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Chester plans for future emergencies

BY NICK GIBERTI
The Vermont Journal

CHESTER, Vt. – Prior to their Wednesday, Nov. 1 meeting, the Chester Selectboard met in their capacity as water and wastewater commissioners, to set new water and sewer rates for the town. Town manager Julie Hance explained that Chester had not raised water or sewer rates in a number of years, and that these rate increases were meant to bring Chester's rates up to date with current operating costs.

The board voted to raise the water base rate by \$3, to \$67, and to raise the usage rate by \$0.50, to \$2. Sewer rates had been raised more recently, and as such the base rate was not increased. The usage rate was increased by \$0.25, to \$4.75.

The board went on to a discussion of short-term rentals (STRs), keeping it short due to two members of the board being absent. Planning Commission Chair Hugh Quinn was present at the meeting, and told the board that he had compiled a list of what he felt were the goals of the STR discussion at the joint meeting of the planning commission and the selectboard, and offered to share those with the selectboard for their consideration. Selectboard Chair Arne Jonynas suggested that another joint meeting may be in order.

The board then heard from the chiefs of the

Chester Police Department, Ambulance Service, and Fire Department, concerning their 2024 general fund budget. The chiefs outlined the ways in which their departments utilize the funds they are granted, generate revenue, upcoming needs, as well as grants and other ways in which they have covered costs to their departments without resorting to taxpayers' money. All departments have seen an upward trend in the number of service calls they receive yearly, for the past several years. "We're going up anywhere from 10-20% on calls every single year," Fire Chief Matthew Wilson told the board. "When I took over as chief 10 years ago, we ran 72 calls. Last year, we ran 255 calls."

Jonynas thanked the department heads for their service to the town, and their diligence in seeking ways of funding their departments to keep costs to the taxpayers low, saying, "I just want to thank all the first responders...for the job that you guys do, and the fact that you are always looking for ways...of getting revenue without that being the main objective, [which is] the safety of the people of the town."

Finally, the board moved on to their discussion of Chester's flood response and forthcoming emergency response initiatives. Frank Kelley, a member of Chester's Citizen Advisory Committee, which acts as a liaison between the

citizens and the police department and other public safety agencies in Chester, spoke to the board regarding a flood response survey which the committee was developing and hoped to make available to citizens of Chester in the near future. The survey would ask about people's experiences with Chester's emergency response in the wake of the July 10 flood, in order to gather feedback for future improvements to Chester's readiness for floods and other emergency events. Kelley also noted that the advisory committee had set up an email account, and was also working on an online form through which townspeople could communicate with the committee.

Alicia DiPietro, police department administrator, briefed the board on Chester's efforts to establish an emergency response operation center, which would bring together the public safety department heads and town personnel who are critical during an unfolding disaster, under one roof, to better facilitate communication, planning, and execution of the response. This effort also involves infrastructure updates, such as creating redundancy in systems like radio transmission towers, in order to maintain

See **PLANS** on Page 2

Ludlow denies two FEMA buyouts

BY NICK GIBERTI
The Vermont Journal

LUDLOW, Vt. – The Ludlow Selectboard met Monday, Nov. 6, for their regularly scheduled meeting, with discussion centering on continued fallout from the July 10 flood.

Town manager Brendan McNamara told the board that the Ludlow wastewater plant is now running at full capacity, but that it still needs significant repairs, as well as upgrades and flood mitigation measures. McNamara said that these mitigation measures could include moving the plant to a new location, though he felt that that was unlikely, as it would entail a large project and a significant expense.

With regard to the FEMA reimbursement process, McNamara told the board that Ludlow's damage inventory had been completed and submitted to FEMA for reimbursement, though some smaller issues continued to crop up that could be traced back to the flood.

McNamara also addressed citizens' continued concerns about the Jewell Brook dam sites, one of which, site five, had visible damage to its spillway. Several residents came forward to voice concerns about the dams, and ask whether the town was prioritizing repairing them. McNamara informed those

present that he has applied for funding through the Emergency Watershed Program for repairs to sites three and five, which would cover 75% of the expense of repairs, leaving the town with the remaining 25%. Total costs for site three were estimated at \$46,000, with Ludlow covering \$11,000. Site five came in significantly more expensive, with an estimated cost of \$519,000, leaving Ludlow with a bill of about \$130,000. The projects have now gone out to bid. McNamara said that the site three project was likely to be undertaken this fall, but that the repairs to site five would likely have to wait until the spring.

Significant discussion was also focused on proposed FEMA buyouts for four properties in Ludlow. The owners of the properties had initiated a process by which, McNamara explained, FEMA would essentially give the town funds to purchase the properties, though the purchases come with significant restrictions on how the properties may be used going forward.

"I am a little apprehensive about approving FEMA buyouts for multiple properties," Acting Chair Justin Hyjek told the board. "No permanent structures can ever be placed on that [property], it comes out of the grand list, and it is undevelopable in perpetuity."

Concern was also raised that two of the properties in question contained historic buildings, specifically

31 Route 103 (formerly Mr. Darcy's), and 106 Main Street (formerly Mojo Café).

Reaction among residents present was mixed. Former Selectboard Chair and Vice President of Okemo Bruce Schmidt proposed that the board table the discussion, to determine what other options exist. "The town could buy them itself," Schmidt suggested to the board. Disagreeing with Schmidt, resident and owner of the Timber Inn Motel Glenn Heitsmith pointed out that, while FEMA buyouts are not ideal, leaving the properties as-is or deferring the decision to a later date could lead to decaying buildings in town. "These places are going to look pretty bad if some action isn't taken, so you don't want to kick the can down the road or you're going to have brambles, nastiness, abandoned buildings, decrepitness – you've got to act," Heitsmith told the board.

Selectboard Member Robert Brandt asked whether approval of the process was binding, and would preclude another buyer from buying the properties. McNamara responded that another buyer could purchase the properties in the meantime. FEMA buyouts are typically lengthy processes, the board noted.

Ultimately, the requests for the former Mojo and Mr. Darcy's were denied, while the requests for 21 Route 103 (formerly

See **FEMA** on Page 2

Depot Street celebrates community

PROCTORSVILLE, Vt. – It's been almost four months since the July flooding that ravaged areas of Vermont including our local area. The last weekend of October, residents of Proctorsville and Cavendish decided it was time for a celebration.

With tongue in cheek signs reading "the forgotten street is closed to thru traffic" and "welcome to our own little apocalypse," the street was blocked off by Red Vault Productions' large white work van, Pastor Abe Gross' tractor, and the red truck everyone knows so well belonging to Jeremiah Tyrrell. The Proctorsville Fire Department even showed their support for the street by dedicating a fire truck and crew to also block each end of the street, complete with flashing lights.

