, collapsed suddenly during the catastrophic flooding that hit Vermont in 2023, punctuating years of back-and-forths about its future. Now the town hopes to clean up the area, removing the rubble and restoring the riverbank to create an undeveloped natural area.

“There’s debris from the components of the dam and the sawmill that are still there after many, many years, and we basically want it to be turned into a green space,” said Michael Hogan, town selectboard chair. “We just want it to be cleaned out and returned to its former condition.”

The debris lodged in the banks of the river will be removed from the area over 200 years after it was initially built into the dam. After receiving grant approval this summer and partnering with the town, the Friends of the Winooski River nonprofit wants to begin the design process with an engineering firm in the coming months.



Photo by Elise Coyle

In the summer of 2025, the remains of the old dam cling to the banks of the Winooski River in Cabot

For some — like Hogan, whose property downstream saw erosion from the dam’s diverting water — the dam was an inconvenience. For others, a potent reminder of the town’s past. Local historian and writer Jane Brown — who, at 93, has been in Cabot for nearly half the structure’s existence — sees dams like Clark’s as integral infrastructure to the success of earlier Vermonters.

“Water was a renewable resource,” Brown said. “You could have a dam up the river, and as long as you didn’t stop the flow for the guy down the river, you could have two or three mill ponds that would survive in a dry spell and so forth and still give power.” In Lower Cabot, the village district in which the structure stood, the power produced by the dam fueled several mills and factories throughout its operation. It was built in 1797, and much of its history presented here was first compiled by University of Vermont’s Consulting Archaeology Program.

Moses Stone originally owned the structure and ran a sawmill there until 1825. After bouncing between a few short-term owners, in 1849 the property was acquired by the Haines family, who for many years had maintained an ownership stake. They used the dam to power a woolen mill, where workers probably produced practical fabrics for blue-collar goods, like flannel.

“Eventually they had a woolen mill, a large woolen mill, there, and that employed a lot of people,” said Brown. “And at one time, because of the dam and the woolen mill, Lower Cabot was probably the center of the town business.” The Haineses revamped the factory, updating machinery in the mill to improve the efficiency of power from the dam. The family owned the land until around the turn of the 20th century.

From there, the historical record becomes murky. The property cycled through several owners in just two decades; at one point housing a facility for meat and bone cutting and later a tennis racket manufacturer. In 1920, the mill was purchased by Harry Clark, the dam’s current namesake. The factory had been converted into a sawmill by that point, and Clark kept it going, producing butter boxes lined with transparent paper for Cabot Creamery. “It made wooden boxes and lined them with butter paper, which was very transparent. We used it for tracing paper, we kids. They were square ones, oblong,” said local Geraldine Bickford in a 1990s book on Cabot history co-authored by Brown.

Not long after Clark took ownership, the complex caught fire. The fire, which occurred overnight in 1925, turned the sawmill to dust. Clark rebuilt on the same land before selling

the property to his son, Clifton “Chub” Clark, in 1946. The sawmill continued to function as usual under the ownership of the younger Clark. The building was described as small and economical, with Chub inside working on his own schedule, not in a rush. “He got what he got done when he got done, and that was it, and he didn’t have to have all this fancy equipment and stuff to run a sawmill,” said Carlton Domey, quoted in that same history book. “He made do with what his father had before him and kept it tinkered up.” For 30 years, Chub stayed at the sawmill. The factory employed a handful of locals. In 1976, just three years after a devastating flood wiped out the back part of the mill, Daniel Davis purchased the property and renamed the building Headwater Mill. The factory turned logs into wooden planks for use in local construction and produced cheese boxes and other woodwork. The mill was proclaimed the “only remaining water-powered commercial sawmill in Vermont” in a 1977 story in the Burlington Free Press. “There’s an air of pleasing ramshackle permanence in the way the building angles up the streambank,” wrote Judith Raven in the article. “Window-high piles of sawdust seem to anchor it to the ground and cushion the place against its own turbine vibrations.” Davis upgraded production in the 1980s, purchasing an automatic sawmill rig from Lane Manufacturing Co. in Montpelier, a new machine that the company boasted could produce enough wood for two houses every day, according to a 1981 issue of the Free Press. The mill halted production in 1997, and by 1999, it had been acquired by Edward Larson. By 2001, everything had stopped, according to regional planning commission documents and Hogan, the selectboard chair. Larson remained the owner of the land as disputes began mounting about the future of the dam. The building on the property had collapsed. The dam and sawmill were inoperable. “I was concerned about the dam for lots of different reasons and wanted to take the dam down at that point,” Hogan said. As documented in 2023 meeting notes from a local workgroup, concerns centered primarily on what would happen if the dam

CABOT DAM continued on page 11

Sacred Hunter

Worshipping harvest of needs, not wants, on Labor of Love Day

Bradley Carleton
Contributor

For those unfamiliar with the importance of Opening Days of the many seasons of hunting and fishing, it brings intense anticipation, anxiety even. And the ultimate test of one's appreciation for the beauty and mystery of nature is the lesson that teaches us to manage one's expectations.

We will not always get what we want. When all the components of a well-planned hunt fail to materialize, we are reminded that hunting is not like grocery shopping.

