

The Charlotte News

October 16, 2025

Your nonprofit community news source since 1958

Vol. 68, No. 09

Charlotte tractor parade helps grow community

Patrick Aber
Community News Service

On Sunday, Oct. 12, Green Mountain Hay was chock full of mopeds, golf carts, lawn-mowers, minivans, and of course, tractors.

The East Charlotte Tractor Parade is a hallmark fall event for Charlotte and its neighboring towns.

Drivers corralled themselves in a field behind Green Mountain Hay, lining their tractors up neatly. As they performed last-minute checks on their equipment, attendees noshed on a potluck lunch in a nearby haybarn.

Bryan Curtis helped organize the food and donations for the event. He passed out tractor knickknacks to an accumulating crowd while eating potato salad.

That's what it's all about for Bryan, "getting together with people."

But Bryan's participation in the parade wasn't limited to the haybarn

PARADE continued on page 3

Ferry company cleaning up sailing center, rent not rising

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

A group of around 50 people, who have kept their boats moored at the Charlotte Sailing Center, gathered for a meeting at the Old Lantern on Thursday, Oct. 9, and they were happy to hear that the sailing center is not being sold.

Trey Pecor, owner of ferry company Lake Champlain Transportation and of the property next to the Charlotte ferry, organized the meeting and came with the welcome news that he plans to clean the property up but is not looking for a buyer.

Furthermore, he also shared the well-received news that the rent is not going up. Whether a boat owner owns their own mooring or is using a mooring owned by Lake Champlain Transportation, Pecor said he plans

SAILING continued on page 5

Charlotte Fire and Rescue celebrates 75 years of service



More than 150 people showed up for the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service's 75th anniversary open house. Photos by Lee Krohn

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Dick St. George remembers coming to the station where the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service sits when he was a child. The building that was there then was built by the members. It had walls and it was heated, but it was sort of bare bones.

Out of those humble beginnings the department that now provides emergency medical and firefighting services to the community was born.

Almost from the beginning the rescue department provided both fire and ambulance service to Charlotte. Well, not actually ambulance because the original "ambulance" was a hearse. That vehicle was transformed from transporting the deceased to helping save lives.

Dave Schermerhorn, fire chief from 1974-89, said the "ambulance" burned up at the hospital one day because of an electrical problem.

After the hearse, the station had a Chevy station wagon which was succeeded by a Dodge van.

Former engineer and captain Jack Kerr said things have really changed over the years for the rescue service. In the early days, the goal was just getting the injured to the hospital as quickly as possible. There wasn't much emergency medical care going on in those early vehicles in those days — in Charlotte or elsewhere in the country.

CPR hadn't even been invented yet.

The occasion for these historical reflections about the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service's history was its 75th anniversary, which was celebrated with an open house at the station on Saturday, Oct. 4.



Longtime member and former chief Dick St. George demonstrates how to tear open a vehicle to get someone out who's trapped inside.

More than 150 people showed up, and a lot of those were kids, many of whom said they would like to be a fireman, or firewoman, when they grow up.

The celebration included demonstrations of how emergency workers force open wrecked vehicles to extricate trapped passengers; bagpipes; tours of the firehouse, emergency vehicles and fire trucks; and lunch.

One big thing that has changed since Kerr first joined the Charlotte department: "When I started, we didn't have any gear," he said. "We did eventually get hard hats."

Although he's retired from the rescue service, Mike Cook probably goes back the longest of anyone at the celebration. He started with the department in 1976.

Cook said he doesn't have any particular

memory that stands out as his favorite from the intervening years: "Everything was good."

Chief Jamie Valyou said he was both hopeful and still surprised by how big the turnout was for the department's 75th anniversary festivities. They had given out all sorts of swag, including mugs, T-shirts and cardboard firetrucks, for the occasion and most of it was gone.

Valyou said his most prominent reflection about the fire and rescue service's history on this day was the growth and development of the organization over the years, which has gone from its origins as a totally volunteer organization to having paid ambulance staff to now having some paid firefighters.

FIRE AND RESCUE continued on page 2

FIRE AND RESCUE

Continued from page 1

“We’re trying to capture the history here to kind of bring us back to our roots and where we were,” Valyou said. “Our future is about community; it’s about building a professional organization to the level that would be expected in this field.”

Although he would like to improve the number of volunteers the department has, Valyou said, it is also important to have paid staff on duty at the station. Volunteers have other jobs that can interfere with their ability to respond to calls, and having someone who is paid to be on duty at the station greatly improves how quickly the rescue service can respond to emergencies and fires.

“For us to have the best outcome in an emergency, there needs to be paid people here in order to be reliable,” he said.

Shiloh Brown, 3, who was folding a cardboard firetruck Valyou had given him into its proper shape, said he would like to be a fireman when he grows up.

“That sounds great. It’s a really important role in the community,” his dad Sam Piesch said. “Definitely, public service is important.”

Piesch answers the call to public service



Children even got to experience what it is like to handle a fire hose. Photos by Lee Krohn

by serving on the Monkton selectboard. Maybe it was his dad’s public service or maybe it was getting the cardboard

firetruck folded into its proper three-dimensional shape, but either way, Shiloh responded by giving his dad a high-five.

Train station discussion continues at selectboard

Brett Yates
Contributor

Charlotte’s ongoing conversation about the homeless encampment at the defunct train station on Ferry Road resurfaced at the Monday, Oct. 13, selectboard meeting as a late addition to the evening’s agenda. Board member JD Herlihy moved to include an update on the controversial topic, which, in September, prompted the selectboard to send a letter to several state agencies expressing “discomfort with the situation’s safety and health issues, zoning violations and anticipation for the situation to spiral out of control and desire for a resolution.”

The town has yet to receive any responses to the letter, and for now, the future of the encampment remains uncertain. But according to board member Lewis Mudge, conditions at the site have improved noticeably since it became a subject of public concern.

“It has been cleaned up and does look a lot better,” Mudge said. “But it did take a little bit of noise, I think, to get it there.”

Mudge had previously spotted syringes

“It has been cleaned up and does look a lot better. But it did take a little bit of noise, I think, to get it there.”

— Lewis Mudge

littered amid the recreational vehicles parked in the area. By his account, those have recently disappeared, along with the old boat that had been sitting in the station’s abandoned lot.

“I’m not saying the folks down there were using those drugs. That might not have been them,” Mudge said. “But it was something that caught my eye when I went down there.”

Town officials noted that the Chittenden County Sheriff’s Office and the Vermont State Police have both visited the encampment. Neither has taken action thus far.

Town administrator Nate Bareham reported that the sheriff “inquired whether or not there are any standing ordinances or regulations of the town that are applicable there. I informed them that there are no applicable regulations or ordinances that address this issue.”

Last month, the Vermont Department of Transportation had told Bareham that it would send a member of its “encampment team” to investigate the site, but Bareham hasn’t heard from VTrans since then. Herlihy emphasized that responsibility for the train station lies with the state, calling it “an unregulated space right now that the town has really limited to no authority over.”

That hasn’t stopped some Charlotters from intervening charitably. Selectboard member Natalie Kanner mentioned that volunteers from the Charlotte Food Shelf

have introduced themselves to the campers and made them aware of their organization’s offerings.

State representative Chea Waters Evans, too, voiced a preference for offering assistance over trying to “run people out of town.” She noted that she had reached out to the Community Health Centers of Burlington. Employees at their Safe Harbor program, which provides healthcare services to the homeless community, subsequently made a trip down to Charlotte.

Seeking to defuse public alarm over a situation that “seems fairly safe,” Waters Evans read a portion of the workers’ site report aloud: “From our observation, there were no signs of apparent drug use, nor was there a significant amount of trash or waste. The site is also minimally visible from the road.”

Kanner adopted a similar tone. “I do think it is really important for us to remain aware that we are talking about people, that there are people who are in a really bad way and are not living there by choice,” she said.

Throughout the discussion, sentiments of generosity and caution mingled, amounting to “a challenging conundrum” for selectboard chair Lee Krohn. He cited, on the one hand, a desire “to be understanding and humane in treatment of fellow humans” and, on the other, a “significant concern” that, if the encampment “is allowed to remain, word will get out and it will expand.”

Zoning administrator hired

Following an executive session, the selectboard approved an offer of employment for Rebecca Kaplan, who will become Charlotte’s zoning administrator if she accepts it. The previous zoning administrator, Aaron Brown, resigned in March, and Kaplan, the town’s planning and zoning assistant, has occupied the role on an interim basis since then.



Mission Statement

To engage and inform Charlotte and nearby communities by:

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

Editorial independence

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

Code of Ethics

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

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

Disclaimer

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

Letters, Opinions and Obituaries

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

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

Editorial Staff

Editor: Scooter MacMillan (scooter@thecharlottenews.org)
Production Manager: Anna Cyr (anna@thecharlottenews.org)
Proofreaders: Mike & Janet Yantachka, Katherine Arthaud

Business Staff

Ad manager: Susie Therrien (ads@thecharlottenews.org)
Bookkeeper: Susan Jones (billing@thecharlottenews.org)

Board Members

Board Chair: Andrew Zehner (andrew@thecharlottenews.org)
Treasurer: Margery McCracken (treasurer@thecharlottenews.org)
Secretary: Meredith Moses
Board members: Peter Joslin, Susan McCullough, Julia Russell, Dave Speidel, Damaris Herlihy, Vince Crockenberg (emeritus), John Hammer (emeritus)
Technical advisor: Melissa Mendelsohn, Orchard Road Computers

Website: charlottenewsvt.org

Subscription Information

The Charlotte News is delivered at no cost to all Charlotte residences. Subscriptions are available for first-class delivery at \$60 per calendar year.
Want a subscription? Subscribe on our website, charlottenewsvt.org

Postmaster/Send address changes to:

The Charlotte News, P.O. Box 251,
Charlotte, VT 05445 Telephone: 802-425-4949
Circulation: 2,100

Copyright © 2025 TCN, Inc., dba The Charlotte News.
Member of the New England Newspaper and Press Association, LION Publishers, Institute for Nonprofit News and the Vermont Press Association.

Support local
nonprofit
reporting.
Donate Today!



The Charlotte News

JOIN OUR
EMAIL LIST
AND GET
THE LATEST
TOWN NEWS
WHEN IT
HAPPENS!

SIGN UP ON
OUR WEBSITE

www.CharlotteNewsVT.org

PARADE

Continued from page 1

lunch. He fired up his 1947 Ferguson tractor to rumble in the procession. He said the tractor was his grandfather’s and he’s kept it in pristine condition since it was passed down to him.

The tractors on display were a spectrum from modern behemoths to vintage classics.

New Yorker Earl Brant, who ferried his tractor across the lake, sported a 1931 Ford Model A which he built himself from the ground up.

He’s been making the trek to East Charlotte every year. His reasoning was simple for his consistent attendance: “It’s fun!”

Dyan Law made her way to Charlotte from Pennsylvania. She travels to Shelburne every year for a family reunion, but it was her first time seeing the parade. She went in blind.

“It’s pretty cool to see all the tractors lined up,” she said.

Around 12:45 p.m., drivers were notified to get their vehicles ready.

A chorus of sputters and whirs blended to one hum of engines as the drivers and passengers settled in.

The parade was on.

Viewers lined either side of Spear Street, snapping their lawn chairs in place and finishing the last dregs of their coffee.

One by one, the tractors made their way onto Spear Street, looping through the town and eventually returning to Green Mountain Hay.

It took 14 minutes for the vehicles to leave the parking lot, but it was not a race. Drivers were focused on enjoying the moment, not speeding to the end.

Neighbors, friends and strangers alike snapped pictures and waved to the drivers as the tractors passed by.

As the parade rumbled down the road, things grew quiet. The sounds of creaking axles and grumbling engines faded. Chattering children and crowing roosters replaced the noise.

The tractor parade was more than a display of machinery. It was a reminder of what many Vermonters believe is the best thing our state has to offer: the people.

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



Photo by Patrick Aber

Tractor drivers parade set off on their route.



Photos by Lee Krohn

Parade goers wait in anticipation of the procession of tractors in front of the Charlotte General Store.



As is usual for this annual celebration of Charlotte’s agrarian roots, the autumn colors provide a beautiful backdrop for the festivities.



Photo by Patrick Aber

A tractor at Green Mountain Hay before the East Charlotte Tractor Parade.