And with that, the first post-flood Depot Street Block Party celebration was underway and open to



Residents gather for the Depot Street Block Party. PHOTO PROVIDED

all members of the community. There was rock painting with positive messages, a slide show to showcase all the volunteers and community members who helped after the flood, live music donated by Jill Sachs, a home cooked meal, and even a relay race where the winning team won gift cards donated by Goodman's American Pie.

Partygoers could also get a #floodlife T-shirt made spe-

cial for the occasion. "This was a celebration of community and our resilience together," said Wendy Reynolds, one of the residents still not back in her home. "We still have a lot to do, as do a lot of Vermonters who were affected, but we wanted to do a little something to acknowledge the bonds that came out of a tragedy. We are so blessed to have this community."

Apple Blossom returns for 2024

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Springfield Hospital is pleased to announce that Apple Blossom will return in May of 2024. The Apple Blossom event has a long history that showcases area high school seniors and elementary children in a performance of song and dance. In 2024, the traditional features that make Apple Blossom so special will be included, along with a community dance following the final performance.

Springfield Hospital welcomes Apple Blossom Director Ashlee White of Springfield, Vt. Ashlee has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in theatre, with a concentration in set design. "I've been dancing and singing since I could walk and talk, and began acting when I was 12," says Ashlee. "I love all forms of performance, but the Apple Blossom event checks all the boxes for me," she continued. She is supported by a com-

mittee of enthusiastic individuals, some of whom include previous Apple Blossom Queens Kelly Flynn and Diane Walker, and previous directors and assistants Lisa Rushton and Tracy Austin.

An orientation for all parents and participants, including elementary school applicants, will take place on Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024, at 1 p.m., at Dressel Gymnasium at Riverside Middle School, Springfield, Vt. The Apple Blossom performances will take place on Friday, May 3, and Saturday, May 4.

Applications for both high school and elementary school participants are available at www.springfieldhospital.org/fundraising-events. Applications for seniors must be received by Dec. 19 (prior to school vacation), and for children, applications must be received by Jan. 19, 2024.

Proceeds from the per-



Apple Blossom Director Ashlee White. PHOTO PROVIDED

formances will support the Dr. E. Sherburne Lovell Health Career Award and Springfield Hospital's 2024 Annual Giving Campaign. The support of community businesses, individuals, and families has been extraordinary during past years, and we look forward to similar participation with the return of Apple Blossom in 2024.

For more information, call Sandy Peplau at 885-7686, or visit www.springfieldhospital.org/fundraising-events.

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DEADLINES

The deadline for all content is **Thursday, Nov. 16 at 12 p.m.** for the Nov. 22 publication.

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Flood recovery support at Fletcher Memorial Library with Efficiency Vermont

LUDLOW, Vt. – Fletcher Memorial Library will host Efficiency Vermont at the library on Wednesday, Nov. 15. Come by to speak with an Efficiency Vermont expert about financial and technical resources avail-

able to flood impacted homeowners, businesses, and rental property owners. One-on-one support will be offered from 12-5 p.m., with a presentation offered at 5:30 p.m. Visit www.efficiencyvermont.com/flood to get

started today. Fletcher Memorial Library is located at 88 Main Street in Ludlow, Vt. If you have any questions, please call 802-228-8921. This program is free and open to the public.

Windsor County Mentors and CTES seek mentors

CAVENDISH, Vt. – Windsor County Mentors (WCM), the youth mentoring organization that has served all of Windsor County, Vt., has an immediate need for mentors in the Cavendish area.

Cavendish Town Elementary School (CTES) recently identified seven children who could benefit from having a local mentor. Now, we need to find responsible local adults to serve as volunteer mentors.

Windsor County Mentors has 50 years of experience matching caring adults with youth in need to help them thrive. Mentoring offers vulnerable youth

opportunities to share experiences with reliable adults to widen their vision of themselves, helping them to be confident, contributing members of their community.

Windsor County Mentors creates and nurtures school-based mentoring partnerships, free of charge, to local children between 5 and 18, who could benefit from a long-term, trusting relationship with an adult in their community.

In the school mentoring program, WCM trains and certifies adult volunteers to be mentors, who are then matched with children at a local school. Once matched,

the pair meets weekly at the school, during the school day, for an hour.

During their time together, mentor and mentee can partake in whatever activity they choose – having lunch together, completing schoolwork, playing a game, or just talking. What they do is less important than the fact that they are together, sharing their lives.

For further information, contact Windsor County Mentors at 802-674-5101, or email executive director Matthew Garcia at matthew@wcmentors.org.

Anthony Marro Trust seeks funding applications

LUDLOW, Vt. – The Anthony Marro Memorial Trust Fund is seeking 501(c)3 entities within the Town of Ludlow area for funds distribution. The trustees will be requesting applications for

funding consideration. The application process deadline is Nov. 16. Recipients must meet trust fund requirements. All awarded recipients will be notified via mail with their funding decision.

To request an application, or if you have any questions, please contact Kimberly Lampert, trustee, on weekdays at 802-228-4000. Disbursement of funds will be processed in December 2023.

OVRCC opens additional funding to businesses

LUDLOW, Vt. – The Okemo Valley Disaster Relief Committee has a limited amount of funding left, which it would like to make available to business applicants who did not previously meet

the deadline of Aug. 23. Please note that only new applicants will be considered for funding, and that funding is quite limited. However, if your business did not previously apply and you are now in need

of funding for flood related physical damage in order to return to full operation, or to cover costs previously incurred if you are now fully operational, please apply below by the new deadline of Nov. 15.

PLANS

From Page 1

communication channels between personnel should one tower be rendered inoperable.

DiPietro also told the board that lack of personnel to handle things such as road closures and redirecting traffic during the flood has led

to discussion of a community emergency response team (CERT). “They are not law enforcement,” DiPietro said, “but they are citizens who volunteer, who get special training...to become part of the public safety factor, and they can do things like put out signage, they can help with traffic control.”

The need for a shelter

during emergencies other than the high school was also discussed, as the high school had proven to have many drawbacks during previous emergencies, including being cut off by floodwaters during the recent flood.

The Chester Selectboard’s next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 15, at 6:30 p.m.

FEMA

From Page 1

Subway) and 91 Route 103 (formerly Sam’s Steakhouse) were approved.

Finally, McNamara gave updates on several other situations in town. Speaking about Shaw’s, Ludlow’s only

supermarket, McNamara said he has been trying to get an official press release from the Shaw’s public relations department. While McNamara said the executives he has spoken with told him that Shaw’s is “100% committed” to reopening the Ludlow location, no exact date has been given. Hyjek expressed concern that the

Shaw’s building has not been worked on “for quite some time.” “I would very much appreciate if they gave us an exact date, or an exact plan, given that we’re almost five months out,” he continued.