Witness Opening Day of resident Canada goose season this past Monday. I had done my homework patterning a flock of birds that, week after week, were building in numbers. Their feeding patterns were consistent. Morning feeds were at the north end of a large field and evening feeds were at the southeastern end. The field was freshly cut with plenty of dropped grains. I had been tracking the weather from the obscenely hot July and early August to what appeared to be an early preview of fall for the last two weeks.

Cool temperatures affect the food choice. Heat drives them to lush grassy fields for the cooling action that offers to their down-coat-clad bellies by adding chlorophyll and dew to their gizzards. When the north wind brought in temperatures that dipped into the mid-forties at night, the bellies of these resilient birds need high carbohydrate and protein to burn in their digestive system which keeps them warm.

Every day, I would record the lake level, which helps to gauge where they might roost based on available water levels that are far enough from shore to avoid predators. I study their movements, their vocalizations, their social hierarchy and the time of day that they would fly from roost to feed and back again. The cloud cover and lack of rain played an important part in the flock's timing of their daily schedule.

Yet, even after all my scouting and studying, I was dumbfounded how 220 birds simply vanished overnight. Checking over a dozen other fields, I found no birds. It was just one day before the opener. And so, for the first time in my 43 years of Opening Days, I had no idea where to go. I'm not one to expend a lot of effort setting out 60 decoys and blinds in hopes that some errant goose would feel sorry for me and come to visit my set up.

So instead, I asked myself, "Do I lay in bed and wallow in my misery or do I get outside and connect to the earth in some other way?" Sleeping in past the time I would have gotten up and rising at the hour of the gentrified civilian, I brewed myself a pot of coffee. Sitting at the table and enjoying a leisurely toast with jam, I felt guilty. Like I had broken a promise to a best friend.

The sorrow drove me to seek solace in the soil of my garden where, for the next six and a half hours, I weeded, trimmed, picked over a dozen cucumbers, half a dozen zucchini and six pounds of green beans. Then I aerated the entire space.



Photo by Bradley Carleton
Sometimes a wild-geese chase yields vegetables.

All the while, talking to the plants and asking them for forgiveness for being so inattentive over the past few weeks as I obsessed over Opening Day.

With my bare feet in the soothing soft soil and my hands feeling the earth slip through my fingers, I was reminded that the Earth does not always give us what we want, but she will give us what we need. Be it animal, vegetable or mineral.

I sat in the garden on a soft pad of closed-cell foam and sang to the plants along with the Bruce Springsteen Pandora station on the Bluetooth speaker under the old willow tree. I stopped for a short break and chugged water from my gallon jug, soothing my parched throat. The water comes from our well and is as clean and refreshing as any mountain stream. As I swallowed one gulp after another, I realized that, here she was providing for me again. The Earth meets my needs. No different than the garden spirits requiring water every evening.

Suddenly, I realized that I was no longer sad or frustrated that Opening Day did not bring me what I hoped for but instead gave me what I needed.

The sun shone down in pillars through the high clouds onto the fields that inspire my back yard. The north breeze cooled my skin and made me grateful that we live in a place where, aside from the Canadian wildfires earlier this summer, our air is healthy and nurtures us in the same way that Mother Earth provides for us all.

Treat her. Nurture her. Speak to her. Worship her and she will return what you need. Sometimes it's a flock of geese gliding into a decoy spread with wings outstretched and other times it might be a couple of baskets of vegetables.

(Bradley Carleton is the founder and director of Sacred Hunter.org, which teaches the public respect and empathy through hunting, fishing and foraging. More of Bradley's writing can be seen at sacredhunter.substack.com.)

Family friendly



Photo by Lee Krohn

Mt. Philo can be a good hike to do with children because it's not too long and it's not too short. You may find it's just right.

CABOT DAM

Continued from page 8

breached in heavy flooding. The uncontrolled rush of water and sediment was unpredictable, and folks worried about a disaster downstream waiting to happen.

But removing a dam is not as simple as it may seem; the town ran into issues almost immediately.

Following Tropical Storm Irene, the town pursued a Federal Emergency Management Agency buyout that ultimately fell through. Later, leaders hoped the town could buy the property and clear out the dam, but a problem arose.

“Part of that process was having this site evaluated for contamination in the soil,” said Michele Braun, executive director of Friends of the Winooski River. “One of the contaminants came back with a crazy high number.”

There was a catch: The high number was a typo.

But even when a corrected report came back, it was too late. Locals and town officials had grown wary about the optics and potential liabilities that may fall on the town if they followed through with the purchase. Progress stagnated until 2019.

That’s when an effort led by the Vermont River Conservancy moved to demolish the dam.

“They weren’t able to reach an agreement with the landowner. The landowner overvalued the property, thought it was worth more than it was worth,” said Braun.

Larson, the landowner, didn’t return three voicemails left over the span of a week.

Ultimately, the dam remained standing when July 10, 2023, came. Floodwaters rushed down the Winooski River, and the dam

burst, spewing over two centuries of debris and sediment build-up downstream.

All that remained of the old structure were two chunks of masonry on either side of the riverbank.

It was only then, after the destruction, that property ownership was successfully transferred to the town this March. The town enrolled the property in a state program that’s meant to protect Cabot from contamination-related liabilities, too.

Now, the town and Friends of the Winooski River are ready to remove the retaining walls of the dam that still cling to the riverbank.

“We work to naturalize the river for the benefit of the river,” Braun said.