Remember Baker entertain the crowd of farm equipment enthusiasts.



NEXT PUBLICATION DATES

OCT. 30
Copy Deadline:
FRIDAY, OCT. 24

Ad Deadline:
FRIDAY, OCT. 24

NOV. 13
Copy Deadline:
FRIDAY, NOV. 7

Ad Deadline:
FRIDAY, NOV. 7

TO ADVERTISE CONTACT:
ads@thecharlottenews.org

SEND YOUR CHARLOTTE NEWS TO:
news@thecharlottenews.org

Commentary

Together, we'll navigate health care and economic issues

Kesha Ram Hinsdale and Ginny Lyons
Contributors

We write from a place of deep concern and commitment. The coming months will bring real hardship for Vermonters: the loss of Medicare Advantage plans, efforts to roll back federal health care subsidies and the ongoing uncertainty of a federal government shutdown. These are not distant policy debates — they affect people in our towns, our families and our daily lives.

In recent weeks, Vermont Blue Advantage and UnitedHealthcare announced they will no longer offer individual Medicare Advantage plans in Vermont in 2026. This means that, for most if not all Vermonters, Medicare Advantage will no longer be an option.

For those affected, current coverage will continue through Dec. 31, 2025, but new coverage must be chosen between Nov. 1, 2025, and March 4, 2026. Most Vermonters will need to move to traditional Medicare with a Medicare Supplement and a Part D prescription drug plan. Because this is a plan withdrawal — not a voluntary change — you will have guaranteed access to a Medicare Supplement plan without being denied or charged more for preexisting conditions. Please keep your cancellation notice as proof of eligibility for this special enrollment period.

Vermont's Area Agencies on Aging and the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) offer free, confidential counseling to help Vermonters review options and enroll in

new coverage. You can reach SHIP at 1-800-642-5119 or call 1-800-MEDICARE for assistance.

At the same time, many Vermonters who work for the federal government face uncertainty due to the potential shutdown. Federal employees who are furloughed or deemed “non-essential” may apply for Unemployment Insurance benefits starting the first day of the shutdown by calling 1-877-214-3330. They have two weeks from the start of the shutdown to file. More information is available at labor.vermont.gov and balint.house.gov/governmentshutdown.

We know the weight of these changes can feel overwhelming. But Vermonters have always met hard times with compassion and solidarity. If you or a neighbor are struggling,

please reach out.

You can contact either of us — Senators Kesha Ram Hinsdale and Ginny Lyons — with questions or concerns. We are also working closely with Vermont's federal delegation — Senator Bernie Sanders, Senator Peter Welch and Congresswoman Becca Balint — to protect Vermonters' health care, support our workforce and strengthen the safety net that keeps our communities whole.

We are fighting every day for you. We can't control what happens in Washington, but we can make sure that here in Vermont, no one faces these challenges alone.

(Kesha Ram Hinsdale and Ginny Lyons are members of the Vermont State Senate from Chittenden County.)

Second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides impact wildlife

Sharon Mount
Contributor

Rodents such as rats and mice are common pests that can damage property, contaminate food and spread disease. To manage these pests, rodenticides — poisons designed to kill rodents — are often used. One particularly potent class of rodenticides is second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides, or SGARs. While effective at killing rodents, second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides

pose serious risks to Vermont's wildlife and ecosystems.

What are second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides?

Second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides are rodenticides that prevent blood from clotting, causing internal bleeding and eventual death. These poisons are designed to be lethal after just one feeding, making them more potent than earlier rodenticides.

However, rodents may live for several days before dying, increasing the risk of exposure to other animals. Common second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides include brodifacoum, difenacoum, bromadiolone and difethialone. These are often used in bait stations around homes, farms and businesses.

How do second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides harm wildlife?

Secondary poisoning occurs when predators and scavengers, such as bald eagles, barred owls, red-tailed hawks, foxes and raccoons, consume poisoned rodents. In Vermont, these species are vital to maintaining ecological balance. Wildlife may also consume bait directly, especially in areas where bait stations are not properly secured. Second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides can remain in an animal's liver and tissues for weeks or months, meaning even small exposures can accumulate and cause serious harm.

Why is this a concern for Vermont communities?

Second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides poisoning affects more than just rodents; it disrupts entire ecosystems. Birds of prey, which naturally help control rodent populations, are especially vulnerable. Vermont has only recently seen the recovery of bald eagles, which were removed from the endangered species list. Sadly, second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides have been linked to eagle deaths. Pets and children are also at risk if they accidentally ingest bait.

What can Vermont communities do?

- Avoid second-generation anticoagulant

rodenticides. These products are banned for direct sale to consumers but are still available online and used by commercial pest control services. Ask pest control providers if they use second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides and request alternatives.

- Use safer alternatives. Unfortunately, neurotoxin rodenticides such as bromethalin have recently been shown to bioaccumulate in birds of prey (Murray, Environmental Pollution, Vol. 333, 2023), although there is less experimental data available as compared to second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides on the impact of neurotoxins on wildlife. Hence, if possible, consider physical traps which are effective and far less harmful to non-target species.

- Support local conservation efforts. Organizations like Audubon Vermont, Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department and Vermont Natural Resources Council work to protect birds and other wildlife. Support their efforts and share information about second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides with your community.

- Advocate for policy change. Some states have already restricted or banned second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides. Vermont residents can push for stronger regulations to protect our environment and wildlife.

Charlotte's strong connection to nature through hiking, birdwatching, farming and outdoor recreation makes this issue particularly urgent. The health of our forests, fields and waterways depends on protecting native wildlife from toxic exposure.

Let Her Sparkle In Tea!



54 FALLS ROAD | MON-FRI 10-5, SAT-SUN 10-4 7 | 802-985-3221



Reach your customers by advertising with us!

Find out what we can do for you.

Contact ads@TheCharlotteNews.org

SAILING

Continued from page 1

for the cost to stay at \$1,500 a year.

Rumors have been swirling that the Charlotte Sailing Center is being sold, and he said that is not true, that he has no interest in selling to a private equity, like so many others have done.

Until the lease ended on Oct. 1, the Charlotte Sailing Center had been managed by Andy O’Brien and family. Pecor said one of the main reasons he terminated the lease was because he didn’t like the way the property was maintained.

“It bugged me to death to drive by a junkyard, and that’s the way it looked to me,” said Pecor, who lives in Charlotte.

Although he declined to criticize the former manager of the sailing center by name, Pecor did say another problem was that the “prior operators stopped paying rent a long time ago.”

Several people, who have kept their boats at the Charlotte Sailing Center, have talked during the past couple of months about how hard it was to get in touch with O’Brien, but all of them agreed he was extremely engaging and helpful when they did. Phone calls and emails to O’Brien from the newspaper have not been returned.

One issue that contributes to the unkempt appearance of the sailing center is the large number of abandoned boats or boats that have not been tended to in a long time.

Russell Fox, who is marine

superintendent for Lake Champlain Transportation, has been working on determining which boats have been abandoned. He put signs on boats that might have been abandoned. After the meeting, Fox was happy to hear from at least one boat owner whose boat had been tagged but who plans to tend to it this year.

Fox said it is a long and complicated process to seize a boat, so the company would like to find another way to get those boats off the property or cared for.

Charlotte Sailing Center will be the fourth marina Lake Champlain Transportation manages. When the company took over the Valcour Island Marina in Plattsburgh, N.Y., Fox said they removed 25,000 old tires. So, cleaning up a marina is something the company has experience in doing. He said that marina was in much worse shape than the Charlotte Sailing Center.

“I’ve been told many times that the Charlotte Sailing Center is an affordable way for people to get on the lake, and I respect that,” Pecor said.

The sailing center has been a DIY place where sailors can moor their boats and work on them, too. He said he doesn’t plan to change that. He doesn’t plan to offer the amenities that other more expensive marinas offer.

“What we’re not trying to be is the marina south of us. We don’t need showers; we don’t need filet mignon. We just like to be able to get out on the boat and sail,” Pecor said.

Ferry fog



Photo by Claudia Pfaff

The Essex ferry approaches the Charlotte side on a chilly Friday morning, which is making clouds coming off the lake.

Commentary

Either regulate social media or further enrich technocrats

Bill Schubart
Contributor

Knife-making began in the paleolithic era (35,000-10,000 BCE) from animal bone and obsidian. Through the millennia, the evolution of one of man’s earliest tools became more sophisticated as flint and polished stone came into use. In the neolithic period, metallurgy emerged in the Middle East among the Chaldeans and knives became a vital tool for hunter-gatherers.

As in the emergence of all tools, humankind has found both good and evil uses for them. A knife can be used to slice bread, to hunt or to kill another person and steal their worldly goods.

Around 1000 AD, primitive “guns” appeared. By 1300, they had a metal barrel and, using gunpowder, could fire a projectile into an animal or a human being.

I first fired a gun at summer camp when I was 8. Riflery and archery were part of the camp curriculum. I still have the National Rifle Association medals I earned. For my 10th birthday, my parents gave me a Winchester .22 long rifle. The first time I used the gun I shot a squirrel. It was the last time I killed anything.

In 2024, New York State Attorney James Letitia James (yes, the same) found the NRA’s director Wayne LaPierre and his cronies guilty of financial misconduct

and fined the organization \$6.35 million. Meanwhile, for the third straight year, firearms killed more children and teens, ages 1 to 17, than any other cause including car crashes and cancer.

As technology has advanced, humankind has developed more complex tools to ease the work of survival, but few have the capacity for death and destruction that firearms have. Civilized communities develop laws to prevent using them for criminal purposes, to reduce crime and to enhance the common good.

But meanwhile, we’ve developed more complex tools to ease or complicate the work of survival. I’ll spare you the emergence of electricity, cars, planes, phones, nuclear power and, for the time being, will ignore artificial intelligence (AI).

But let’s turn to one of the most powerful tools technologists have evolved to date, social media. It emerged in the mid-late ‘90s and bloomed in the first five years of the new millennium with Myspace, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

By 2015, with the emergence of smartphones, studies showed users were spending some four hours a day staring at a phone. By 2023, some 60 percent of the world, almost 4 billion people, were using social media.

Many of my friends use social media as a tool that supports family and community

adhesion, sharing news, ideas and images of births, weddings, deaths and other details of family life. I get it. I see the value. But I am loath to use a tool that offers little privacy, shares my personal interests and information for profit and is used by pedophiles to groom young children. I was taught that “we are known by the company we keep.”

Watching the evolution of social media, I made a decision in 2022 to sign off. This is generally considered suicidal for an author with nine books on the market. Instead, I use old tools and go the extra mile to visit, write or call a friend or family member. When I just need to escape the daily chaos, I sit near the sounds of a nearby running brook or on a beach and stare at blue water, or I have coffee with a friend or just look at a photo of a loved one.

Social media’s impact is invasive. Within minutes of the assassination of Charlie Kirk, millions of adults and children watched his killing. According to the American College of Pediatricians, a survey in 2023 said U.S. porn revenue exceeded \$13 billion and \$100 billion globally. A Benenson Strategy Group survey of 1,358 teenagers in 2022 found that the average age of pornography exposure was 12 years old. Fifty-eight percent of teens reported they’d seen pornography online. One third of students said they had seen pornography on social media apps. A total of 73 percent of teens affirmed that they

consumed pornography and 67 percent of the girls said that they intentionally sought out pornography. Fifty-two percent said they had seen violent or aggressive behavior in online pornography.

Although it took a while for this lapsed Catholic to get there, I have no judgments about what mutually consenting adults choose to do with one another in private. But children and physically and mentally vulnerable adults are a different matter. They deserve protection in law, in religions and within families.

Which brings us to the overarching problem: rampant corruption, wherein big tech and social media firms lobby Congress and legislatures against any effort to tax or regulate them.

As to market potential, as of 2025, there are an estimated 5.24 billion social media users worldwide (64 percent of the world’s population) with gross sales revenue expected to reach over \$252 billion in 2026.

As to lobbying, Meta (Facebook, Instagram) alone has spent \$13,760,000 so far just this year. While combined, Meta, Alphabet (Google, YouTube), Microsoft, ByteDance (TikTok), X (Twitter) and Snap (Snapchat) spent \$61.5 million lobbying Congress in 2024 — an increase of nearly 13 percent compared to 2023. Together, these

SOCIAL MEDIA continued on page 7

Around Town

Congratulations

Beth Humstone of Charlotte was awarded the Arthur Gibb Award for Sustainable Community Leadership on Tuesday, Sept. 30.