Ludlow’s next selectboard meeting will be held Dec. 4, at 6 p.m., in the Heald Auditorium at Ludlow Town Hall.

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Perkinsville Village history and nature walk

WEATHERSFIELD, Vt. – Join Weathersfield's Conservation Commission, Historical Society, and Parks and Recreation, for a history and nature walk through Perkinsville Village on Saturday, Nov. 11, at 8:30 a.m. The walk will leave from the 1879 Schoolhouse, and take hikers along the Black River to the former Perkinsville Lower Village. Becky Tucker,

author of "We Remember: Before and After the North Springfield Flood Control Project," will locate the settlement that was taken down beginning in 1957. We will have time to look at the old power dam, and the work that the Army Corps of Engineers has undertaken to restore this area after the July floods. We will be back in Perkinsville in time for the

Veterans Day Memorial Service on the Perkinsville Green. This event is rain or shine, free, and open to all. Wear bright clothing. Park at Hoisington Field (1862 VT-106, Perkinsville, Vt.). Copies of "We Remember" (book and map of houses taken) will be available for purchase. For more information, call 802-263-5584.

Concert to benefit WCA flood recovery

WESTON, Vt. – New Thought Vermont, a Weston-based nonprofit supporting community health, wellbeing, and creativity, is sponsoring a concert on Sunday, Nov. 12, at 4 p.m., at the Walker Farm Theater, to benefit continuing flood recovery expenses for the Weston Community Association (WCA). The nonprofit WCA maintains historic and natural landmarks, including the heavily damaged Weston Playhouse.

The hourlong event will feature the Castleton Quartet, an ensemble comprised of local musicians and educators. Featured will be enjoyable and diverse classical, folk, and pop selections, including the works of Cole Porter, John Williams, and Leonard Cohen. Also on the program will be the Vermont State University String Quartet, comprised of leading string players from the Castleton campus. Their presentation will include

music in the fiddle and classical traditions, as well as selections by Taylor Swift and Charlie Daniels.

There will be no admission fee for the event. Donations for repairs of the Weston Playhouse are encouraged. Doors will open at 3:40 p.m. prior to the concert; reservations are not needed. For information, contact New Thought Vermont at 802-824-3810 or newthoughtvt@yahoo.com.

"Songs of Vermont" with Banjo Dan

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – "Banjo" Dan Lindner will present the next Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) program "Songs of Vermont" on Tuesday, Nov. 14, at 2 p.m., at the Nolin Murray Center, next to St. Mary's Church on Pleasant Street in Springfield.

He will perform several of his favorite songs that he has written in his 50-year career as a professional musician. He'll discuss the inspirations and stories behind these songs, which are drawn from Vermont's history, legends, places, and personalities.

Dan has performed throughout Vermont and the Northeast, along with several overseas tours. Over that span, he has recorded some 20 albums, including those by "Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys," as well as solo albums under his own name. Among the latter are four collections of "Banjo Dan's Songs of Vermont." All told, Dan has recorded over 100 original songs.

Sponsored by the University of Vermont, OLLI is run by local volunteer members, and is geared mainly towards seniors who are 50 years of age and over who

enjoy learning for the fun of it. Anyone who would be interested in this type of program, regardless of their age, is welcome. The programs last about an hour and a half.

Pre-registration is highly recommended. We can no longer take any payments onsite at the door. However, if you arrive without having registered, we will not turn you away. We will hand you a form with instructions on how to make payment after the program.

The program fee is discounted for members. Non-members are welcome and encouraged to attend individual programs for a single program fee.

You may view the entire semester programs by going to the website www.learn.uvm.edu/olli/springfield. Registration can be done online at this website with a credit card. You may also register over the phone, using your credit card, by calling 802-656-8407, or email noncredit@uvm.edu. You may have to wait for a return



Banjo Dan Lindner will present "Songs of Vermont" at OLLI.

PHOTO PROVIDED

call back.

Due to the current situation of Covid, the University of Vermont expects all participants at UVM sponsored non-credit events (including OLLI) will be vaccinated. Masks are optional and welcomed. For full health and safety information, go to www.learn.uvm.edu/olli/springfield.

The next program, on Tuesday, Nov. 28, will be "The Nature of Weather Patterns," presented by Mark Breen, voice of "Eye on the Sky" and senior meteorologist at the Fairbanks Museum. This will be the final program of this fall semester.

SEVCA executive director

WESTMINSTER, Vt. – The Board of Directors of Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) is pleased to announce that it has hired Josh Davis of Brattleboro to serve as SEVCA's executive director. Davis has led Groundworks Collaborative as their executive director for the past 11 years, guiding the creation of Groundworks from the merger of The Brattleboro Drop-in Center and Morningside

Shelter.

Prior to his time at Groundworks, Davis completed a master's degree in sustainable development from The School for International Training, and worked as a Peace Corps volunteer in Namibia as well as spending time working in Japan and Kosovo.

"Throughout my time at Groundworks and as a local resident, I've come to know and deeply appreciate the vital role SEVCA

plays in our community, both as a critical partner and a provider of services and programs," said Davis. "I'm thrilled to be joining a terrific team and working together to make real and lasting improvements in the lives of individuals and families across southeastern Vermont." Davis will begin at SEVCA on Jan. 1, 2024.

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The Story of Us

BY RON PATCH

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I think it was back in May when I wrote an article about a book I wanted to publish this March. It would be a book of other peoples' stories. I asked readers to write a couple stories for this book. I've had a good response, but I need more stories.

We all have stories. We tell stories without even thinking about it. They are part of our life. Dorothy Canfield Fisher best explained it this way: "We treasure

our remembered people and doings because they are comments on human life, drawn from somebody's first-hand experience.... We know very well that these humble anecdotes would seem to people of the big world no more than pinches of dust – or perhaps single blades of grass from a meadow."

Some say they can't write. Nonsense, of course you can. If you can tell stories, you can write them down. Don't worry about grammar. I have been corrected many times when I say, "I graduated Chester High School in 1969." "No," they say. "You graduated 'from' Chester High School."

We do have our own way of speaking. I don't think it's wrong. It's who we are. Gordon Gates wrote some wonderful stories, but he couldn't spell worth a hill of beans.

Along with memories, I'm looking for those who just like to write. Maybe late at night, when you are alone, you set your thoughts to paper. I'd like to see them.

As I travel around the area doing business, I see interesting forms of yard art. Some are very creative. It's something they are compelled to do. It's in their bones. Yard art is a subject I want to include in the book. It is self-expression at its best.

Danny Clemons and I were out shrooming a while back. We saw a great sculpture of a motorcycle, made from found objects. We were in the Westminster area.