The team is paying attention to unstable ground near homes above the river, she said.

The project has received grant approval from Watersheds United Vermont, a network of water quality and restoration groups in the state. The plan now is to enlist an engineering firm to come out to design the project, ideally this fall, Braun said.

“We probably will put down some historical signage down there, maybe some markers, historical markers, for what the dam was and its impact to the community,” Hogan said.

For historians like Brown, safeguarding Cabot’s cultural memory is of great importance.

“You have to preserve what generations before you did and appreciate what they did to make a better life, which is what we have now,” Brown said.

“In making progress, we’ve lost a lot, too,” she said later. “We’ve lost a lot of the community, the feeling of working hard for our living, our dependence on one another.”

(Via Community News Service, a University of Vermont journalism internship.)

Community Roundup

Windmill Hill area of Shelburne Farms protected for farming and education

Windmill Hill, an agriculturally important area of Shelburne Farms, is now permanently protected. On August 14, the education nonprofit conserved these 66 acres with the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and Vermont Land Trust to create the largest block of conserved farm and forest land on the property.

“It’s a National Park-quality landscape supporting our mission to inspire and cultivate learning for a sustainable future,” said Shelburne Farms president Alec Webb.

Forty years ago, to financially stabilize a young nonprofit that had just been bequeathed 1,000 acres, its board of directors worked to conserve critical areas of the farm by collaborating with the Vermont Land Trust and sold several house sites on the property’s margins, including three on its southern border, Windmill Hill. But when the nonprofit reacquired land south of Windmill Hill in 1994, those sites became a developable private island in the heart of the farm. Over the past decade, Shelburne Farms successfully worked to repurchase these parcels. Now, those 66 acres of fields and woodlands are permanently protected.

The land will be open for walking and education programs and will enhance the farm’s biodiversity, wildlife habitat, water resources, forestland and fields now and into the future.

“The property will enhance Shelburne Farms’ already critical role in demonstrating how farmland can be managed simultaneously for agricultural production, biodiversity, water quality, learning, and public access and will benefit Vermonters and visitors for generations,” said Karen Freeman of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board.

Funding for the project included a \$950,000 grant from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, along with \$50,000 from the town of Shelburne Open Space fund. Gifts from the Lookout Foundation, Freeman Foundation, and several anonymous private donors, including a \$1,000,000 gift from a fundholder at the Vermont Community Foundation, provided additional major support for the project, which was a key component of the Campaign for Shelburne Farms.

“This land will pay public, agricultural, and ecosystem dividends forever,” said Webb.



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Calendar

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**Vermont Lakes And Ponds meeting
Thursday, Sept. 4, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.**

The annual meeting of the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation on Thursday, Sept. 4, celebrates the efforts of lake associations to preserve Vermont's waters. The seminar is free and open to the public, but you must register at vermontlakes.org to receive the link or to attend in person at the South Burlington Public Library Community Room or via Zoom. More info is at: vermontlakes.org/event/2025-fovlap-annual-meeting.

**Archaeology of canal boats
Thursday, Sept. 4, 7-8 p.m.**

History, artifacts and shipwrecks lie in the depths of Lake Champlain. Lake Champlain Maritime Museum will present Talking Archaeology, a free talk series with museum archaeologists and researchers. Learn about local history, archaeological discoveries, artifacts and the stories the museum has uncovered over four decades of nautical archaeology and research. This talk will be held in the auditorium of the Hoehl Family Education and Visitor Center and last about 30-45 minutes with time for Q&A afterwards. Talking Archaeology is free to attend with registration at <https://tinyurl.com/mrpjeaat>.

**Free Shelburne Museum
Saturdays, Sept. 6-27, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.**

Shelburne Museum is rolling out the welcome mat for college students this fall with Student Saturdays, offering free admission every Saturday throughout September. The program kicks off on Saturday, Sept. 6, inviting students to discover art, history and community as the new school year begins.

**Walk for the animals
Saturday, Sept. 6, 10 a.m.**

Join fellow animal lovers for a leisurely, 1-mile walk around Middlebury, followed by music, food, prizes and a pool party just for dogs in the Middlebury Town Pool. Sign up in advance or at the event. Registration takes place at the Memorial Sports Center at 10 a.m., the walk kicks off at 11 a.m. and the doggie dip in the Middlebury Town Pool follows. All proceeds benefit Homeward Bound, Addison County's Humane Society (homewardboundanimals.org).

**American Revolution artifacts
Saturday, Sept. 6, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum is getting ready for the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in 2026 with a newly expanded exhibit on the American Revolution in the Champlain Valley, featuring new research and lesser-known stories. Get a preview of some of the artifacts, stories and research that will be featured in this exhibit at a special free event. Take a look at original artifacts from the Battle of Valcour Island, Arnold's Bay and other sites around the region and hear about the research. Collections manager Patricia Reid will talk to visitors about the artifacts and our plans for the upcoming exhibit. This event is free; no registration or tickets required.

**Needle felt vultures
Saturday, Sept. 6, 1-2 p.m.**

Needle felt a thumb-sized vulture in honor



Courtesy photo

There will be a 1-mile walk for dogs in Middlebury on Saturday, Sept. 6, followed by a pool party for dogs.

of International Vulture Appreciation Day. Beginners welcome; materials and instruction provided. We'll also share why vultures are so awesome. Suggested: \$35 (includes admission, your vulture and a felting needle to take home). Register at <https://tinyurl.com/9mrbajym>.