Every year, the Vermont Natural Resource Council recognizes an individual for their work in building healthy, equitable and sustainable communities with the Arthur Gibb Award for Sustainable Community Leadership.

According to a release, Gibb dedicated much of his life to ensuring that Vermont was a better place for future generations.

The award was presented to Humstone at the Vermont Natural Resource Council's annual celebration.

Humstone was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., but moved to the Green Mountain State to pursue her career in community planning after receiving a master's degree in city planning from Harvard University. She has worked as an urban planning consultant for 47 years and held roles as a land-use planner for the state, member of the Burlington Planning Commission, co-founder of the Vermont Forum on Sprawl and president of Smart Growth Vermont, to name a few.

Tim Volk of Charlotte has been appointed vice president of the board of Generator Makerspace in Burlington.

Newly appointed board president Bianca Roa and Volk will lead Generator's board of directors as the organization continues to foster entrepreneurship, innovation and creative problem-solving through accessible maker resources and educational programming, according to a release.

"Whether you are a curious young mind, a lifelong learner, a business on the cusp of a breakthrough or anywhere in-between, Generator offers a safe space to collaborate

and explore," said Roa. "It is a privilege to lift up this work alongside Tim, the rest of the board and the Generator staff."

Generator Makerspace is a community-based nonprofit that supports entrepreneurs, innovators and makers through accessible tools, resources and education. It provides space, equipment and a collaborative community to help transform ideas into reality, the release said.

Volk brings more than 30 years of consumer marketing and business leadership experience. He served as partner and president of Kelliher Samets Volk (now KSV) for 25 years and serves on the boards of the Northern Forest Center and Virtual Peaker, among others. Volk has also served as board member and chair for nonprofits including the Vermont Business Roundtable and the Vermont Community Foundation.

Champlain College awarded its 2025 Distinguished Citizen Award to **Lindsay DesLauriers**, president of Bolton Valley Resort.

As a member of the family that founded Bolton Valley, she returned to the resort in 2017 and has since led its revitalization, transforming it into a four-season resort.

In addition to her work at Bolton Valley, DesLauriers has been active in state policy and community initiatives, including serving as a former state director for the Main Street Alliance of Vermont, where she advocated on behalf of small businesses. She has also been a strong voice for working families, helping to shape the conversations around paid family leave and workplace equity.



Tim Volk



Lindsay DesLauriers

SOCIAL MEDIA

Continued from page 6

six companies employed nearly 300 lobbyists in 2024 — or one for every two members of Congress.

If technocrats are allowed to bribe Congress and legislatures not to regulate or tax social media to prevent this tool from damaging social and ethical norms, what will that mean for the future as mega tools like artificial intelligence (AI) are deployed to further enrich them? Big tech and social media firms are already paying astral sums to attract AI professionals. Bloomberg reports that OpenAI is now the world's most valuable privately held start-up. Previously vested employees managed to sell \$6.6 billion worth of their stock for \$500 billion, a level that surpasses the entire value of SpaceX at \$400 billion.

The sad excuse for dropping content moderation of social media posts and evading regulation is "freedom of speech." Meta has dropped fact-checkers and will "dramatically reduce the amount of censorship" using free-speech as its rationale.

Left free to simply harvest billions in profits from this new tool, and others yet to emerge, it's clear we have chosen to

accelerate the accretion of wealth over the wellbeing of future generations.

Jean M. Twenge, a professor of psychology at San Diego State University and the author of "10 Rules for Raising Kids in a High-Tech World," makes clear that, "there's no substitute for legislation that requires tech companies to take the lead in verifying their users' ages." She continues, "Lately I've been coming around to one conclusion that might seem obvious decades from now: America can have social media or we can have a healthy democracy — but it might have been foolish to think we could have both for long."

As long as wealth trumps social good, our decline will only accelerate. To survive our inventions and protect our most vulnerable, we must understand their potential for good and evil and be willing to create law that prevents their use to cause harm and to further enrich the top 0.1 percent of American families which in the fourth quarter of 2024 held 22.7 percent of the nation's wealth, while the bottom half held 4.21 percent.

Our future generations will hold us accountable if we can't account for ourselves.

Letter to the Editor

Discrimination incidents threaten state's welcoming image

To the Editor:

Vermont is seeing increasing reports of racial and other discriminatory incidents in our schools, town halls and workplaces. It appears Vermont is not entirely insulated from the national trend of rising incivility and decreasing empathy and that our reputation as one of the most inclusive, welcoming states is facing challenges from within.

"Is this the direction we want for our state? The Vermont Declaration of Inclusion Initiative believes we can do better," said Bob Harnish, its founder. "We are using this important moment to step up our support to actively partner with towns to ensure they can successfully meet their community goals."

Ideas for implementation for Declaration of Inclusion towns:

- Welcome and connect newcomers. Launch a concierge program and organize social events (potlucks, receptions) in collaboration with community groups to welcome and connect new residents.
- Promote diverse culture and learning. Sponsor educational events (films, speakers, exhibitions) through libraries.
- Communicate and display. Publicize the declaration across the town website, newsletter, annual report and physical display in the town office.

In addition, the initiative is delighted to announce that Marsha Cassel of Rutland Town has joined our group to lead

implementation efforts. Cassel is a dedicated Vermont educator and family mediator. She holds degrees from Middlebury College, the University of Vermont and Champlain College (master's in mediation). She spent 25 years as an award-winning, public-school teacher of multiple subjects, including French, Spanish, civics and global studies, earning recognition as a Rowland Foundation Fellow in 2014 and the 2017 Vermont Humanities Educator of the Year.

"I am committed to social justice, community understanding and civil dialogue," said Cassel. "I am eager to start working with our communities so that we provide welcoming spaces for newcomers to meet neighbors, build relationships and become active participants in the community."

To date, 164 towns and cities, home to more than 80 percent of the population, have adopted the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion. It is supported by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, Vermont League of Cities and Towns, and the Vermont Council on Rural Development.

Additional information on the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion may be found at vtdeclarationofinclusion.org. This website is generously furnished by and maintained by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce.

If you have more questions, email Bob Harnish, Vermont Declaration of Inclusion, at rharnish24@gmail.com.

Barbara Noyes Pulling
Rutland

Education

Charlotte Central School tradition: the carnation ceremony

Naomi Strada
(Summarized by Tom Scatchard)

On Friday, Oct. 3, the Charlotte Central School community gathered for one of the school’s most cherished traditions — the carnation ceremony.

Each fall, eighth graders present carnations to kindergartners as a way of welcoming them into the school community. In June, the kindergartners will return the gesture to those same eighth graders as they prepare to graduate and head off to high school.

The student speakers captured this spirit so well. The first speaker welcomed families and caregivers, sharing her excitement about passing on this tradition. One student spoke about the meaning of the ceremony and how it connects the oldest and youngest learners across generations. Another speaker added his own reflections, reassuring new students that while eighth graders may look intimidating, they remember what it felt like to be small and are here to support the kindergartners on their journey.

The Carnation Ceremony is more than a moment of welcome; it is a symbol of who Charlotte Central

School is: a community of learners who care for themselves, care for each other and grow together in kindness.

Student focus groups

As part of Champlain Valley School District’s focus on co-creating engaging student experience, a team of administrators and curriculum leaders toured classrooms in every school across the district the week of Sept. 29.

The planning team hosted 15 focus groups that welcomed more than 100 students. They explored everything from how and where students see connections in their learning to one thing students might change about school to make it better match who they are and what they need.

This work was just one step on our journey to co-create actions that channel energy, creativity and resources where they matter most, including to honor identity, foster connection, build proficiency and inspire direction across the school district.

SPARK clubs

While Spanish Clubs have been happening for weeks, session 1 of the larger after-school SPARK Clubs program began the week of Sept. 29,

engaging students across many grade levels in Spanish language and culture, jazz and ballet dancing, knitting, sewing and MathCounts.

The students were not only exploring something they cared about, but also building new skills and relationships with peers and adults they might not otherwise connect with. That combination — choice, curiosity and connection — is what makes SPARK truly spark.

Programs like SPARK are one way Charlotte Central School is living out the Champlain Valley School District pillars of engagement. Students are growing their identity by discovering new interests; building connection through shared experiences; developing proficiency as they practice and create; and finding direction as they explore what excites them most.

A special shout-out to the activities director, club leaders and assistants who have stepped forward to run or support these after-school SPARK clubs: Nicky Elderton, Caroline Homan, Alyssa Jones, Ainaka Luna, Rachael Miller, Bernice Murray, Zach Pichette and Mary Tierney.



Courtesy photo
Eighth grade and kindergarten students at Charlotte Central School’s annual Carnation Ceremony.

Drought woes



Photo by Robert Caldwell

The continuing drought has left the dock at the Shelburne fish and wildlife boat access high and dry.

Dragonheart Vermont donates \$25,000 to cancer efforts

Shannon Cunniff
Contributor

Dragonheart Vermont awarded \$25,000 to Sail Beyond Cancer Vermont from the proceeds of its 2025 Lake Champlain Dragon Boat Festival. This donation will support Sail Beyond Cancer’s mission of honoring those facing a cancer diagnosis by offering meaningful sailing experiences on Lake Champlain.

In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Dragonheart Vermont is also pleased to announce a variety of community partnership initiatives that facilitate giving:

- Waterworks, Winooski — For each glass of rosé purchased on any Friday evening in October, \$1 will be donated to Dragonheart Vermont.
- May Day, Burlington — On Oct. 15, May Day will donate 10 percent of proceeds to Dragonheart Vermont in support of programming for breast cancer survivors.
- During October, Solmate Socks will donate 50 percent of all purchases made

through the following solmatesocks.com/pages/dhvt to Dragonheart Vermont. Additionally, sales of Solmate’s newly redesigned Alpen Rose sock will benefit Dragonheart Vermont throughout the year.

- The police and fire departments of Killington will be selling pink versions of their official patches, and the proceeds will be donated to Dragonheart Vermont.

- Align Cycling will host three Breast Cancer Power Hours to Cycle for Charity on Oct. 25. Participants are invited to support Dragonheart Vermont by registering and joining this health-focused fundraiser. Costumes and bike décor encouraged. For more information, contact info@AlignCycling.com or visit aligncycling.com.

Dragonheart Vermont is a nonprofit dragon boat organization committed to strengthening and empowering breast cancer survivors and the greater community through the sport of dragon boating. Over the past 19 years, Dragonheart has given more than \$1.17 million back to cancer-related organizations across Vermont. For more information, visit dragonheartvermont.org.

Sports

Leaf Peepers races, foliage attract runners near and far

Sarah Andrews
Community News Service

On Sunday, anxious runners stretched in the parking lot while friends and families set up chairs on the historic Vermont State Office Complex, awaiting the beginning of the annual Leaf Peepers Half-Marathon and 5k race.

About 500 runners of all ages made their way to the starting line at 9 a.m., just as the sun was beginning to beam down for an unseasonably warm October day.

The group Central Vermont Runners organizes the race, which has been a New England tradition since 1984. The half-marathon course has stayed mostly the same for over 40 years. It begins on Horseshoe Drive, travels along Route 100 in Waterbury to River Road in Duxbury and crosses the Winooski Street bridge into Randall Meadow, ending back where it began.

This is the 41st running of the race (they skipped 2020 because of COVID). Race director Will Robens says it’s the biggest race that Central Vermont Runners puts on every year.

In four decades of racing, the Leaf Peepers half-marathon has gained some loyal supporters.

“There’s people that have been running it since the beginning,” Robens said.



Photos by Sarah Andrews
A runner crosses a bridge among fall foliage during the Leaf Peepers race.

It’s not just Vermonters. The Leaf Peepers race draws in runners from all over to see Vermont’s scenery during peak foliage.

Marcia Andresen and Cody Andresen-

Otten came up from Florida for the 5k race. The mother and son pair are trying to run a race in all 50 states. Vermont is number 47. These races are a fun challenge for the pair.

“It’s nice. We can do our own thing,”

Andresen-Otten said.

Amanda Whitaker from New York has raced in all seven of the World Marathon Majors in Tokyo, Boston, London, Sydney, Berlin, Chicago and New York. She crossed the finish line in Sydney in August and says that Vermont brings a welcome change of pace.