Possible "The Story of Us" book cover.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY RON PATCH

when the ball landed on the color you bet on.

I remember older teenagers having their dungarees rolled up, with a pack of cigarettes rolled up under the sleeve of their t-shirt, strolling along with their steady. Someone should write this story.

The old woman

This is a short story I wrote for

the book. For many years, I maintained an antique clock for an old woman. I would get it running perfectly, here at my place. The last time I worked on the clock, I had it keeping time within three minutes in seven days.

Danny Clemons and I were working on postcards one winter day, when the old woman stopped to visit. Greetings were exchanged. I asked how the clock was doing. "It's 10 minutes slow," she says. That just didn't make sense. I knew what I had done so I asked, "How often do you wind it?" Reply: "Every Monday morning," which is the way it should be done, once every seven days. Now I'm puzzled.

I then asked, "When you wind it, do you reset it to the correct time?" "Do I have to reset the time?" she asked. Danny and I had a good laugh after she left.

This week's old saying: "He's more complex than Vitamin B."



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health news

OPINION

Springfield Hospital welcomes Audrey Dudzik, MD, FACS

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Springfield Hospital is pleased to welcome Audrey Dudzik, MD, FACS, to the general surgery department.

Dr. Dudzik received her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish, and Bachelor of Science in Microbiology, with honors, from Michigan State University. She continued her education by receiving her Master of Science degree in basic medical sciences from Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit, Mich. Dr. Dudzik received her Doctor of Medicine from The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University in Providence, R.I. She completed her general surgery residency and internship at the



Audrey Dudzik.
PHOTO PROVIDED

Memorial Mercer University Medical Center in Savannah, Ga. She is board-certified by the American Board of Surgery, and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. She currently serves on the board and is the medical director of

the Visiting Nurses and Hospice of the southwest region. She is also a member of the Vermont chapter of the American College of Surgeons.

Dr. Dudzik was previously employed as a general surgeon at Central Vermont Medical Center in Berlin, Vt., and Rutland Regional Medical Center in Rutland, Vt. She is currently accepting new patients at Springfield General Surgery, located in the Professional Building on Level A, next to Springfield Hospital, at 29 Ridgewood Road, Springfield, Vt. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 802-885-5600.

Edgar May Masters shine

HARTFORD, Vt. – Swimmers from the Edgar May Health and Recreation Center's Masters Swim Team participated in the 14th annual Leaf Peepers Swim Meet at the Upper Valley Aquatic Center, in Hartford, Vt. The meet consisted of 140 swimmers between the ages of 21-85 years old. The Edgar May was represented by four swimmers who train at the indoor pool in Springfield: Kristen Miller (Ludlow, Vt.), Brooke Decker (Andover, Vt.), Bettina McCrady (Springfield, Vt.), and Oliver Abbott (Woodstock, Vt.). The four swimmers dominated the field in numerous events.

Miller was first in her age group, second overall female, and set a remarkable new age group meet record of 26.08 seconds in the 50 free. In the 100 free, she was first in her



Oliver Abbott, Bettina McCrady, Kristen Miller, and Brooke Decker.
PHOTO PROVIDED

age group and first overall female, with an impressive time of 59.14 seconds.

Abbott secured first place in his age group with a remarkable time of 25.14 seconds in the 50 free. In the 500 free, he dominated his age group, finishing in first place with a time of six minutes and 10 seconds. He claimed another first place win in his age group in the 25 back, swimming the event in just 14 seconds.

McCrady took first place in her age group in the 25 free, and set a new age group meet record with a time of 18.86 seconds.

Decker earned first place in her age group in the 25 free, and set a new age group meet record with a remarkable time of 14.61 seconds.

These exceptional performances not only reflect the swimmers' hard work and dedication, but also set the bar for excellence in their respective age groups.

For those interested in joining the Edgar May Mas-

ters Swim Team, the word "Masters" has nothing to do with your skill level or current ability in the pool, just your age. Masters Swim is for those looking to improve their fitness through the sport of swimming. Workouts will vary strokes, and throughout the week focus on speed, endurance, and technique. There are three workouts per week at the Edgar May: Monday from 6-7 a.m., Thursday from 6-7 p.m., and Saturday from 7-8 a.m. This program is led by Kristen Miller, our wellness director. She is a former Division 1 swimmer and trained U.S. Masters Swimming coach.

The next exciting opportunity to compete for Edgar May Masters swimmers will be at The GYM Turkey Day Prep Meet, which is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 19. The event will take place at the YMCA Allard Center in Goffstown, N.H.

The Edgar May Health and Recreation Center, 140 Clinton Street in Springfield, provides area residents of all ages with the opportunities and resources necessary to live an active and healthy lifestyle in a safe, clean, and supportive environment. For more information, call 802-885-2568, email info@edgarmay.org, or visit www.edgarmay.org.

North Star Vision moves to 100 River Street

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – North Star Health recently completed renovation of a second-floor area of its flagship community health center in Springfield, Vt., to make room for North Star Vision to join the lineup of health services available there.

Already a familiar and trusted provider of quality eye care for area adults, children, and families, North Star Vision (formerly Lane Eye Associates) has been part of the Springfield community for many years at its previous location just two miles down the road.

"With the recent unveiling of the North Star Health name and identity, it made sense to bring North Star Vision into our centrally located health center at 100 River Street. Eye care is a critical part of the healthcare continuum, and having it available on-site makes it that much more accessible to our residents," said Bob Flint, chair of North Star

Health's Board of Directors.

In anticipation of the move and the resulting increased visibility to the local community and health center patients, North Star Vision also expanded its ability to provide care. Earlier this year, Erik Kuntzsch, OD, MS, ABO, an optometrist and diplomate of the American Board of Optometry, joined optometrist April Harmer and her team of eye care professionals to deliver preventive vision services to people of all ages. Following the clinical guidelines of the American Optometric Association, North Star Vision recommends regular, comprehensive eye exams to promote both eye health and overall health, as well as increase the chances for early detection and treatment of eye and vision problems. Dr. Harmer and Dr. Kuntzsch are welcoming both new and established patients at



North Star Vision team celebrates after cutting the ribbon to their new 100 River Street location.
PHOTO PROVIDED

the Springfield Health Center location.

Community residents met the North Star Vision team and toured the new facility at its location overlooking Comtu Falls in the historically preserved Fellows Gear Shaper building that now houses North Star Health's Springfield Health Center at an open house on Tuesday, Oct. 24.

Josh Dufresne, CEO of North Star Health, is ex-

cited about the move. "Even though vision care has been part of our full spectrum of services for a long time, I'm excited to have North Star Vision come 'home' to our River Street center. It makes it easier for our patients to get multiple healthcare needs met in a single trip to one location, and it exemplifies the North Star commitment to accessible whole-person care."