**The Steph Pappas Experience
Sunday, Sept. 7, 1-2:30 p.m.**

For a third year, The Steph Pappas Experience returns to perform on the lawn of the Charlotte Museum at 215 Museum Road. There will be refreshments and the museum will be open 1-4 p.m.

**Finding joy in natural world
Sunday, Sept. 7-Monday, Oct. 1**

Frog Hollow Gallery's new exhibit is Nature in Portrait, Finding Joy in the Natural World by artist Melissa DeTroy. The show presents a significant evolution in DeTroy's artistic practice, moving from her well-known detailed botanical illustrations to a more personal and expressive body of oil and gouache paintings

**Taiji classes at the Grange
Mondays & Wednesdays, Sept. 8-Nov. 5, 6-7:30 p.m.**

Felipe Toro will lead introductory taiji classes at the Grange on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Taiji quan or taiji (tai chi) is an internal martial art system which emphasizes the development and control of qi (chi) within the body. There is a suggested donation of \$90 for the 18-class series and registration is required with Toro at champlainwellness@gmail.com.

**Age Well luncheon
Tuesday, Sept. 9, 11:30 a.m.**

St. Catherine of Siena and Age Well are offering a free luncheon for anyone 60 or older in the St. Catherine of Siena Parish Hall at 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 chicken, corn and potato stew, crackers, Oregon blend vegetables, wheat dinner roll, apple cake and milk. The deadline to register is Sept. 3. Contact Pam Niarchos at 802-662-5283 or pniarchos@agewellvt.org.

**Square dance lessons
Tuesdays, Sept. 9 & 16, 7-8:30 p.m.**

The Lake Champlain Squares will present two free introductory classes for square

dance beginners at Frederick Tuttle Middle School, 500 Dorset St., South Burlington. For more info call or text 802-233-3339.

**Poetry at the Grange
Thursday, Sept. 11, 6:30-8 p.m.**

"Poetry at the Grange" is held every second Thursday from 6:30- 8 p.m. at the Charlotte Grange. Bring your own poetry or favorites to share or just come to listen. Enjoy tea and fresh-baked cookies. This is a celebration, not a critique session. RSVP: Abby Killey at abigailkilley@me.com.

**Coffee and muffins
Friday, Sept. 12, 8:30-10 a.m.**

Please note that the date has changed for the Grange's coffee and muffins happy hour at the historic hall at 2858 Spear St. in East Charlotte. Join neighbors and members of the Charlotte Grange for free coffee, tea and homemade muffins.

**Fall woodland training
Friday-Sunday, Sept. 12-14**

Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife invites landowners, foresters and conservation-minded individuals to its fall cooperater training, held at Kehoe Conservation Camp on the shores of Lake Bomoseen. This free, 2 1/2-day program immerses participants in the science and art of woodland stewardship. With presentations from state and local experts in forestry and wildlife management and stories from fellow landowners, the training explores forest ecology, habitat enhancement, invasive species control, conservation planning and how to maintain connected and resilient landscapes. Learn more or apply at vtcoverts.org. For questions, email info@vtcoverts.org.

**Lake Champlain Challenge Race
Saturday, Sept. 13, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.**

The Challenge Race is an annual summer race on Lake Champlain that's open to all human-powered vessels, who race on a 3-mile course. Race categories include: rowing gigs (fixed seat and sliding seat, solo and crew), kayaks, canoes, paddleboards and miscellaneous. The only requirement is the boat must be propelled by human power. Awards will be given for fastest in each category and most creative race name. After the race, all are invited to a free lunch buffet, hosted by the museum's rowing clubs. The Challenge Race is \$30 a person and payment will be collected in person at check-

in. Pre-registration for the Challenge Race is strongly encouraged to guarantee a spot in the race and lunch. Registration encouraged at <https://tinyurl.com/bdf7h7df>.

**Forest sit
Thursday, Sept. 18, 10-11 a.m.**

Rest, restore your spirits, watch birds or butterflies, do a little nature journaling or whatever is comfortable and quiet for each at Birds of Vermont. Many of us need some respite, solace and recuperation. Please bring any of these you wish: water, tick repellent, journaling materials, binoculars, camp stool, pillow, a sitting mat. Hats recommended. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/ykvr5k6c>.

**Charlotte Walks
Friday, Sept. 19, 8:30-9:30 a.m.**

Get more familiar with Charlotte's public trails or meet and chat with other residents by joining a Charlotte Walks. Every third Friday of the month members of the Grange and others meet at a different trailhead at 8:30 a.m. These walks generally last about an hour and are led at an adult walking pace. The location will be announced later.

**Words in the Woods
Saturday, Sept. 20, 11 a.m.**

Vermont Humanities Words in the Woods events allow Vermonters and visitors to enjoy our state's natural beauty while listening to and reading literature in the outdoors at different Vermont State Parks. The fifth of this year's readings will be at Mt. Philo State Park and will feature the Young Writers Project (YWP), an independent nonprofit begun in 2006 in Burlington to inspire, mentor, publish and promote young writers and artists. Vermont Humanities will cover park entries for the program.