“It’s leaf peeping, I can just relax and enjoy it,” Whitaker said.

Among the 5K racers was 6-year-old Marley Ndione of Montpelier, who danced across the finish line.

“He’s run a lot of races with me. He loves them,” said Mohamaduou Ndione, Marley’s father.

The winner of the half-marathon was Waitsfield’s David Sinclair, who completed the 13.1 miles in 1 hour and 7 minutes. Sinclair is an ultra-runner, and he usually runs long-distance trail races.

“It’s a beautiful day and you have peak foliage,” said Sinclair. “I was running a little too hard to take it all in.”

Neal Graves of Waterbury was first to cross the finish line in the 5K, completing that course with a time of 17:40.8.

Full results from both races are online at leafpeepershalfmarathon.org.

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

Sports

CVU football record 2-4 after losses to Essex, Colchester

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

In many ways in every sporting contest, the mental game is the game. So much of winning or losing depends on belief.

“If” is such a big word. Two letters seem insufficient for a word packed with so much meaning.

In his poem “If,” Rudyard Kipling addressed the vagaries of belief:

“If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you.”

Later in the poem, he digs into the necessity of continuing to believe even when there doesn’t seem to be any reason to keep on believing:

“If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone.
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the will which says to them: ‘Hold on!’”

The coaches of the Champlain Valley Union football team would certainly be thrilled if they could unlock the power of belief in their players. The young Redhawks have been as skilled and strong as any of the teams they’ve faced this year, but last year’s older and more experienced team had something this year’s team is still looking for a way to grab and hold onto — the belief that they can win no matter how the previous play went or what the score is.

Essex 37, CVU 7

Head coach Frank Parisi said, after the Redhawks’ contest with Essex on Saturday, Oct. 4, at CVU, that his team was in the struggle for the first quarter, in fact for most of the first half, but then the mental game, or lack thereof, took over, and the visiting Hornets ran away with a decisive win.

“There’s great spots, but it’s just like, it’s good, good, good — breakdown — good, good, good — breakdown. So, it just continues to be the breakdowns that are killing us,” Parisi said. “But there’s some



Photo by Calvin Morse

CVU’s Ryan Wood makes a tackle against Colchester on Oct. 11.

bright spots.”

About five minutes into the game, the Hornets’ Aiden Iverson took a pass 28 yards for the game’s first score.

CVU played stout defense for the rest of the first quarter and into the beginning of the second. With 10:32 left in the first half, the Redhawks snagged an interception. A couple of plays later John Saladino ran it in from one yard out to tie the game at 7-7.

However, Griffin Randall caught a pass and scampered 59 yards for another Essex touchdown.

Down 14-7, the Redhawks seemed to lose their self-confidence or swagger or mojo or will or — whatever you call it, they didn’t appear to believe that they could win.

Essex began to dominate on both offense and defense. Although Saladino continued to run strong, no longer were there any holes in the Hornets’ defensive line for even the strongest or slipperiest of running backs to get through.

With 22 seconds left in the half, Iverson

kicked a short field goal attempt to make it 17-7.

Five and a half minutes into the second half, the Hornets’ Adam Bent intercepted a CVU pass. Then, from under center, he lofted a 65-yard scoring pass to Iverson to make it 24-7 and effectively put the game out of reach of the Redhawks.

With 11:35 left in the fourth quarter, Essex scored again. Less than two minutes later the Hornets scored another touchdown, but CVU blocked the extra point to make the final score 37-7. It was the Hornets’ first win over the Redhawks since 2021.

Parisi said he was happiest about Saladino’s running and how the offensive line was opening holes for him during the first quarter.

“We ran right down the field on them,” he said. But then his team got tired or psyched out for the rest of the game.

Colchester 20, CVU 7

The Redhawks suffered another loss at home against Colchester on Saturday, Oct. 11.

It was a defensive battle for the first quarter and into the second until the Lakers’ Jacob Robare took a pass from Colton Lefebvre 70 yards at the 9:35 mark to the end zone to give Colchester a 7-0 lead.

The rest of the second quarter belonged to the visitors. The Lakers scored two more touchdowns but missed an extra point with less than a minute left in the first half to go up 20-0.

Brody Coppins ran it in from just a few yards out at the 4:03 mark and Robare scored on a quarterback sneak just before the end of the half. And that was all the scoring for the Lakers in this game.

Just before the Lakers’ final score, Saladino injured his leg on an illegal tackle and had to sit out of the game.

The second half returned to a defensive struggle with the only scoring coming from CVU when Jacob Barrett took a pass for 22-yard score with less than 2 minutes left in the game.

In the first half, the majority of CVU’s offense had been Saladino carrying the ball. Although the Redhawks’ blocking did not open many significant holes for him to gain much ground, there was optimism on the sideline that it was just a matter of time until he broke loose. A defense can only take so much of Saladino’s punishing running before it’s worn out.

After the game Parisi took some measure of reassurance in his team’s performance in the second half.

“We held them to zero in the second half,” the CVU coach said. “We won the second half 7-0. That’s a positive.”

For the Redhawks, Blake Companion finished with eight catches for 70 yards and Alex Jovell with seven catches for 51 yards, while quarterback Ian Kennelly passed for 168 yards.

Champlain Valley’s last two games are away, at St. Johnsbury at 7 p.m., this Friday, Oct. 17, and at Burr & Burton, 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 24.

After the loss to Colchester, CVU’s record stood at 2-4, but the playoffs start with all the teams at 0-0, so anything is possible for those who believe.



Photo by Al Frey

John Saladino had 22 carries for 86 yards and scored the Redhawks’ lone touchdown against Essex on Oct. 4.

In the Outdoors

Wonders to be seen close to home and not too far away

Elizabeth Bassett
Contributor

Very close to home, on my Muck boots beside the back door, a praying mantis perched not long ago. It was intent and did not flinch when I clicked several close ups. A few days later, I slipped into my boots and found a large glob between them. Not wanting to disturb it, I waddled to the garden. I wondered if this was a butterfly chrysalis before remembering the praying mantis. I realized that I knew nothing about its life cycle. So, I looked it up.

Some praying mantises are capable of parthenogenesis where an embryo develops from an unfertilized egg. Females lay dozens to several hundred eggs that they then encase in a protein-rich foam. This egg case, called an ootheca, hardens to protect the eggs over the winter. When the egg case is hard, I'll remove it to a safe place in the garden. Come spring, I hope to see a brigade of tiny praying mantises emerge.

A bit farther from home at The Nature Conservancy's Raven Ridge Natural Area, the vernal pool that we monitor has dried out for the first time in the seven years we have been observing it. Data from our submerged thermometer will be analyzed by the Vermont Center for Ecostudies and will tell us when the last water evaporated. According to VCE, ours is not the only vernal pool that went dry for the first time this summer. We will find out next spring what effect this has on our breeding population of wood frogs and salamanders. Even farther afield, I found myself in



Photos by Elizabeth Bassett

A granite memorial in Barre's Hope Cemetery, carved into a clapboard farmhouse, commemorates a family buried there.

Barre recently. I can never resist a visit to Hope Cemetery, a well-maintained treasure trove of granite memorials. With each walk there I find a monument that I've never seen before.

This time I spotted a massive chunk of stone carved into a clapboard farmhouse, complete with shingled roof, double-hung windows and front porch. A slab in the ground, like a welcome mat at the base of the front steps, announces the name of the



A praying mantis poses for its photo.

family buried here.

During the pandemic, when indoor gatherings were discouraged, I met my mother at Hope Cemetery for an outing. A new memorial had appeared since my previous visit, one of the world's few monuments to the 1918 Flu Epidemic. Installed in 2018, the five-ton granite bench is a gift of Brian and Karen Zecchinelli, owners of the nearby Wayside restaurant. The beloved eatery opened one hundred years earlier, just a few months before influenza tore through Barre killing nearly 200 people.

The New York Times reported, "One of the dead was Mr. Zecchinelli's grandfather, Germinio, an Italian immigrant who worked as a craftsman in a local granite factory, one of many in a town that still bills itself as the granite capital of the world."

Zecchinelli knew little about his grandfather's life, which lasted just 35 years, so he spent months researching his death. He quickly became fascinated not just by the flu, but by its near total disappearance from our collective memory. Over the course of three years, 50



An egg case appeared a few days after the praying mantis sighting.

million died across the world, among them 675,000 Americans. The inscription (vermonter.com/hope-cemetery) on the granite bench reads, "1918 Spanish Flu Memorial." Chiseled on the back, "Over 50 million deaths worldwide."

My late-September exploration coincided with the first rainy day in months, so I tarried a bit longer in Barre. Until it closes for the season at the end of October, the Vermont Granite Museum hosts a special exhibit, Fracture Point, focused on the dangers of stone-carving work. Silicosis, tuberculosis and accidents took a high toll on workers whose cutting and carving was done in the outdoors.

The first indoor workspace was built in 1895 and is home to the museum. Exhibits in the vast 28,000 square-foot granite shed include tools large and small, archival photos, plaster models of monuments, maps of granite deposits across the region and shows by local stone carvers. The museum also hosts resident stone-carving artists.

A great way to pass a rainy day! Happy lingering fall.

Advertise Your Business in
The Charlotte News

Contact ads@TheCharlotteNews.org

Celebrate!

Share your loved one's milestone
with an ad in The Charlotte News
for only \$49.

Go to charlottenewsvt.org/advertise and
select "Advertise a Celebration"

Contact ads@thecharlottenews.org
with any questions.



Outdoors

How Vermonters are tracking the state's largest trees

Maeve Fairfax
Community News Service

Gwen Kozlowski is an expert at measuring the biggest trees in the state.

She calculates their big tree points: circumference in inches plus height in feet plus a quarter of the average crown spread in feet.

The Vermont Big Tree Program maintains a list of all champion trees in the state, a record of the largest known tree of each species. Vermont's largest tree, a cottonwood in Colchester, has 447.63 big tree points.

Arborist and Milton tree warden Kris Dulmer said that though champion status doesn't protect the trees, the list gets people excited about them.

"Everyone likes a big tree," he said.

This particularly applies to landowners who discover they have a big tree on their land.

"They tend to get excited and a little protective of the tree, and they start to see it in a different light," Dulmer said. "They have a little further appreciation for their trees."

The list was started in 1972 by former Castleton professor Jeff Freeman. Initially, county foresters provided many of the nominations for big trees, sometimes unofficially competing to see who could find the most, said Kozlowski.

The list went dormant in 2003 but was resurrected in 2021 by the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program.

During the COVID lockdown, Kozlowski attempted to find the 145 trees on the original list. Often, the only records were old forester notes which sometimes didn't even provide an address, she said. In the end, she tracked down about 70 of the original trees.

There are currently 91 champions on the list, as well as a list of vacant species the program hopes to eventually fill.

The list is stored in an ArcGIS database, including a map and photographs of each tree. Many of the champions are on private land and cannot be visited, but there are directions provided to the ones that are on public land.

Anyone can nominate a big tree. When Kozlowski receives a nomination, she schedules a time to go out and measure the tree, or if it is far away, enlists help from another forester.

The national list of champion trees uses the same formula. Vermont boasts two trees on the federal list: a staghorn sumac in Grand Isle County and a roundleaf serviceberry in Rutland County.

The sumac was found by Dulmer. He drove by the tree for several years before talking to the landowner, and then nominated it to the list.

"I measured it up and compared it to the national record, and it blew the national record away," he said.

Dulmer has found and nominated over ten trees on the state list.

"Anywhere I go, I'm always looking at trees, period. So if I'm driving, I'm looking. If I'm walking, I'm looking. So it's just a passive process for me," he said. "As I pass any tree, it's kind of in the back of my mind, 'Is it a big tree?'"

His interest doesn't just lie with the huge trees.

"My favorite niche part of the list is nominating big-little trees," or the largest specimen of a tree species that doesn't get very big, he said.

Dulmer is able to recognize these big-little trees because he knows the average size of Vermont's tree species.

"They often get overlooked," he said.

His favorite big tree finds are the champion black locust, green ash and alternate-leafed dogwood. Dulmer's job largely involves treating ash trees to protect them from the invasive emerald ashborer, whose larvae kill ash trees. He found the champion green ash tree while driving.

A program through ArborJet allows landowners to get historically significant trees treated for free. With this program in mind, Dulmer tracked down the farmer who owned the tree, Jed Ladd, to see if he could help get it treated.