Dear Editor,

I'm writing about the proposed community garden in the demolished church footprint in Bellows Falls, on the corner of Atkinson and Church streets.

I think it's a wonderful idea. The soil contamination is a problem, not a predicament, and it is likely all the village lots have lead and other contaminants from a century of lead paint on Victorian homes.

There are many ways to address this very common problem in this country, because the U.S. was late in eliminating lead from its paint and fuel. That delay is still negatively af-

fecting our children today, as well as our gardens. However, many economical and effective methods have been used to either ameliorate the contaminants, or to bypass them. Barriers, raised beds, and growing fruiting plants where the fruits do not absorb the contaminants are the easiest methods.

As a permaculture designer and lifelong gardener on three continents, I've seen many types of gardens and situations. The most important key to a successful community garden is the community. I have only lived in Bellows Falls for two years now (this was my third Halloween), but I already see how this community has a great passion for its village and for each other. This green space is in the heart of the town, between two schools, a perfect spot to teach our children about the connection we have to Earth, water, sunshine, oxygen, and build our human and non-human relationships with those tiny soil organisms we rely on for our survival every day. Yes, the village could sell the lot and make some money, but an investment like a community garden pays us all back in both beauty and substance, as well as the invisible gift of building a stronger community regardless of its income or status. Many Bellows Falls residents do not have the space to grow a garden in their yards. This corner lot could fill that need. Bringing children and adults together to learn together, and share in the bounty they have coaxed from the Earth is a noble endeavor.

A garden is a blessing that lives forever. The beautiful stained glass window of St. Francis with his wild animals that used to overlook the villagers from that lot is now based at the BF train station. St. Francis has always been the symbol of nature's protector and healer. He might have been relocated, but his spirit remains on the corner of Atkinson and School streets.

Let's heal that lot together and make a garden of love and beauty, no?

With respect,
Pauline Schneider
Bellows Falls, Vt.

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CHURCH / COMMUNITY

obituaries

Springfield UCC begins creating gathering space



Nick Barlow, Hugh Stevens, and Nate Lewis of Skyline Landscaping. PHOTO PROVIDED

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Fifty-year-old bushes and shrubs were removed from the green space next to First Congregational Church United Church of Christ at 77 Main Street in downtown Springfield, to make way for a gathering place for all. The first phase of what will be a three-year project is completed, thanks to the HOPE Fund of the Vermont UCC Conference, many member donations, and the carefully executed removal, pruning, and trimming of trees by Skyline Landscaping LLC. We also thank our neighbors for their patience with all the noise of chain-

saws and large equipment. Next year, we hope to build a patio with pavers that will let in the rainfall, and bring in seating for rest, conversations, and a lunch break. A mid-sized flowering tree will replace the aging crabapple that was cut down. A pathway from the sidewalk will be accessible for all. The last phase will be developing gardens and plantings of native species for a sustainable landscape. All of the cost for the coming planning and development will be from grants and donations. We are a brave and hope-filled church in a brave little state.

Author Francesca Arnoldy workshop series

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Sharing from her experience as a community doula and hospice volunteer, Francesca (Gurney) Arnoldy, who graduated with Springfield High School's Class of 1999, has made normalizing the topic of death her life's work. She is an accomplished author, speaker, teacher, and provider, and will be holding two free workshops open to all in Springfield on Nov. 13 and 14 – each with a different focus, so that attending both will have double the impact.

On Monday, Nov. 13, from 1-2 p.m., Francesca will be at the Springfield Town Library for a one-hour "Intro-

duction to Death Journaling" workshop.

On Tuesday, Nov. 14, from 1-3 p.m., Francesca will be at the Springfield Area Parent Child Center Training Center in North Springfield for a two-hour "Cultivating Compassion" workshop.

Registration for both of these events is open online at www.eventbrite.com. For more information, call the Springfield Town Library at 802-885-3108, or Springfield Area Parent Child Center at 802-886-5242. To learn more about the work of Francesca Arnoldy, please visit her website at www.francescalynnarnoldy.com.

Ann McCloskey at Rockingham Library

ROCKINGHAM, Vt. – For those who are drawn to memoirs, or those who wish to write their own, join memoirist Ann McCloskey on Saturday, Nov. 18, at 1 p.m., at the Rockingham Library. McCloskey will read from her book "These Dreams of You," and talk about the rewards and challenges in writing an honest and unflinching story laden with emotional content. McCloskey's discussion of her memoir writing process will inform those who are interested in better understanding the genre, and inspire those who may want to write their own stories. The author will be available to sign books for purchase.

In "These Dreams of You," McCloskey tells the story of lovingly raising a remarkable daughter, who developed mental illness and died young. McCloskey's memoir follows her pivot from years of striving to save her anorexic daughter, to ultimately support-

ing her as she lived out her life in the manner she chose as an adult. Written from the heart, McCloskey's personal narrative conveys hope and resilience as she prevails through her grief with no regrets about her parenting.

This memoir has been called sad and devastating, but also full of truth, and love, and grace. While McCloskey's story offers an unvarnished account of her challenges in raising her extraordinary daughter, it also conveys the depth of love she felt for her. Interspersed throughout the narrative are several lyrical letters written by mother to daughter since the daughter's death.

This program is free and open to the public. For more information, call 802-463-4270, email programming@rockinghamlibrary.org, or stop by the Rockingham Library at 65 Westminster Street in Bellows Falls.

ALSTEAD, N.H.

Third Congregational Church UCC, River St.
Sunday worship begins at 11 a.m., led by Pastor Maureen Adams. Communion is the first Sunday of each month. For more information, email alsteadthirdchurch@gmail.com, call 603-835-6358, or go to www.facebook.com/Third-Congregational-UCC-Church-of-Alstead-NH-120645387960916.

BELLOWS FALLS, VT.

Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St.
Services are held most Sundays at 10 a.m., in-person. Please join us. All are welcome. For more information go to Facebook @ImmanuelEppiscopalChurch or to our website www.immanuelepiscopal.org.

United Church of Bellows Falls, UCC, 8 School St.
Worship service starts at 10 a.m. every Sunday. All are welcome to attend. Following the service, there will be a time of refreshments. Many other services are offered throughout the week. If you have any questions or want to learn more, call 802-463-4323, visit the church, or find them on Facebook.

CAVENDISH, VT.

St. James United Methodist Church, 570 Main St.
Please join us Sundays at 8:45 a.m. with Pastor John Hawkins. All are welcome. For more information, call 802-674-3443 or go to www.facebook.com/stjamesumproctorsville.

CHESTER, VT.