**Capital City Concerts season
Saturday, Sept. 20, 11 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.**

The Capital City Concerts season opens on Saturday, Sept. 20, with Robert McDonald, one of the great American pianists and a faculty member at both the Juilliard School and the Curtis Institute. His free 11 a.m. master class will be followed by a 7:30 p.m. recital which will include music of Beethoven, Brahms, Copland, Grieg and Fauré.



CHARLOTTE TOWN MEETINGS AND AGENDAS

Visit charlottetvt.org
for more information

Planning Commission meeting
Thursday, Sept. 4, 7 p.m.

Regular Selectboard meeting
Monday, Sept. 8, 7 p.m.

Energy & Climate Action Committee
Tuesday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.

Development Review Board meeting
Wednesday, Sept. 10, 7 p.m.

Planning Commission meeting
Thursday, Sept. 18, 7 p.m.

Library News

Your library card could be golden if you sign up this month

Margaret Woodruff
Director

September is Library Card Sign-Up Month. You can win a Golden Library Card worth six free audiobooks.

This September when you sign up for a library card, you'll be entered to win a Golden Library Card from Libro.fm. Have questions? Feel free to ask a librarian, or visit Libro.fm to learn more. You must be 18 or over to win.

There is still space for storytellers. Share your story and hear from others in the Charlotte community and beyond. If you have a story to tell, please contact Samara Anderson to be featured in the Charlotte Storytelling event on Sept. 25.

The library's photo gallery project continues. Send a photo of your favorite pooch (or pooches) to display at the library. Your pups will be in good company as we have had to expand our display area.

Low-vision readers have a new tool at the library. Stop by to read a book or magazine using the video magnifier. Staff is available to help you get started. Thank you to the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (vabvi.org) for loaning us the equipment.

If you or someone you know is blind or visually impaired or has a physical or reading disability that impacts reading standard print, the library can help you apply for free resources such as large print books, talking books and braille services from the ALE Library (able.vermont.gov). New StoryWalk® at the Library: "Fresh-Picked Poetry"

A new StoryWalk based on "Fresh-Picked Poetry: A Day at the Farmers' Market" by Michelle Schaub has been installed on the Charlotte Library grounds. In time for fall's abundance of vegetables appearing at local farmers markets, this StoryWalk takes readers to the market and what to see, what to eat and how produce is grown.

Programs for kids

Baby time

Saturday, Sept. 6, 10-11 a.m.

On the first Monday of the month, join other families in an unstructured hour of play and exploration in the young children's area. Ages birth to 12 months.

Toddler time

Saturday, Sept. 6, 10-11 a.m.

On the first Monday of the month, join other young families with toddlers for an unstructured hour of play and exploration in the program room. Ages 12 months to 24 months.

Weekly programs for kids

Preschool story time

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.

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

Preschool free play

Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

Play in the preschool years enables children to explore and make sense of the world around them, as well as to use and develop their imagination. Explore the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks, playdoh — these are a few of the open-ended projects planned for Wednesday morning play-based learning at the Charlotte Library.



Left: Matt Bijur demonstrates how to use the new bike repair station in the library parking lot.
Right: Sue Smith uses the video magnifier at the Charlotte Library.



Photos by Susanna Kahn

Baby Time

Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.

An unstructured hour for parents, caregivers and babies to play, explore books and chat 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. The library will have loads of Lego bricks out, along with some books and prompts for inspiration. For all ages. Please note: Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult.

Programs for adults

Garden Circle

Mondays, 8:30-10 a.m., & Wednesdays, 4:30-6 p.m.

Garden stewards Karen Tuininga and Linda Hamilton invite past and interested new members to the library's Garden Circle to join in tending the library gardens. These include the Rain Garden along the east side of the building, the Welcome Garden that wraps around the south end and the raised bed Food and Herb Gardens behind the Quinlan Schoolhouse. Come regularly or as you can. All help welcome. Questions? Email seed@charlottepubliclibrary.org.

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.

Reception for art exhibit

Friday, Sept. 5, 5-7 p.m.

Join Sarah Wesson for the opening reception of her exhibit, "Within Walking Distance." Wesson has painted extensively in Italy, Vermont and Maine. For a decade she exhibited and sold her paintings from her studio in downtown Middlebury. She continues to exhibit in various galleries around the state. She has taught painting at the Middlebury Studio School, curated art shows, and now works out of her home studio in Ripton. Sarah studied painting

and drawing at The Art Students League in New York City. "Within Walking Distance" includes watercolors of plants the artist collected on walks near her house.

Short story selections

Wednesday, Sept. 10, 1 p.m.

Join library director Margaret Woodruff to share and discuss short stories old and new. This is an online program. Join on Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/2uxwrsyr>.

Mystery Book Group

Monday, Sept. 15, 10 a.m.

In "Sleepyhead." Mark Billingham's thrilling debut novel, one person who holds the key to a killer's identity but is unable to speak. Copies available at the circulation desk.

Silent reading party

Tuesday, Sept. 16, 4:30-6 p.m.

Welcome to introvert happy hour at Adam's Berry Farm. Join a silent reading party and enjoy a book in this beautiful pastoral setting. Or read with friends. All readers are welcome. Whether it's ebooks or audiobooks, poetry or prose, fiction or non-fiction, it's BYOBook. Simple refreshments served and berry treats available for purchase.

Better-together book club

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 7 p.m.