Jed is a fifth-generation dairy farmer from Alburgh and cares a lot about that tree.

"I just always liked that tree and watched it from a little kid riding my bicycle, till now," he said.

It is in one of his pastures, and his cows often use it for shade.

He's been measuring it for a while and said that it grew about a foot in circumference in a roughly 10-year period.

"Just the size of it has always amazed me," said Ladd.

When Dulmer got in contact with Ladd and went to look at the tree, he saw ashborers on it. It was going to be another two or three months before it could be treated through the program, according to Ladd.

"My wife and I decided to treat it just to save it," he said. "Kris thought at that point it wasn't going to make it if we waited another three months."

This was about two years ago. The tree has



Photo courtesy Jed Ladd

The champion green ash tree in Alburgh.

a few dead branches but came away largely unscathed.

"It looks beautiful this year, has nice, dark green, thick foliage, so the tree is well on its way to fully recovering," said Dulmer.

Kozlowski said that, in essence, the Vermont Big Tree Program is really about trees and people.

"It's really about the stories and the connections that people have with them," she said.

You can see Charlotte's largest trees on the link to the Hamilton Champion Tree Roster here: <https://tinyurl.com/bdtc64s6>.

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



**Reach your
customers by
advertising with us!**

**Find out what
we can do for you.**

Contact ads@TheCharlotteNews.org

Arts & Entertainment

Norman Rockwells find new home at Shelburne Museum

Marie Spaeth
Community News Service

Shelburne Museum Curator Carolyn Bauer sat down recently to talk about the lasting impact of Norman Rockwell’s work and the excitement the new acquisitions are generating at the museum.

Rockwell (1894-1978) lived in Arlington from 1939 to 1953 and featured Vermont in some of his most famous art. All three of the works gifted to the museum were commissioned by the Rock of Ages granite quarry and monument maker in Barre. Bauer also shared news about a Rockwell exhibit planned for next year.

Q. How did the museum acquire the three Rockwell paintings?

A. I received a phone call from a group called Polycor Inc., which owns Rock of Ages. They’re out of Canada, and they approached us saying they have these three works at Rock of Ages in Barre, and they’re hoping to find a new home for them, hopefully in Vermont. I visited and saw the works. We chatted about how Shelburne Museum handles being stewards of these works, and they were very happy to give them as gifts, as donations to us.



Photo by Marie Spaeth

Curator Carolyn Bauer stands beside “The Craftsman,” one of Rockwell’s pieces in the Webb Gallery at Shelburne Museum.

Q. Norman Rockwell lived from 1894 to 1978 and remains popular today. Can you tell me a little bit about him as an artist?

A. He’s multi-generational in his reach, even today. During his prolific career, he was well known as an illustrator for the Saturday Evening Post, which was a weekly publication that came to your mailbox. But what is really unique, what we’re excited to constantly explore at Shelburne Museum, is his connection to Vermont, which is really deep in the sense that he became an honorary Vermonter in many ways.

Q. Can you describe the paintings?

A. “Kneeling Girl” (1955) was the first commission Rock of Ages asked Rockwell to create. It is a small adolescent girl who is kneeling near a head marker, a gravestone with daisies in reverence or memoriam to someone else. In “The Craftsman,” (1962) we see a stone engraver creating a head at their factory. Having both the sketch as well as the final work of art helps us understand his

process, looking into his mind of how he approached the painting, what changes he did between the final sketch and the final painting.

Q. How long have the paintings been displayed at the museum?

A. They went on view in May. Public reception has been great. There’s been a lot of excitement around having Rockwells here in Vermont accessible for the public to view.

Q. What would you say makes Norman Rockwell a compelling artist in this day and age?

A. What makes the three paintings special now is understanding the context of placing Rockwell in Vermont, with a Vermont company, for a product that is

important to Vermont: granite. I think what was true for Rockwell back then and continues is the story, the narrative. It’s changed over the years, but you’re still creating and sharing stories around these works, which was the same thing that happened when you would get your Saturday Evening Post in 1934 and have a conversation around the family table.

Q. Which painting is your favorite?

A. I think the sketch for “The Craftsman” (1961-1962). It’s not polished, it’s rough. It’s an artist working. More than that. You get inside his head. You can seize his hand quite definitively through different pencil marks, paint marks that make it feel like a very personal rendition of the work that I’ve grown to really love.

Q. Why do you like curating at Shelburne Museum?

A. You’re constantly working on multiple projects at once, often many years in advance. It’s kind of this revolving door, but it’s exciting. What I love the most about curating is communicating with our visitors to, hopefully, instill not only appreciation in art, but perhaps topics that you learn and think about while in the exhibition that you bring into someone’s life, even if just for a second.

Q. Are there any upcoming exhibits or events you’d like to talk about?

A. Next summer, our exhibition “Norman Rockwell: At Home in Vermont” will open on June 20, 2026 and run through Oct. 25, 2026. We’re going to have fabulous loaned works by Rockwell, as well as his friends from Arlington, Vermont.

For more information visit shelburnemuseum.org.

(Via Community News Service, in partnership with the University of Vermont for Shelburne News.)

Sunset silhoutte



Photo by Elizabeth Hunt

A quintessential autumn sunset seen from Greenbush Road.

Our Local Feast

Hardy autumn greens are a great way to dress up soup

Dorothy Grover-Read
Contributor

From Monday to Monday, last week to this, we’ve gone from 80 degrees and tank tops to killing frost and finding out the heater in your car doesn’t work. Such is New England weather at its most unpredictable.

The leaves are shedding fast, and while we’ve not been offered the most brilliant colors this year because of the drought, the air is crisp and fresh and the smells of autumn are everywhere. My time of year, even though the daylight is disappearing.

Hardy greens are often one of the few things left in our gardens after the frost, and they will stick around at our farm stands and winter CSAs off and on through the cold weather. It’s sad when that weekly shopping and social ritual of the farmers market comes to an end for the season, but the farmers right now are most likely ready to pause and take a breath. They’ve earned the rest.

As much as I love my garden, may I confess that I’m always eager for the frost, to put the garden to bed for the year and not have to think about watering and weeding and harvesting. Now’s the time to stop trying to figure out what to do with all those cherry tomatoes or zucchini. We’ve earned the rest, too.

Kale and Swiss chard are two of my garden staples. Often the first crop we northerners plant out in the early spring, they continue to supply us with greens from spring through frost and often beyond. The more you pick, the more you get and the only time I’ve been without chard was the year the deer broke through the fence one night and chewed the whole row down.

Even then, it grew back quickly.

If you don’t have a garden, tuck some in a large pot or in a flower bed; it’s not picky.

My mother was a great proponent of these vegetables in our garden and on the dinner table. We had to eat our greens, just like Popeye. Her favorites were the chard and spinach, which she often cooked to death by today’s standards.

Chard is a green that you can cook for a long time, and it will retain a lot of flavor, intensifying the broth of any soup or stew. However, the longer you cook it, the more it loses color, and vitamins, which is why I like to cook it as quickly as possible.

I still use my mother’s trick of a squeeze of lemon juice or drizzle of vinegar to brighten them up at the end, and always steamed not boiled.

No matter the green, they are soft and a bit soggy after cooking, so some croutons, dried bread crumbs or crunchy finely minced nuts or seeds add some interest, especially if you’ve served them many days in one week to keep up with the harvest. A sprinkle of Parmesan is also delicious.

Add these greens to many soups and stews. I always include them in my big batch of beans just to add a bit more nutrition, flavor and color as well. This will turn the beans into a full meal.

For this soup, I used Blue House Mushrooms grown right in neighboring Ferrisburgh. It was a lovely variety, shiitake, king and oyster mushrooms, but you can substitute any favorite here, even



Photos by Dorothy Grover-Read
Don't care for kale? Just tear off the tender parts of the leaves, spritz with a bit of oil, season how you like and roast in a 350-degree oven (325 convection) for about 15 minutes. Let cool completely, then enjoy as a crunchy snack.



With the addition of beans, this hearty soup becomes more of a stew, filled with extra protein.

the humble white button which is always available and delicious.

These sturdy greens often have tough stems that cook at different lengths of time from the leaves. Routinely, it’s best to remove the stems and ribs, chop them up for the recipe or save for stock or another use. The leaves cook quickly by themselves.

If you don’t have Swiss chard, simply swap out spinach, kale, beet or other sturdy green. How about collards? We think of them as southern foods, but we routinely find them at our northern farm stands these days.

If you do not have leeks, use a large sweet onion, it will be just as tasty. Use any potato you like. Here I used a mix of odds and ends I had in the larder. No fennel? Substitute celery.

Not only tasty, this is a feel-good soup that warms and nourishes. Hardy greens are a powerhouse of nutrition. They add a variety of vitamins and minerals, including iron and calcium, protein, phytonutrients, fiber, cancer-preventing compounds, heart protection and all with few calories and virtually no fat.

Mother was right, eat your greens!

Autumn mushroom and Swiss chard soup

In a couple of tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil, sauté:

- 1 large leek, diced
- 1 small bulb fennel, diced
- Chopped up stems from a bunch of Swiss chard
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced



Mushrooms, Swiss chard and potatoes combine to make a delightful autumn soup, perfect for enjoying by the fire as days grow shorter and the garden becomes a memory.



Swiss chard is only one of the many hardy and hearty greens that northern gardens enjoy for a long season from earliest spring through late frosts. Look for varieties of many colors for a higher mineral count.

1 teaspoon ground fennel seeds.

Cook until the leek softens and add:

- 8 ounces of mixed mushrooms, rough chopped.
- Season all with salt and pepper and drop in:
- 1 pound of potatoes, cut bite-sized
- 6 cups vegetable stock or water.

Let this simmer until the potatoes are tender, then add the leaves from the chard and let cook just until they are wilted but still have some body. Taste for seasoning, and serve up.

You can garnish with a soft-boiled egg for a bit more protein if you like or toss on some garlic croutons.

Yellow-eyed beans with Swiss chard

A variation on the recipe above. Proceed as above, then simply add a couple of cups of cooked yellow-eyed beans when you add the chard leaves. This is a most hearty dish, delicious served up with biscuits.

Yellow-eyed beans are a New England staple and can be found in most grocery stores or co-ops. They will store for months as dried beans but cook quickly in a pressure cooker or slower stovetop.

Make a big pot and use them in multiple recipes through the week. Cooking beans from dried taste much better than canned and are way cheaper in the long run.

Mom always cooked her beans in her trusty pressure cooker. I use my instant pot which is much easier to control, or the boil and simmer method below.

For the instant pot, heat a tablespoon of olive oil on sauté and add:

- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced.

Once the vegetables are soft, add:

- 1 lb. yellow-eyed beans
- 1 1/2 quarts water
- 1 1/2 teaspoon of salt.

Cook at high pressure for 30 minutes and let naturally release.

If you don’t have a pressure cooker, first, soak your beans overnight in salted water if you are cooking them on the stove top. If you don’t use salt, your beans will be bland. Conventional wisdom used to say not to add salt until the end or it will toughen the beans, but this has been debunked.

I’m afraid the beans that ended up tough were probably very old and would have been tough salt or no salt. To correct this, simply add a quarter teaspoon of baking soda to the cooking water.

In the morning, drain the beans and add them to a large pot where you have sautéed the onion and garlic. Add the water and salt, bring to a boil, cover and cook until the beans are tender. This will take around two hours depending on the age of the beans.

Community Roundup

Wrapping up the water-quality stewardship field season

Saint Michael’s College announces affordable tuition opportunities

New financial aid initiatives at Saint Michael’s College aim to make the cost of attendance more affordable for students, including those from Vermont.

They include:

- Free tuition Vermont — Vermont residents whose household income is \$100,000 or less will have their tuition fully covered after the allocation of Pell and VSAC grants. Students are required to fill out the FAFSA first to be eligible for tuition coverage and then must apply for other state grants through Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC). To continue receiving full tuition in subsequent years, students must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5.
- University of Vermont match — Vermont residents whose household income is above \$100,000 will pay the same tuition and fees as students who attend the University of Vermont, after institutional scholarships. This initiative aligns with the College’s new “Flagship Match” program, through which out-of-state students will pay the same tuition



and fees as their state’s flagship institutions, after institutional scholarships.