First Universalist Parish of Chester, Route 103 North
Services are Sundays at 10 a.m. in person. Sunday services run from September to early June. Contact chestervtuu@gmail.com for a Zoom link for the service.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 313 Main St.
Services are on Wednesdays at 5:30-6 p.m. and on Sundays at 10 a.m., both in person and by Zoom, followed by coffee hour. All are welcome. Handicapped accessible. For a link to the Zoom service or more information about services and events, please visit www.stlukeseiscopalvt.org.

GRAFTON, VT.

Grafton Community Church, 55 Main St.
Worship begins Sunday at 10 a.m. View sermons on Zoom. For more information, go to www.graftoncommunitychurch.org or call 802-843-2346.

LONDONDERRY, VT.

Second Congregational Church of Londonderry, 2051 N. Main St.
Worship service is at 9:30 a.m. in person or online. Fill out a form at www.2ndcongregationalchurchvt.org to be sent a link to the live stream.

LUDLOW, VT.

Annunciation Catholic Church, Corner of Depot and High St.
Masses are celebrated on Saturday at 4:30 p.m. and on Sunday at 9 a.m. For further information, see our website at churchoftheannunciation.org, or call us at 802-228-3451.

Tyson Community Church, Corner of Rt. 100 and Dublin Rd., opposite Echo Lake Inn.
Services are Sundays at 10:30 a.m. No service last Sunday of the month. Email terry.bascom@pm.me or call 802-228-2480.

MOUNT HOLLY, VT.

Village Baptist Church, 32 Church St.
We welcome all to come and worship with us Sunday at 9:30 a.m. For more information, call 802-259-2440.

PERKINSVILLE, VT.

Bow Baptist Church, 1102 Route 5, Weathersfield Bow
Sunday services are 10 a.m., 11 a.m., and 6 p.m., and Wednesday Bible Study and prayer at 7 p.m. For more information, call 802-546-4902.

SPRINGFIELD, VT.

Calvary Baptist Church, 156 Main St.
Sunday services are 9:30 a.m. in person. Services are still streamed at www.facebook.com/calvarybaptistchurchspringfieldvt. For more information, go to www.calvarylovesspringfield.com.

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, 90 Park St.
Sunday Liturgy is 9:30 a.m. and Saturday vespers at 5 p.m. For more information, call 802-885-2615 or Parish Council President Thomas Barton at 802-263-5719.

First Congregational Church, UCC, 77 Main St.
Sunday services are at 10 a.m. in person. Singing is encouraged! For more information, call 802-885-5728, email fccucc@vermontel.net, or go to www.firstchurchspringfield.org.

North Springfield Baptist Church, 581 Giddings Street, North Springfield.
All are welcome and invited to join us for worship on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. For more information, please email the church office at office@nsbcvt.org, or call 802-886-8107. We are handicap accessible.

Michael J. Knoras Sr., 1931-2023

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Michael J. Knoras Sr., 92, died on Thursday, Nov. 2, 2023, at the Jack Byrne Center in Lebanon, N.H., with his family by his side. He was born on July 15, 1931, in Springfield, Vt., the son of Michael and Helen (Lovell) Knoras. He attended Springfield schools, graduating from Springfield High School, Class of 1949, and from the co-op program in 1950.

He served in the United States Air Force as a flight engineer and staff sergeant from 1950-1954.

On Aug. 22, 1964, he married Margaret Hanscom in Springfield, Vt.

Michael was employed as an engineer and purchasing agent with Jones & Lamson Machine Tool Company for 50 years, retiring in 2001 from the Goldman Group as head of purchasing for Jones & Lamson, Bryant Grinder, and Fellows Gear Shaper.

He was a longtime active member of St. Mary's Catholic Church. He was a member and Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus Council #2628 in Springfield. He was a selectman for the Town of Springfield for many years, and also served on many other boards and commissions. At the time of his death, he was still a member of the airport commission, as well as the Historic Mis Club.

Michael enjoyed cooking, and put on many dinners and fish fries over the years at St. Mary's Church in Springfield.

He loved and was very proud of his Polish heritage. He was often found listening to Polish polka music on his cellphone.

He is survived by his wife Peggy; four children Mary-Jo Roldan, Michael Knoras Jr., Edwin Knoras, and Kathleen (Kiki) Boyens; nine grandchildren Mariama Strucula, Brandon Roldan, Alexis Roldan, Alexander Knoras, David Knoras, Taylor Knoras, Eric



Michael Knoras Sr., 1931-2023. PHOTO PROVIDED

Lohutko, Kiko Boyens, and Anthony Boyens; six great-grandchildren Isabelle Austin-Lohutko, Mazlyn Lohutko, Oaklan Lohutko, Beckett Lohutko, Colton Richey, and Blakely Boddreaux. He is also survived by several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He was predeceased by his father Michael Knoras, mother Helen Zielonko, step-father Joe Zielonko, and by two brothers Edward Paskevich and William Paskevich.

Visiting hours will be on Friday evening, Nov. 17, from 6-8 p.m., at the Davis Memorial Chapel in Springfield, Vt.

A Memorial Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, Nov. 18, at 11 a.m., at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Springfield, Vt. Burial will follow in the St. Mary's Cemetery.

Special thank you to VNA staff, Springfield Ambulance Service, Springfield Hospital, Mount Ascutney Hospital, DHMC, and Jack Byrne Palliative Care Center.

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CHURCH SERVICES:
We run Church Services on an alternating schedule. Subject to space. All services are posted online at www.VermontJournal.com.

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calendar

LEGAL NOTICES

NOV. 11 – CHESTER, Vt. – There will be a Christmas Holiday Sale held inside the Gassetts Grange on Saturday, Nov. 11, from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. There are still tables available for those who would like to sell items at the fair. If you are interested in renting a table, please call Donna at 802-591-4290.

LUDLOW, Vt. – There will be a free lunch for veterans on Saturday, Nov. 11, from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., at the Masonic Hall at 22 Buttermilk Falls Road, hosted by the Black River Lafayette

Lodge of the Mizpah Order of Eastern Star, to thank all veterans of the armed forces.

LANGDON, N.H. – The Fall Mountain Craft Fair will take place on Saturday, Nov. 11, from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., at Fall Mountain Regional High School in Langdon, N.H. This annual event features over 60 local vendors, concessions, and childcare, and benefits the Fall Mountain France and Spain 2024 trips, the French and Spanish Clubs, and the Art Club.

NOV. 12 – SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Join us

on Sunday, Nov. 12, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. at the Huber Building, 80 Main Street in Springfield, Vermont to share stories about the need for Universal Healthcare. The Vermont Workers Center is working to bring this issue back to the state legislature. We hope Vermont will be able to lead the way in making healthcare available for everyone, while reducing the cost to the public. We are asking everyone who can to bring a dish to share. We will have separate tables for vegan and non-vegan fare. What is most important is your concerns about how healthcare is paid for. Your voice counts in addressing this important issue.