"True Biz" is an enlightening coming-of-age tale that takes place in a boarding school for deaf students. Copies available at the circulation desk.

Men's book club

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 7:30-9 p.m.

"Genghis Khan & the Making of the Modern World" by Jack Weatherford tells of the early life of Genghis Khan and his rise and transformation from the tribal world of the steppes to the civilizing explosion of the Mongol Empire. It's the story of how the modern world was forged. Copies available at the circulation desk. Join in person or on Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/5etxn8c6>.

Thursday book group

Thursday, Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m.

"Hidden Valley Road" is the heartrending story of a midcentury American family with 12 children, six of them diagnosed

with schizophrenia, that became science's great hope. Join on Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/8zrcrbe> or copies available at the circulation desk.

Not just plain vanilla

Tuesday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m.

Join Hank Kaestner, former director of spice procurement at McCormick & Co., for a fascinating spice story. According to Kaestner, "Vanilla is one of the world's most popular flavors, but is very much misunderstood. It's the only orchid species of any commercial importance." Learn why this flavoring has a special connection to Vermont and enjoy a treat that highlights this familiar yet enchanting flavor.

Restoring insects

Monday, Sept. 29, 7 p.m.

Learn why insects are essential to ecosystems and how we can help restore their populations. Following a short video featuring Doug Tallamy, Jacob Holzberg Pill from Branch Out Burlington and master gardener Lori Martin will put this information into context for gardeners and naturalists here in Charlotte and the Champlain Valley.

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, library director 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.

Join in 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.

Library contact information:

Margaret Woodruff, director
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian
Susanna Kahn, tech librarian
Phone: 802-425-3864
Email: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org

Senior Center News

Senior center ‘spices up’ its programming in September

Lori York
Director

September is World Alzheimer’s Month, a time to raise awareness about dementia and Alzheimer’s disease. At the Charlotte Senior Center there is a monthly caregiver support group and a memory café designed to provide connection and support for families navigating memory loss.

This month, the senior center offers a presentation by Hank Kaestner on the world of cinnamon and spices and a session on navigating Medicare open enrollment. Check out the September Senior Art Show or consider joining one of the art classes and programs available. For those interested in language, there are opportunities to connect while building skills in Italian, French and German, with Spanish conversation classes returning in October.

Alzheimer’s caregivers support group Wednesday, Sept. 10, 3-4 p.m.

Are you caring for someone with Alzheimer’s? Do you know someone who is? Please join us for our monthly Caregivers support group on the second Wednesday of each month from 3-4 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. Free. No registration required. For additional information please contact Louise Fairbank at louisefairbank67@gmail.com.

Cinnamon presentation Thursday, Sept. 18, 1-2 p.m.

Join spice expert Hank Kaestner for this much-anticipated presentation that begins with an exploration of cinnamon, its origins, uses and unique appeal, and evolves into one of Hank’s most beloved talks: “Spices — What are they and where do they come from?” With decades of experience and a passion for global flavors, Hank brings the world of spices to life in this flavorful and fascinating journey. Free. Registration is appreciated by calling 802-425-6345.

Memory café Saturday, Sept. 20, 11 a.m.-noon

The memory café meets monthly on the third Saturday at the Charlotte Senior Center. This free event provides a welcoming and supportive space for individuals living with memory loss, along with their caregivers or loved ones. Enjoy a fun activity, connect with others and find meaningful support. This program is offered in partnership with Age Well and the Charlotte Library. Free. To register, call 802-425-6345 or reach out to Susan Cartwright at cartwright.susan1@gmail.com for more information.

Understanding Medicare open enrollment Tuesday, Sept. 23, 12:30-2 p.m.

Join representatives from Age Well’s State Health Insurance Assistance Program for a helpful and informative session on Medicare open enrollment. Learn how to navigate your Medicare options and make informed decisions about your coverage. Open enrollment occurs annually from Oct. 15-Dec. 7. This is the time to review your coverage for the new year. During this time you can switch Advantage or Part D plans, or join a plan if you missed your initial opportunity to sign up. Free. Registration is appreciated by calling 802-425-6345.

Art

September art exhibit

Visit the senior center and view the September senior art show with a wide range of art by local artists of all skill levels, ages 50 and older. An artist reception will be held on Friday, Sept. 26, from 1-2 p.m.

Arts Group Fridays, 10 a.m.-noon

Explore your inner artist with the Friday morning arts group. This weekly group is designed for artists of all levels who are seeking inspiration and support in a welcoming and social environment. Whether you’re just starting or have years of experience, you are invited to bring whatever project you’re currently working on. Free. No registration required.

Watercolor workshop Tuesdays, Sept. 9-30, 9 a.m.-noon

Celebrate the beauty of autumn in this fun and supportive four-part watercolor class. We’ll explore fall-themed and classic New England scenes, building on your skills while enjoying the vibrant colors of the season. Some watercolor experience is helpful. A materials list will be provided upon registration. Cost: \$165. Registration and payment required by Tuesday, Sept. 3. To register, call 802-425-6345.

Languages

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

Parlez-vous français? We are an intermediate group of French speakers who meet weekly for French conversation. As the group grows, there may be opportunities to split according to skill levels. Questions? Email Roberta Whitmore at robertawhitmore27@gmail.com.

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? Email Dan York at dyork@Lodestar2.com.