- Commuter commitment — Students who are permanent residents within a 35-mile radius of St. Mike’s and do not need room and board because they commute to campus will pay \$11,500 per year in tuition, after institutional scholarships.

These tuition rates are all available to new and transfer students applying to enroll as early as the spring 2026 semester, which begins in January.

“We know our students get a world-class education at Saint Michael’s College, and we want to ensure this experience is accessible to any student who would thrive here,” said Saint Michael’s College president Richard Plumb. “With a focus on skills, professionalism and empathy, as well as a strong foundation in our Edmundite heritage, our students are prepared to face the many complexities of our world today with confidence and purpose. Initiatives like those we’ve recently made available to Vermonters are grounded in our belief that education – especially a St. Mike’s education – should be within reach for anyone who seeks it.”

In addition to the new financial aid opportunities, students will also be eligible for college work study, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and various loan programs.

More information about these and other new financial aid initiatives can be found at smcvt.edu/freetv.

Lake Champlain Basin seeks proposals for ecosystems research

The Patrick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin Program seeks preproposals for research projects that will address the complex challenges facing Lake Champlain and its watershed. A subset of applicants will be asked to submit a more detailed full proposal for further consideration.

Research preproposals should support clean water or healthy ecosystems goals outlined in the program’s management plan at <https://tinyurl.com/crerxtxr>. For this request, the Lake Champlain Basin Program is particularly interested in funding research projects that:

- Assess the bioavailability of phosphorus from understudied sources or that replicate previous mercury studies in Lake Champlain.
- Support population monitoring for priority species, assess the impact of cyanobacteria blooms on lake biota, investigate the impact of environmental change on native species or advance understanding of aquatic habitat

restoration techniques.

- Assess the impacts of established aquatic invasive species or investigate best practices for containment of hemlock woolly adelgid to preserve riparian habitat.
- Assess best practices for dam removal, including riparian restoration, invasive species spread prevention and minimizing impacts on threatened and endangered species.
- Identify opportunities to enhance public recreation access or improve understanding of water use conflicts at recreation access points.
- Develop best practices for riparian forest management.

Please see the request for preproposals for full details on research priorities. Requests up to \$400,000 will be considered, with all awards subject to available funding.

Proposals must support work within the Lake Champlain watershed.

Proposals are due at 5 p.m. on Nov. 7. Awarded research projects are targeted to begin work in January 2027.

More information, including grant guidelines and applications, is available on the Lake Champlain Basin Program’s website at lcbp.org/grants.



Getting loony



Photo by Lee Krohn
This weather vane at Shelburne Farms indicates the full moon is directly overhead.

On Books

Old Wild West, green eggs and ham, whole bunch of letters

Katherine Arthaud
Contributor

Larry McMurtry (1936-2021), American novelist, screenwriter and essayist, was born in Wichita Falls, Texas, and grew up on his parents' ranch in Archer City, Texas. In his memoir, he wrote that during the first five or so years in his grandfather's ranch house, there wasn't a book to be found, but every night his family would sit out on the front porch and tell stories.

Books entered the picture in 1942 when McMurtry's cousin Robert Hilburn, on his way to enlist for World War II, stopped by the ranch house and left a box full of boys' adventure stories from the 30s.

McMurtry's work is generally influenced by the Old West and contemporary Texas. His many novels include "The Last Picture Show" (1966) and "Terms of Endearment" (1975), both of which were adapted into popular movies. Films adapted from McMurtry's books earned a total of 34 Oscar nominations, with 13 wins. His 1985 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "Lonesome Dove" was adapted into a TV miniseries that earned 18 Emmy Award nominations, with seven wins. In 2014, McMurtry received the National Humanities Medal.

Getting to reading "Lonesome Dove" was, for me, a bit like the journey of the nameless character in Dr. Seuss' "Green Eggs and Ham," who is entreated, begged and borderline-bullied by the inordinately persistent Sam-I-am to try, just once, at least once, green eggs and ham.

I am exaggerating. No one was as persistent for me as Sam-I-am, but I do remember my mother, and others, recommending the novel. But it's a Western, I thought, and so, so long. So, I put it off for years. But recently my sister mentioned the novel and how much she'd loved it and told me I should read it. So, I did. All 857 pages.

You should see my copy. It has been through the ringer. No cover (it ripped off after being left out in the rain) and curled, dog-eared pages from me lugging it all over creation; it's pretty sad. But, like the Velveteen Rabbit, its shabby appearance is indisputable evidence of its being well loved.

Reading "Lonesome Dove," I had the sense that I was living in two worlds: the real one, that takes place in and around Charlotte, and the world of the plains, valleys and small towns of the West: Texas, Nebraska, Montana.

The book is hauntingly, beautifully written and completely transporting. In short, it's about two retired Texas Rangers in the 1870s who live in a small town called Lonesome Dove (such a great name for a town) near the Rio Grande and run The Hat Creek Cattle Company. When an old friend rides into town and suggests they drive a bunch of cattle north to Montana, they gather a crew and some horses and two blue pigs and head off into the wilderness.

It's a Western, yes, but as Michael Sebastian (Esquire) points out, although the story revolves around cowboys, the book is really an anti-western: "There's very little romance about this time in American history. Instead, you're confronted with the brutality of the American West."

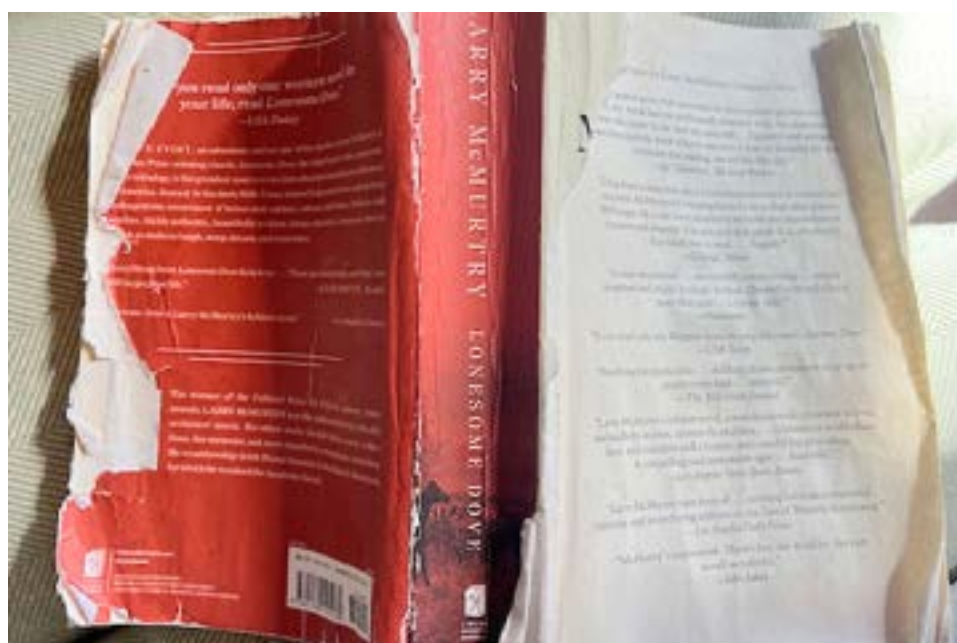
McMurtry had a complicated relationship with this novel, because of the way a 1989 TV adaption starring Tommy Lee Jones and Robert Duvall glossed over a number of its anti-western themes.

"McMurtry began comparing his most popular book to 'Gone with the Wind,'" The New Yorker's Rachel Monroe writes. "He didn't mean it as a compliment."

The characters in "Lonesome Dove" are vividly rendered — from big-talking Augustus McCrae, to his partner, Captain W.F. Call, a man of few words, to Pea Eye, and young Newt, Josh Deets and the much-feared Native American Blue Duck. I feel like I know them all. And I miss them.

Though the book is populated mostly by male characters, McMurtry does a good job with the female ones, as well. Lorena, the sex worker, and Clara, the homesteader, are painted with sensitivity and depth. Along with a handful of others, they stand out as strong characters with dignity, dreams and strong motivations of their own.

Jia Tolentino, from The New Yorker, calls "Lonesome Dove" a "grand quest that



A well-traveled copy of 'Lonesome Dove.'

Photo by Katherine Arthaud

unstitches its own mythology with every line." The book had him spellbound, he says, "obsessed with the characters, who felt realer to me than my own self ... I was so thankful for the reminder that reading can still be like this."

"Anything but predictable," said The Wall Street Journal. "Skillfully drawn characters crop up at nearly every turn ... splendid."

This is a multi-layered, multi-dimensional book. At times, it's quite amusing; at others, harsh and harrowing. But like some of the rivers Call and Augustus and their ragtag team of cowboys cross on their way north, it runs deep. Longing and melancholy, sadness, exhilaration, cruelty and compassion, violence, wisdom, naivety, friendship, belonging, loneliness, hunger for both adventure and for home. It's all woven — beautifully, engagingly, fondly, at times brutally — against a backdrop of the American West. Cattle and horses, sagebrush and rattlesnakes, arrows and bullets, saloons and rivers and deserts and grassy bluffs. Almost 900 pages, I was left wanting more. One of the best books I've ever read. Highly recommend.

Another book I'd highly recommend is "The Correspondent" by Virginia Evans, a novel in the form of letters. It surprised me, very pleasantly, how reading letters to and from a person was a bit like assembling a jigsaw puzzle. Out of many disparate pieces, a whole vision, a whole life, takes shape, coalesces.

Most mornings, around 10:30 a.m., Ms. Van Antwerp (mother, grandmother, wife, divorcee, retired lawyer) sits down to write letters.

To whom? Well, the list is varied. To her brother Felix in France, for one ("Thank you for the birthday card, the fountain pen, and the book, which I started the day it arrived ... and finished today."), to her best friend, to Ann Patchett, to Larry McMurtry (!), to the dean of the English department of the university who refuses to allow her to audit a class even though she has done so in the past, to Joan Didion, to George Lucas ("I am crossing my fingers that

your staff has passed along his message in a bottle I am rather chucking into the Pacific."), to two eligible bachelors/suitors, to her daughter Fiona (with whom she has a rather stormy relationship) and so on.

"I write to anyone that strikes me," Sybil writes in one of her letters. "Friends, lawmakers, editors, teachers, diplomats, authors. Authors are my favorite. It's harder now, of course, because with the internet people are e-mailing (its faster, simpler, less fussy than having to have the materials, the pen, the moment at the desk, the stamp, etc.) and it can be more difficult to find an address, but usually if you really try, you will. And one ought to try. An e-mail can in no way replace a written letter. It does concern me that one day all the advancement of technology will do away with the post, but I hope to be dead and gone long before then."

Over time, through letter after letter, we get to know Ms. Van Antwerp better. And some of the mysteries that are introduced early on are clarified or resolved, at least to a degree.

To her daughter Fiona she writes, "When I was a child your grandparents sat me down to explain that I was adopted. I was in first grade. Your Pop had come home from work and we sat down in the formal living room, which was unusual, and they explained it to me, and then they took me for an ice cream sundae in lieu of supper to smooth it all away. I was troubled by it. Of course I was, but I was something of a weird bird as a child, serious, grave, without friends, often ignored by other children and tended toward fixating on things. I became fixated on this. It has always been my nature to see things in black and white, as you well know. I like rules. I relish living in a world that runs on laws and systems that are quite clear and declared. I think being adopted made me feel, as a child, that I did not fit inside the system. I didn't tell a soul."

If a book of letters sounds boring or tiresome, let me assure you: this is not. It's quite the opposite. Do read it. Highly recommend, for you and for holiday gift giving. It's a treasure.



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

802-425-2004

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

Calendar

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

Shelburne Museum 2025 exhibits Daily, thru Oct. 26, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Before the end of the Shelburne Museum's season on Oct. 26, visitors are invited to explore the final weeks of what the museum considers an extraordinary lineup of exhibitions celebrating art, sound, craft and imagination. From Sound, Art, & Ink: Higher Ground Gig Posters, which chronicles Vermont's vibrant music scene, to the playful textile creations of artist Dahlov Ipcar, from the immersive sonic and textile expressions of Making a Noise: Indigenous Sound Art to the Karen Petersen's graceful bronze horses installed across the museum's grounds, it's a last chance to see a wide variety of exhibits.