NOV. 13 – LUDLOW, Vt. – There will be free Bingo at the Black River Valley Senior Center, 10 High Street in Ludlow, on Monday, Nov. 13, from 1-3 p.m. Cash prizes and a door prize will be awarded, and refreshments will be served. For more information, call 802-228-7421.

NOV. 16 – LUDLOW, Vt. – There will be a free community lunch on Thursday, Nov. 16, at 12 p.m., at the Ludlow Community Center Cafeteria, 37 Main Street. This will be a full-course turkey dinner, with Bingo to follow the meal. All are welcome.

NOV. 18 – S. LONDONDERRY, Vt. – The South Londonderry Free Library invites kids of all ages to a Thanksgiving workshop with Casey Junker Bailey on Saturday, Nov. 18, at 10:30 a.m. We'll be making crayon print wall hangings and hand

bound thankful books for Thanksgiving festivities. The program is free of charge and, thanks to a generous grant from the Stratton Foundation, each family will receive the storybook "Thankful," to keep. For more information on our monthly programs for kids, contact the library at 802-824-3371.

WALPOLE, N.H. – On Saturday, Nov. 18 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., the First Congregational Church of Walpole on the Common will be revitalizing their much loved Mistletoe Mart. Among items offered will be candy, baked goods, a pet table, a make-and-take card station, jewelry, holiday gifts, coffee and donuts, and the always anticipated white elephant room. The expanded seating Holiday Luncheon is from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., with a choice of soups, a variety of sandwiches, and three dessert selections. Do some early Christmas shopping and enjoy a festive lunch.

NOV. 22 – WALPOLE, N.H. – The First Congregational Church of Walpole will be having their annual Pie Sale on Wednesday, Nov. 22, at the Walpole Post Office, starting at 9 a.m. Come get your Thanksgiving pies and other baked goods.

SUNDAYS – CHESTER, Vt. – Six Loose Ladies hosts Odd Bobbins Spinners the second Sunday of each month from 1-4 p.m. at their location on the Common in Chester.

CHESTER, Vt. – The Gassetts Grange holds a dance and open mic night on the second Sunday of

every month, from 1-4 p.m., with live music by Green Mountain Express. Admission and food purchases are by donation. Call Doug or Donna with any questions at 802-591-4290.

MONDAYS – ROCKINGHAM, Vt. – The Rockingham Library hosts a chess club each Monday from 3-5:30 p.m., led by Mike Sola. All levels of players will be welcomed.

LUDLOW, Vt. – Zumba classes, Mondays at 9:30 a.m. at the Spring House at Jackson Gore. All fitness levels welcome. Call 802-228-1419 for more information.

LUDLOW, Vt. – Aquatic Aerobics, Mondays at 10:35 a.m. at the Spring House at Jackson Gore. Call 802-228-1419 for more information.

TUESDAYS – BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Come check out TOPS – Take Off Pounds Sensibly. We are a nonjudgmental, affordable, and supportive weight loss group. The first visit is free. We are taking Covid precautions so a mask is required while attending the meeting. All are welcome; youth must be at least 9 to attend and have parental permission. Meetings are every Tuesday at 25 Cherry Hill in Bellows Falls. Weigh-ins start at 5:45 p.m.

WEDNESDAYS – CHESTER, Vt. – Knitting with Friends at Six Loose Ladies on the Chester Common, Wednesdays, from 10 a.m. to noon.

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. –

Frances Barsky leads a weekly creative writing workshop at the Rockingham Library from 1-2:30 p.m. Bring a laptop or a pen and paper.

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Knitting Together, every Wednesday, 1-3 p.m., at Village Square Booksellers, knitting hats and mittens for our school kids. We provide yarn, some direction, and an enjoyable visit. Acrylic yarn donations are always welcome. For more information, contact Caroline at 802-463-4653.

THURSDAYS – CHESTER, Vt. – Knit Knite at Six Loose Ladies on the Chester Common Thursdays, from 5-8 p.m., and via Zoom, from 7-8 p.m.

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Free Chair Yoga classes for ages 50 and over are held on Thursdays from 9-9:45 a.m., at the Springfield Senior Center, 139 Main Street. All equipment is provided.

WALPOLE, N.H. – Alcoholics Anonymous women's meeting, a 12-step recovery program for women who have a desire to stop drinking, is happening every Thursday at 6 p.m. at the St. John's Episcopal Church at the corner of Westminster and Elm streets in Walpole, N.H. For more information, call Viva at 802-732-8330.

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Genealogy enthusiast Wayne Blanchard will be at the Rockingham Library on Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. If you own a laptop, please bring it along. Both beginners and seasoned genealogists are welcome.

PROCTORSVILLE, Vt. – On Thursdays at 6 p.m., join Lori Wright for a yoga class. Contact Lori Wright at 603-401-8123 or visit www.dgbodyworks.com for more information. Private classes are available.

LUDLOW, Vt. – Certified instructor Helena Wu will teach Tai Chi classes every Thursday, from 9-10 a.m., at the Black River Valley Senior Center, 10 High Street in Ludlow. Classes are free, and are limited to 10 participants. Registration is required. For more information, contact the Senior Center at 802-228-7421, or Helena Wu at 802-289-7369.

FRIDAYS – CHESTER, Vt. – Alcoholics Anonymous meetings held every Friday at 6:30 p.m. at St. Joseph's Church, located at 96 South Main Street in Chester. If you have a problem with alcohol, this is an understanding place to come to.

SATURDAYS – LUDLOW, Vt. – Zumba classes, Saturdays at 9 a.m. at the Spring House at Jackson Gore. All fitness levels welcome. Call 802-228-1419 for more information.

LUDLOW, Vt. – Yoga, Saturdays at 10 a.m. at the Spring House at Jackson Gore. Call 802-228-1419 for more information.

PROCTORSVILLE, Vt. – On Saturdays at 9 a.m., join Lori Wright for a yoga class. Contact Lori Wright at 603-401-8123 or visit www.dgbodyworks.com for more information. Private classes are available.

DAILY – REGION – If you want to drink that's your business, but if you want to stop, that's ours. Contact Alcoholics Anonymous at www.aavt.org or call your local hotline at 802-802-2288 and join a meeting. You are not alone.