Italian for beginners Fridays, Sept 12-Oct. 24, 10-11 a.m.

Curious about learning Italian or looking to refresh your basics? Join instructor Nicole Librandi in this lively beginner-friendly class where you’ll discover the beauty of the Italian language and culture through conversation, reading, writing, singing and humor. Cost: \$60.*(plus a small supply fee payable directly to the instructor) Registration and payment due by Friday, Sept. 5. To register, call 802-425-6345.

Outdoor programs

Experienced hiking group

Love tackling challenging hikes? We’re forming a group for experienced hikers interested in exploring scenic trails across Vermont and the Adirondacks. If you’d like to join, email Michael Rubin at mjrubin99@gmail.com.

Gentle walk Thursday, Sept. 25, 9 a.m.

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



Photo by Lori York

Laughter fills the room as cards are dealt during the regular samba game, a lively variation of canasta, at the senior center.

the local walks. Meet at 9 a.m. in the foyer of the Charlotte Senior Center. Questions? Call Penny Burman at 916-753-7279. Free. Registration required.

Women’s kayak trips Second & fourth Friday mornings

Join a community of active women who enjoy exploring our local lakes, ponds and rivers by kayak. Trips are planned based on water and weather conditions and are subject to change. To express interest, email Susan Hyde at susanfosterhyde@gmail.com to be added to the master list of paddlers. Details for each trip will be sent via email the week prior to the outing. Free. Registration required.

Games

American-style mahjong Tuesdays, 12:45-3:45 p.m. & Wednesdays, 6 p.m.

Enjoy American mahjong in a welcoming social setting, with opportunities to play twice each week. Beginners and experienced players alike are encouraged to join. Free. A great time to join the fun and get to know other players. Register for your first visit to Tuesday sessions in order to be included in the group texts. Email Suzanne Slesar at suzluna@madriver.com. Jane Krasnow, an experienced player, will be there to teach newcomers and guide play on Wednesdays. Open to all skill levels. Email jane.krasnow@gmail.com.

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

Join an informal mahjong gathering, open to all levels of experience. Whether you’re new to Shanghai style or a seasoned player, you’re welcome to join the group for casual play and fun conversation. Questions? Email Nan Mason at anne.mason@uvm.edu. Free.

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

Backgammon is a tactical table game with a 5,000-year history. We welcome players at all levels. Free. To register, email jonathanhart1@gmail.com.

Exercise

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

Join Phyllis Bartling for a hybrid strength and core class designed specifically for individuals 55 and older. This safe yet challenging workout combines upper-body

strength exercises with hand weights and mat exercises that focus on strengthening core muscles to improve balance, strength and posture. Cost: \$10 a class. No registration required.

Tai chi-yang style short form Thursdays, 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Join Eliza Hammer for a tai chi class featuring the Yang international short form, the most popular style of tai chi practice. This form involves slow, continuous, soft circular movements coordinated with breathing. Regular practice helps improve balance, mental clarity, flexibility, stability, coordination and overall health. Practicing in a group setting is both uplifting and energizing. Hammer, a certified instructor, has studied with the founder of the Tai Chi for Arthritis Association. Please note that this class is not for beginners. If you have questions about whether this class is appropriate for your skill level, you are welcome to observe a class or reach out to Hammer at belizahammer@hotmail.com. \$10 per class. No registration required.

Bone Builders Mondays & Tuesdays, 9:45-10:45 a.m.; Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m.; & Fridays, 11 a.m.-noon

RSVP Bone Builders, a program of United Way of Northwest Vermont, is a no-impact, weight-training program designed to prevent and even reverse the negative effects of osteoporosis in older adults. Bone Builders consists of a warm-up, balance exercises, arm and leg exercises, and a cool down with stretching. Free. No registration required, but there is paperwork to complete for the RSVP Bone Builders program.

Meals

Menus are posted on the website: charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday lunches

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

Senior center info:

The senior center offers programs for adults 50 and older from Charlotte and surrounding communities. Priority is given to seniors, but programs are open to adults of all ages. Interested in receiving a weekly reminder about what is happening? Sign up for the email newsletters at charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Write Ingredients

Get some of your 4 pounds of cukes at Monday Munch

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

Chowder and quiche are interesting words with fascinating histories, but, for now, let’s go with cucumber. Clocking in at 96 percent water, the cucumber is one of the world’s oldest cultivated vegetables. Originating in Asia, it now grows on most continents. In Numbers 11: 5 the Bible offers this account of cucumbers in ancient Egypt: “We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic.”

These days, each person in the U.S. eats about 4 pounds of cukes a year.

The cucumber’s water retentive ability earned it the reputation for never losing its cool. Seventeenth-century physicians prescribed placing patients with fever on a bed of cucumbers so they would become “cool, as a cucumber.”

What’s more, according to popular lore, eating cucumbers three times a day would heal red noses and cause pimples on the face to disappear.

In his “Natural History,” Pliny the Elder wrote that Emperor Tiberius (42 B.C.-37 A.D.) ate cucumbers every day. To ensure an abundant supply, he arranged for raised beds in frames on wheels so the cucumbers could be moved around to get the full heat of the sun.

The 18th century British pundit Samuel Johnson, who was known for a fulsome appetite as well as an ever-ready pen, did not hold cucumbers in such high regard, insisting that he’d follow physicians’ advice that a cucumber “should be well sliced and dressed with pepper and vinegar, and then thrown out, as good for nothing.”