'Blithe Spirit'

Fridays-Sundays, Oct. 17-26

The Valley Players will present "Blithe Spirit" by Noel Coward at their theater at 4254 Main Street in Waitsfield. Friday and Saturday night shows are at 7 p.m., and Sunday matinees are at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$14 for seniors and students and \$18 for adults. For tickets and more information, visit valleyplayers.com or email boxoffice@valleyplayers.com.

Explore Lewis Creek watershed Saturday, Oct. 18, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

The Lewis Creek Association's Mountains to Mouth: an Exploration of the Watershed is a day-long celebration of the natural, cultural and landscape history of Monkton and portions of the Lewis Creek watershed at the Monkton Town Hall. In the morning, experts will lead field trips exploring the geology, history and wildlife of Monkton, and landscape painting will be offered along Lewis Creek. From 1-3 p.m., there will be children's activities and talks on pollinator gardens, local history, aquatic invasive species in local ponds and best management practices for lakeside properties. Lunch and remarks will be 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. with lunch and refreshments provided or bring a picnic. More info at lewiscreek.org or email kate@lewiscreek.org.

Carve-in at Birds of Vermont Saturday, Oct. 18, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

At the Green Mountain Woodcarvers carve-in and annual meeting at Birds of Vermont, members will be working on a variety of carving projects. Carvers are always happy to explain how they carve and to share their expertise with others. More info greenmountainwoodcarvers.org/carvein.html.

Tree identification for birders Sunday, Oct. 19, 1-3 p.m.

Have you ever noticed a bird, then wondered what kind of tree it was in, or why it was there? Take a walk and explore tree identification with forester Kathleen Stutzman at Birds of Vermont. Open to folks with any and all levels of familiarity with trees or birds. Suggested donation \$10-\$30. Register by phone at 802-434-2167 or visit birdsofvermont.org/event/tree-identification-for-birders-and-friends.

'Taking Venice' film Wednesday, Oct. 22, 6 p.m.

The Architecture + Design film series

continues with "Taking Venice" at Burlington's Contois Auditorium or available for same-day streaming on the 100th birthday of artist Robert Rauschenberg. The film tells the tale of the 1964 Venice Biennale, where he was the first American awarded the Grand Prize. This became controversial with rumors that the U.S. government manipulated the outcome. It left Rauschenberg grappling with doubts about the nationalist politics that overshadowed his victory

October bird monitoring walk Saturday, Oct. 25, 8-9 a.m.

Birders, current, experienced, newbie and would-be, welcome to join the Birds of Vermont monthly monitoring walk to record birds on the museum's trails, forest and meadow. Bring your own binoculars, dress for the weather. We recommend bringing tick repellent and a water bottle. Free, suggested \$10 donation. Registration will be posted at birdsofvermont.org/special-upcoming.

Artist roundtable

Saturday, Oct. 25, 2-3 p.m.

Land, Light, Water & Air artist roundtable discussion will be held at the Bryan Art Gallery in Jeffersonville. The discussion provides an opportunity to learn from the artists about their approaches to their work, their inspirations, key techniques and even favorite materials. The roundtable is free. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. For information: 802-644-5100 or info@bryangallery.org.

Haunted happenings

Sunday, Oct. 26, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Join a family-friendly, fun, fall frolic with activities, games, and trick-or-treating throughout the grounds of the Shelburne Museum. Costumes encouraged. Haunted happenings will also include food pantry collection at East Gate; artmaking activities — Halloween and seasonal-themed art projects for all; facepainting; lawn games and Halloween-themed outdoor fun; and creating your own fairy houses or gnome huts. Admission is \$5. Children under 3 are free.

Born in 1685 concert Sunday, Oct. 26, 3 p.m.

Capital City Concerts in Montpelier will present Born in 1685: Bach, Handel and Scarlatti. It has been said that "Bach is the genius of counterpoint; Handel's music is operatically-conceived; and Scarlatti was the Chopin of the harpsichord." Violinist Ari Issacman-Beck, flutist Karen Kevra and pianist Jeffrey Chappell will mix and match in a program including chamber music, sonatas and solo works.

Hinesburg Artist Series Sunday, Oct. 26, 4 p.m.

As part of the Hinesburg Artist Series, the Hinesburg Community Band and the South County Chorus will perform at Champlain Valley Union High School at 4 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 26. While the concert is free, donations are gratefully accepted. For more info go to hinesburgartistseries.org.

NPR's A Way with Words Tuesday, Oct. 28, 6 p.m.

Join the "A Way With Words" radio show and podcast co-hosts Martha Barnette and



Photo by Jennifer Brittenham-Jones

A seance is featured in the black-and-white production of 'Blithe Spirit' at the Valley Players Theater in Waitsfield, which will run weekends through Oct. 26



Photo by Daria Bishop

A visitor interacts with a work in the exhibit Making a Noise: Indigenous Sound Art at Shelburne Museum, one of several that incorporate sound and allow interaction. The museum closes for the season on Oct. 26.

Grant Barrett as they explore the words and phrases connected to climate change at the South Burlington Public Library.

An evening with poet laureate Tuesday, Nov. 4, 4:30 p.m.

Former U.S. poet laureate Ada Limón will hold a presentation in partnership with the University of Vermont at the Ira Allen Chapel. Limón is the author of seven books of poetry, including "Startlement: New & Selected Poems." Register for this free event at <https://tinyurl.com/ykzcsdvk>.

Honoring Vermont LGBTQ+ elders Saturday, Nov. 8, 1-3 p.m.

Looking Back-Moving Forward: Vermont Stories of LGBTQ+ Caregiving & Community" will take place at the Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History in Middlebury. The event will shine a light on LGBTQ+ Vermonters whose stories and legacies serve to reimagine care for elders today and in the future. For more information, email publichistory@sheldonmuseum.org.



CHARLOTTE TOWN MEETINGS AND AGENDAS

Visit charlottetvt.org
for more information

**Public Hearing on land-use
regulation amendments**
Thursday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m.

Development Review Board meeting
Wednesday, Oct. 22, 7 p.m.

Planning Commission meeting
Thursday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m.

Regular Selectboard meeting
Monday, Oct. 27, 7 p.m.

Conservation Commission meeting
Tuesday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY



802-662-0774
Chris Jenkins
Master Electrician
Fully Licensed and Insured
Charlotte, VT
cjenkins@level-up-electric.com

Professional Electrical Services

Residential Commercial

- Service Upgrades
- EV Chargers
- Rewire
- Generator Connections

Eff VT EEN Contractor



Chris's Lawncare & Mini Excavating LLC

Tree, Shrub & Stump Removal
Stump Grinding
Complete Invasive Species Removal
72' Bucket Truck
16" Brush & Wood Chipper
Brush Hog & Flail Mowing
And Much More!

802-425-3846

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS HERE!

Half and full-year options with **FREE** color starting at \$22 cost per issue.

Contact:
ads@thecharlottenews.org



PHILOSURVEYING.COM

Jason C. Burt, Licensed Land Surveyor
jason@philosurveying.com
802-782-9273 | Charlotte, VT

BEAGLE BUILDERS, LLC

ROOFING, SIDING & EXTERIOR FINISHES



WINDOWS & DOORS
DECKS, PORCHES & SUNROOMS
REMODELING & ADDITIONS

Monkton, VT beaglebuilders@gmavt.net
802-453-4340 CALL US! 802-355-0807



1-802-989-0825

Paul

Top Soil
Driveway Topping
Sand & Gravel
Stone & Mulch

Small Jobs
Bobcat Work
Mini Excavator Work
Trucking

Brushhogging by Adam

Adam Dantzschler
Proprietor

Services
Brushhogging
Brush Clearing/Mulching
Chain-Sawing
Delivery/Haul-away
Driveway Repair
Excavating
Roadside Mowing



Phone: 802-578-8347
email: adamdantzschler@aol.com



Investing in better water

- Water Filtration Systems
- Water Delivery
- Water Softeners

Call us today!
Culligan Water
802-865-0000
154 Brentwood Drive
Colchester

Library News

Bring family treasures and learn about caring for them

Margaret Woodruff
Director

Jane Cadwalader and Rachel Onuf from the Vermont Historical Records Program will visit the library 5:30-7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 22, to answer questions about caring for family treasures. This presentation will focus on practical steps you can take to provide “good enough” care for the objects and papers that you value and perhaps hope to pass on to others.

Cadwalader and Onuf will provide some advice that applies to all types of treasures and guidance for some specific types of materials as well. They will share additional resources and allow ample time for questions and discussion.

Feel free to bring one of your treasures (or a photograph of it) to share. Presented in partnership with the Charlotte Historical Society.

Special events

Old-time music

Saturday, Oct. 25, 12:30 p.m.

Enjoy old-time and Irish music performed by Zachary DeFranco. He'll take time to discuss the instrument history as well as the history of the tunes being played.

**Sixth annual pumpkin carving
Wednesday, Oct. 29, 2-4 p.m.**

Join Jessica Sriver and other jack-o-lantern fans for pumpkin carving on the library porch. Pumpkins will be part of the sixth annual jack-o-lantern display on the town green. Already have a carved pumpkin you would like to be a part of the display? Drop it off by Thursday, Oct. 30, to be included. Jack-o-lanterns will be lit at dusk on Thursday, Oct. 30, and Friday, Oct. 31.

Vermont Reads

Our Vermont Reads series continues. Stop by to get your copy of “The Light Pirate.” Enjoy some local refreshments, take a tour of our climate-friendly gardens and make a weathervane to take home. Vermont Reads series:

- Thursday, Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m. — Thursday Book Group discussion of “The Light Pirate” on Zoom
- Thursday, Oct. 30, 7 p.m. — “Drawing Hidden Systems” with graphic novelist Dan Nott.

Programs for kids

Baby time

Saturday, Oct. 4, 10-11 a.m.

On the first Saturday 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, Oct. 4, 10-11 a.m.

On the first Saturday 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.



Photos by Margaret Woodruff

Left: If you have treasure from the barn like vintage bottles, you might bring them to the family treasures workshop. Right: Fishing creel from early 20th century is a family treasure someone might bring to the family treasures workshop.

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.

BabyTime

Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.

You're invited to 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. We'll 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 of 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.

Thursday book group

Thursday, Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m.

Join a Zoom discussion at <https://tinyurl.com/8zrcrbe> for a discussion of the Vermont Reads 2025 selection, “The Light Pirate,” by Lily Brooks-Dalton. Named after a catastrophic storm, Wanda is born into a world that's rapidly changing. Rising sea levels and devastating weather patterns transform her coastal Florida town. As she moves from childhood to adulthood, Wanda adapts to this remade landscape, finding adventure, love and purpose in a place largely abandoned by civilization.

Mystery book group

Monday, Oct. 20, 10 a.m.

Join a discussion of “Alibi Man,” the second book in Tami Hoag's Elena Estes series. Once upon a time a child of wealth and privilege, Elena turned her back on that life. Betrayed and disillusioned by those closest to her, she chose the life of

an undercover cop, the hunt for justice her own personal passion. Then a tragic, haunting mistake ended her career. Now Elena exists on the fringes of her old life, training horses for a living. But a shocking event is about to draw her back into the painful vortex she's fought so hard to leave behind. Copies available at the circulation desk.

Cooking book club

Tuesday, Oct. 21, 5:30-7 p.m.

Cooking Book Club: The Moosewood Cookbook

Join us for our fall session of the cooking book club, celebrating the “Moosewood Cookbook.” Find your favorite recipe and bring to share at a potluck. No time to cook? Join us anyway for delicious food and good company. Copies of the cookbook are available to check out from the library.

LIBRARY continued on page 22

LIBRARY

Continued from page 21

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

The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets the first Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. except the month of August



Courtesy photo
Zachary DeFranco brings old-time music to the library.

unless otherwise rescheduled following the Opening Meeting Law. The next scheduled board meeting is Thursday, Nov. 6. Contact the library or visit the library website (charlottepubliclibrary.org) for more information.



Photo by Margaret Woodruff
All ages are pumpkin carving at the Charlotte Library in 2023.

Senior Center News

Cribbage group and blood pressure workshop coming this month

Lori York
Director

Highlights of the Charlotte Senior Center’s variety of programs this month include a healthy cooking class for one, a video on local wildlife in Charlotte, a porcelain ornament workshop and several conversation groups.

New additions include a weekly cribbage group and a blood pressure management workshop in collaboration with My Healthy Vermont. An artist reception will also showcase the work of three local artists, each inspired by natural and organic elements found in the environment.