In “American Food: What We’ve Cooked, How We’ve Cooked It and the Ways We’ve Eaten in America Through the Centuries,” Evan Jones notes that early American cooks

seem to have found many delicious ways to serve cooked cucumbers: “One rule of thumb asserted that cucumbers must be served ‘under meat and over fish.’” The recipe for veal collops with cucumber sauce calls for parboiling cucumber slices for 10 minutes, mixing with butter, sour cream, thyme, salt and pepper and simmering the slices another 10 minutes.

Shingon Buddhist temples in Japan offer an adhithana, a cucumber blessing. The priest, along with believers, offer a prayer together, seeking good health through the hot summer — just like fresh cucumbers. A limited edition, mint-colored soda, Pepsi Ice Cucumber — “artificially flavored to resemble the refreshing taste of a fresh cucumber” — was released in the summer of 2007, only in Japan.

At the New York Times, the acerbic and always witty Judge John Hodgman awards people who argue about whether a cucumber is a vegetable or a fruit a master’s in pointless argumentation. Hodgman also has a few words for people who wash cukes in the bathroom sink.

As could be expected, an expanded cucumber search at the New York Times offers a huge string of possibilities. The prospective cook can choose cucumbers marinated, pickled, sauteed, steamed, poached, smashed, stir-fried, creamed, grilled, salt-massaged, jellied, juiced and spiked. Cucumbers spicy or tame. Cukes don’t go solo but appear with mustard, tofu, parsley, soy, ginger, garlic, cheddar, marmalade and Frangelico hazelnut liqueur. A Cucumber Collins has 2 ounces of gin. Maybe people who are served cold cucumber-walnut soup will feel a need for the Collins.

Not all cucumbers are benign. In “Stand back! This explosive cucumber is bursting with seeds,” (<https://tinyurl.com/3w568sx9>) NPR notes that a small, hairy version of the cucumbers we find in the produce aisle would

have an advantage over its more palatable cousins, but, alas, this explosive cucumber is toxic.

It’s impossible to decipher just where the extensive info on cukes and pickles offered by Smithsonian Magazine fits into the current president’s threats to cut funding because he finds the institution “too woke.”

Regardless of its political status, the magazine offers info both engaging and comprehensive, telling us that although the exact origins of the pickle are unknown, most food historians believe these salted and brined cukes date back to the days of the ancient Mesopotamians, around 2400 B.C. Fast-forward to the 15th century, and pickles arrived in the New World thanks to Italian merchant Amerigo Vespucci, known locally as the “Pickle Dealer.” He supplied trans-Atlantic ships with preserved meat and vegetables — including pickles — to help prevent sailors from developing scurvy.

These days, the pickle on a stick is a carnival treat (<https://tinyurl.com/yc3urhen>).

A bear named Yampil was rescued from a Ukrainian battlefield. Now he appears in the Washington Post (<https://tinyurl.com/ype6v4km>) munching on a cucumber, ready to be adopted by a Scottish zoo.

Meanwhile, in California, after managing to get into an ice cream shop at 4 a.m., a black bear named Fuzzy sampled vanilla bean, chocolate, coconut pineapple, cheesecake and green tea ice cream (<https://tinyurl.com/2m99kjxx>). During all the sampling, Fuzzy showed a preference for strawberry. Seeing this, I suspect that the bear who appeared at my back door a few months ago when I was stirring a pot on the kitchen stove was hoping for a treat.

Although the author of the conspiracy theory extravaganza, “The Real Anthony Fauci: Bill Gates, Big Pharma and the War on Democracy and Public Health,” hasn’t yet made his views on cucumbers known, as the

current United States secretary of health and human services, Robert Kennedy Jr. now has an untoward influence on U.S. agricultural practice and hence what we eat. Here’s an article (<https://tinyurl.com/56ym9x4a>) on what this reformed Twinkie lover currently eats, which he summarizes by saying: “I wouldn’t eat a human, I wouldn’t eat a monkey, and I wouldn’t eat a dog.”

Well, hooah! I’m waiting for word on whether Kennedy will eat an orange cucumber. This new designer vegetable, not yet available in grocery stores, is growing in experimental gardens at the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Vegetable Crops Research Unit in the horticulture department at the University of Wisconsin. Enthusiastic scientists say these cukes could become a ready source of the orange antioxidant, which the body converts into vitamin A, and thus, help compensate for the dietary shortages of vitamin A now prevalent in the Third World (cuccap.org).

Build up your own vitamin A at Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center, along with the bonus of good desserts and good company.

Monday Munch
Sept. 8, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Corn chowder, green salad with toppings, bread, beverage and apple pie with ice cream.

Sept. 15, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Crustless quiche with onion, bacon, spinach, and Swiss cheese; cucumber salad; homemade sourdough bread; and dessert.

Reminder: Knowing that every child should have books to keep, the Charlotte Grange maintains a wonderful Little Free Library for Kids outside 2858 Spear Street. Invite a child you care about to take a look — and take a book. Available books range from baby board books to books for teens.

Wash and ride



Photo by Josh Bagnato

Although the lake surface was relatively calm on the day before, on this Sunday it was another story. The waves were high and the vehicles in front of the ferry got a free wash.

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