Presentations & discussions

Healthy cooking for one
Friday, Oct. 17, noon-2 p.m.

Chef Shaun from Harbor Village Senior Communities offers a fun and informative healthy cooking class designed just for one. Learn simple, nutritious recipes perfect for solo dining with tips on portioning, freshness and flavor. Free. Registration required. Space is limited.

Local wildlife
Tuesday, Oct. 21, 1 p.m.

Join Peter Demick of the Charlotte Conservation Commission for a 24-minute video of local wildlife, captured through trail cameras right here in Charlotte. This unique footage is part of the commission’s ongoing efforts to raise awareness and appreciation for the rich biodiversity in our community. Following the video, there will be a Q&A session and an opportunity to learn how

you can get more involved in conservation initiatives. Whether you’re a nature enthusiast or simply curious, this is a great chance to connect and contribute to local environmental stewardship. To register, call 802-425-6345.

Blood pressure management workshop
Thursdays, Oct. 23-Dec. 18, 1-2:30 p.m.
(no meeting Thanksgiving)

Join us for an eight-week workshop series offered by My Healthy Vermont and designed to empower you with the tools and strategies to better manage high blood pressure. Each 90-minute weekly session focuses on practical behavior changes, including how to effectively use a home blood pressure monitor, manage medications, improve nutrition, reduce stress and more. Take control of your health in a supportive, educational environment. Registration can be completed ahead of time by calling Caitlin Moroney, enrollment specialist and workshop facilitator, at 802-859-5913 or by attending the first session on Oct. 23.

Three artists inspired by plants
Friday, Oct. 24, 4-6 p.m.

This month there will be an artist reception that features nature-based works by three local artists:
• Lynne Gavin (Richmond) Eco-printed scarves, bags and textiles made with flowers, leaves and natural dyes.
• Ed LeClair (Charlotte) Botanical eco-print banners and intricately wood-burned gourds.
• Alice Trageser (Charlotte) Unique wall sculptures made from dried plant materials.



Photo by Lori York
Participants in the core and strength class at the Charlotte Senior Center focus on building stability, balance and muscle tone.

Programs

Beginner Italian
Fridays, Nov. 7-Dec. 19, 10-11 a.m.

Curious about learning Italian or looking to refresh your basics? Join Nicole Librandi for six weeks 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, Oct. 31. To register, call 802-425-6345.

Spanish conversation
Tuesdays, 10-11 a.m.

¿Hablas Español? We will meet weekly. At each session one member of the group will announce the topic of conversation for the following week. Come join our group for conversation in Spanish. Questions? Email Bernice Wesseling at bernice.wesseling@uvm.edu.

Memory café
Saturday, Oct. 18, 11-noon

The memory café meets monthly on the third Saturday of the month at the Charlotte

SENIOR CENTER

Continued from page 22

Senior Center. This free event provides a welcoming and supportive space for individuals living with memory loss, along with their caregivers or loved ones. This month we will get into the autumn spirit by decorating cookies and pumpkins while reminiscing about our favorite fall activities. This program is offered in partnership with Age Well and The Charlotte Library. Questions? Contact Susan Cartwright at cartwright.susan1@gmail.com. Registration required by calling 802-425-6345.

Death café

Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2:30-4 p.m.

We gather on the fourth Wednesday of each month to come together in fellowship, celebrating life through open conversations about death and dying. While these discussions can be difficult, sharing our thoughts, questions and stories heart-to-heart helps us build a strong sense of community and fosters a unique joy that enriches our lives. We look forward to walking this journey together and growing our community. Have questions? Reach out to Polly at ppolly62@ymail.com. To register, call 802-425-6345.

Porcelain ornament workshop

Thursday, Oct. 23, 1-2:30 p.m.

Join us for a creative and relaxing workshop where you'll craft three-four handcrafted porcelain clay ornaments. Add your personal touch with textures and glazes during the session. Professional potter Judy Devitt, who brings over 30 years of teaching experience, will take the ornaments home to fire in her kiln. Your finished pieces will be returned to the senior center in two weeks. Cost: \$20 plus a \$10 supply fee (paid directly to the instructor). Registration and payment due by Friday, Oct. 17. To register, call 802-425-6345.

Shape-note singing

Sunday, Oct. 26, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Traditional a cappella, four-part harmony sung for the joy of singing...not as a practice for performance. Search "Sacred Harp" on YouTube for examples, then come and sing with us! Introduction to shape notes and scales is recommended and offered 30 minutes before each fourth Sunday singing. The first hour will be Sacred Harp singing and the second hour will be singing from an alternate Shape-Note book. Books will be provided. For questions or to schedule your introduction to shape notes and scales, please contact Kerry Cullinan at kcolynxvt@gmail.com.

Photo discussion group

Sunday, Oct. 19, 2-4 p.m.

Join a monthly photo discussion group where photographers of all skill levels are welcome to share their work, ideas and experiences. Bring a photo and a story to share with the group. This is a chance to engage in creative dialogue, get feedback and explore the impact of your images in a supportive and collaborative environment. For questions or more information, contact Emily Cross at ecross@ecrossphoto.com. Free. No registration required.

Games

American mahjong

Tuesday, 12:30-3:45 p.m.

& Wednesday, 6 p.m.

Enjoy American mahjong with opportunities to play twice each week.

Beginners and experienced players are welcome to join. Tuesday afternoons is a drop-in class. If you are brand new to mahjong, experienced player Jane Krasnow will be on hand Wednesday evenings to teach newcomers and guide play throughout the evening. Jane starts a beginner-friendly class at the beginning of each month. Already know how to play? Come and enjoy a night of friendly competition. Please email Jane Krasnow at jane.krasnow@gmail.com to let her know you are coming!

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.

Cribbage

Thursdays, 2-4 p.m.

Love cards? Want to learn a classic game or brush up on your skills? Starting Oct. 30, join a new weekly cribbage group — open to beginners and seasoned players alike! Whether you're new to the game or just a little rusty, John Kareckas, an experienced player will be on hand each week to teach and guide you through the pegs and plays. Enjoy a fun, relaxed atmosphere while keeping your mind sharp and making new friends. Bring your curiosity (and maybe a little competitive spirit)! Come play, learn and laugh — one crib at a time! For questions, contact John at jc.kareckas@gmail.com.

Exercise

Core & strength fitness

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

Join Phyllis Bartling for a hybrid pilates class designed specifically for individuals 55+. 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 Dr. Lam, 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 warmly welcome to observe a class or reach out to Hammer at belizahammer@hotmail.com. Cost: \$10 a class. No registration required.

Meals

Menus are posted on the website: charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday lunches

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

Senior center info:

The senior center offers programs for adults 50 and older from Charlotte and surrounding communities. Priority is given to seniors,



Photos by Lori York

Diane Xiques from Milton adds patterns to her clay slab during a pottery workshop at the senior center.



Experienced potter Judy Devitt demonstrates a variety of techniques during a recent hands-on pottery workshop at the Senior Center.



A timely presentation at the Charlotte Senior Center by Age Well provided guidance on navigating Medicare open enrollment.

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. The "Week Ahead" email is sent out on Friday mornings with activities, lunch menus and special programs for the upcoming week.

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

Write Ingredients

Enjoy brownies, the ultimate celebration dessert at Monday Munch

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

You don’t have to wait for National Brownie Day on Dec. 8 to enjoy this ultimate celebration dessert. The New York Times features straight talk about brownies from Katherine Hepburn, including her warning against using too much flour at <https://tinyurl.com/j2b5s76s>.

Here is some more brownie advice:

- Life is better when you have a brownie nearby.
- Why be moody when you can eat a brownie?
- Calories don’t count when it comes to brownies.
- Embrace the brownie bliss.
- Life is short, eat a brownie.

I still have my “Eat more kale” T-shirt, bought in response to Governor Peter Shumlin’s effort to support the local artist who was fighting Chick-fil-A’s attempt to curtail his T-shirt business. A few years later, at the end of his 2016 press conference, Shumlin seemed to follow all the above brownie precepts when he announced that his final act in office would be to prepare “ultra-super-extra-special” brownies for the Vermont House of Representatives.

“At the very least, these brownies should give you temporary comfort in a world in which our Tweeter-in-Chief tries to reignite a nuclear arms race. That’s how they work for me, anyway,” he said.

Under Shumlin, Vermont was the first state in the country to enact food packaging and labeling regulations.

For sure, the brownies at the upcoming Charlotte Senior Center Monday Munch will also be “ultra-super-extra-special,” prepared by volunteer cooks who make relaxing over food very, very special, offering you the respite Shumlin spoke of a decade ago.



Adobe Stock photo

Where the buffalo roam

Webster’s Dictionary tells us that ricotta, a white, unripened Italian cheese that resembles cottage cheese, is made from whey, a leftover from the production of other cheeses, made from the milk from various beasts including sheep, cows, goats and water buffalo. Since there hasn’t been anything in the news lately about buffalo roaming the streets of Vermont, we can assume that you’ll find sheep, cow or goat whey in that Senior Center Monday Munch ricotta.

Lots of us sang about where the buffalo roam when we learned “Home on the Range” in school. This folk song is the Kansas state song and is sometimes called the “unofficial anthem” of the American West. Lots of famous singers recorded it, including Porky Pig and Bugs Bunny (<https://tinyurl.com/ywxxsnr4>).

Much more tolerable, here’s Burl Ives (youtube.com/watch?v=1blrlcX68q8) and Pete Seeger (youtube.com/

[watch?v=PwYFvDuI9OY](https://youtube.com/watch?v=PwYFvDuI9OY)). Frank Sinatra said this was FDR’s favorite song.

In 2010, members of the Western Writers of America chose the song as one of the Top 100 western songs of all time. The cabin of the song’s creator, Dr. Brewster M. Higley, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. NPR has the story at tinyurl.com/mrjba5b2.

You may be surprised by the musical tastes of a number of modern presidents (<https://tinyurl.com/bp5hyaa4>).

If you want to stir up your creative juices and write a poem about ricotta, here are some rhyming words to help you get started: biota, club soda, Dakota, iota, Lakota, Minnesota, nonquota, pagoda, pelota, sapota, Sarasota, Toyota.

Junk food’s day in the sun

In 1896, Frederick and Lewis Ruechle of Chicago launched Cracker Jack, America’s first junk food. By 1916, it was the best-selling confection in the world.

Enjoy this Cracker Jack moment from “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” (youtube.com/watch?v=rVFi-yeTe5g).

Although kale chips have been produced as a potato chip substitute, they don’t seem to appear in any featured movies.

Food Fact: Oct. 29 is Oatmeal Day. Maybe this is supposed to atone for the fact that Oct. 30 is Candy Corn Day. George Renninger of Philadelphia is credited (or discredited) with inventing candy corn in the 1880s. Goelitz Confectionary (now named Jelly Belly Candy Company) bought the rights in 1898. Candy corn was first called Chicken Feed, and its ingredients haven’t changed much since the 1880s: sugar, fondant, corn syrup, vanilla and marshmallow cream.

Most candy corn products come in the classic white, orange and yellow. But there are also varieties available in white, orange and brown; white, purple and brown; red, white and green. And for your next Candy Corn Fourth of July: red, white and blue.

Candy corn isn’t just for eating. You can acquire candy corn earrings, votive candles, night lights, stuffed plush toys, inflatables for your yard, tissue paper button kits, gnomes, stress relief toys.

Thinking candy corn-flavored coffee surely was the end of the road, I entered “candy cane coffins” in a search. Here’s what popped up: wood coffins for crafts, party treat trays, and mini coffin décor. Yes, these coffins are filled with candy corn.

Skip the candy corn, and instead, go enjoy a friendly and tasty Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center, 2125 Ferry Road, and invite a child to check out the great offerings at The Little Free Library for Kids at the Grange, 2858 Spear Street.

Monday Munch

Oct. 20, 11:30-12:30 a.m.

Squash soup, apple and spinach salad, corn muffins, brownies and ice cream.

Oct. 27, 11:30-12:30 a.m.

Portuguese vegetable soup, Caesar salad, rolls and ricotta cake.



Horsing around

Photo by Conklin Photographic

Katie Cook of Charlotte trots Teya BRB at the Dressage at Devon in Pennsylvania, Sept. 22-25, the largest and most competitive breed show in the United States. Teya came in second out of 26 competitors. Cook’s horses competed in seven different classes and placed in most of them.

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

PRESORTED STANDARD