TOWN OF GRAFTON Equipment Operator/Truck Driver

The Town of Grafton, Vermont is seeking qualified applicants for a full-time Equipment Operator/Truck Driver. Job duties include snow plowing, salting, and sanding in the winter months, and general highway maintenance and construction work in the other months. The employee must be able to perform general labor duties and minor repairs and maintenance to the highway equipment. Ability to communicate in a courteous manner to co-workers and the general public is required. Must have a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

The Town of Grafton is an Equal Employment Opportunity employer and does offer an excellent benefits package.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Apply to: Morgan Wilbur, Town Administrator, PO Box 180, Grafton, VT 05146, or by email at townadmin@graftonvt.org

TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD TAXPAYER NOTICE

The second quarter installment of the 2023-2024 Town & Town School District Taxes is due and payable **November 15, 2023**. Payments can be made as follows:

- In person or through the mail.
- Dropped into our mail slot located in the white door that faces Main Street or into the mail slot located in the door on the second floor at the top of the outside stairs.
- Electronically on the town's website at <https://springfieldvt.gov>. A fee is charged for this method of payment.

Payment receipts available in person or by including a stamped self-addressed return envelope or an email address. Town Hall is open M-F 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Barbara A. Courchesne, Treasurer

Springfield Public Meeting Riverwalk Alternatives Presentation

6:00 PM
Monday November 27, 2023
Selectboard Hall
96 Main Street
Third Floor
Springfield, VT

The Town of Springfield is investigating Pedestrian improvements to River Street from Chester Rd. to Elm Hill St. We are hosting a public meeting to gather public input on Alternatives. Please attend and provide your thoughts. If you are unable to attend and have comments/questions, please contact Martha Harrison, Municipal Project Manager, Mount Ascutney Regional Planning Commission, 802-674-9201x122 mharrison@marcvt.org

We Want to Hear from You!

TOWN OF CHESTER Whiting Library Board of Trustees

The Whiting Library is seeking an individual to be appointed to the Board of Trustees. This position involves attending monthly meetings; working with other trustees overseeing the general operations of the library; assisting with budget preparations; promoting and advocating for the library in the community; and other necessary duties. Letters of Interest must be emailed to Matthew Gorsky at mgorsky@whitinglibrary.org no later than November 13, 2023.

TOWN OF CHESTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY WATER/WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR

The Town of Chester has a full-time employment opportunity available in its Water/Wastewater Department. This job is specific to the position of Operator of the Wastewater Plant and Municipal Water System. Minimum requirements are:

- * High School Diploma or equivalent
- * Minimum of a VT GD 2 Domestic WW Operator Certification preferred but will train the right applicant
- * Minimum of a Grade 3 Water Certification or the ability to obtain the Grade 3 Certification within 2 years
- * Two years applicable experience in all phases of water/wastewater system operation and maintenance preferred
- * Significant knowledge of Vermont regulatory and reporting requirements to ensure compliance with all conditions of water and wastewater permits preferred.
- * Ability to deal with the public in a positive manner
- * General contracting and basic maintenance skills a plus
- * Willingness to work alongside other departments

Starting salary will be determined based on experience with a competitive benefits package. The position will remain open until filled. Please submit Employment Application and Resume to the Chester Town Manager's Office, 556 Elm Street, P.O. Box 370, Chester, VT, 05143.



Town of Westminster
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DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD (DRB) WESTMINSTER TOWN HALL Westminster, Vermont

Legal Notice

The Westminster Development Review Board will meet at 6:30 pm on **Monday, December 4, 2023** to consider the following:

Application # 24-18

Application # 24-18 (Preliminary Plat Hearing) James & Linda Marcille property located at 122 Old Ledge Road. The Applicant is requesting a major subdivision. Application will be reviewed under **Section 311 Site Plan Review; Section 447 Rural Residential District; and Article VIII Subdivision of Land (Major Subdivision)** of the adopted 2017 Zoning Bylaws.

Application # 24-19

Application # 24-19 Aurelius DiBernardo property located off Route 121. The Applicant is requesting a Lot Line Adjustment. Application will be reviewed under **Section 311 Site Plan Review; Section 446 Residential District;** of the adopted 2017 Zoning Bylaws.

Participation in the proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to make any subsequent appeals.

The application is available for review in the Westminster Town Hall, 3651 US Route 5 Westminster, Vermont 05158, Monday – Friday from 8:30 am - 4:00 pm.

State of Vermont

Superior Court
Windsor Unit

Probate Division
Case No. 23-PR-06456

In re: Estate of John M. Gabert

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the creditors of John M. Gabert, late of Springfield, Vermont.

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or estate must present their claims in writing within 4 months of the first publication of this notice. **The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be forever barred if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.**

Dated: November 2, 2023

/s/William E. Dakin, Jr.
William E. Dakin, Jr., Administrator
c/o Dakin & Benelli, P.C.
PO Box 499
Chester, VT 05143
802-875-4000

Name of Publication: The Vermont Journal

Publication Date: Nov. 08, 2023

Address of Probate Court:
Vermont Superior Court
Windsor Unit, Probate Division
12 The Green
Woodstock, VT 05091

classifieds

BUYING/SELLING

BUYING-SELLING Coins, Paper Money, Vintage Sports-Postcards, Comics. See our displays at ANTIQUE CENTERS in Chester and Quechee. Open 7 Days. 802-379-2353. House calls available.

ESTATE SALE

Estate sale Friday and Saturday, Nov. 10 and 11, from 9 am - 5 pm, 76 Elm Hill, Springfield, VT. Years of collecting, quality antiques and modern décor, no junk. 802-885-3050.

FIREWOOD

Firewood for sale, 1 ton log load truck, 1 cord at 8-10 foot length, \$130 a cord. You cut and split. Delivered to Chester and Londonderry. 802-875-2646.

Free firewood, must have your own pickup truck and saw, Windham, Vt. 802-875-2646.

FOR SALE

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. - 2012 Basha Edge Sport 150 Scooter, new tires, battery, air filter, lights all work, includes cover, lockable luggage, color yellow, odometer is 2,233. Fires right up. Asking \$900. Call 802-885-2370.

MERCURY MARQUI, 2004, mint condition. This car was owned and maintained by one owner. 113,000 miles, clean inside and out. \$4,500. Please call for photos 802-770-0569.

OVER 2000 BROKEN-IN TIRES
MANY SETS OF 4



CANON TIRE
 I-91, Exit 8, Ascutney, VT
802-674-5600
NEW TIRES TOO!!

RON PATCH

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802-374-0119

GUNS WANTED

REGION - Guns wanted. Hand-guns, rifles, or shotguns. Top prices paid. Call Ray at 802-775-2859 or 802-236-7213.

HELP WANTED

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Nonprofit Windsor County social service agency seeking full-time Assistant Director. Professional, self-motivated and knowledgeable with excellent communication and technical skills. Previous experience preferred. Competitive salary and benefits. For detailed job description submit cover letter and resume to: kkeillingtonbrngns@gmail.com.

Chef wanted. Part-time, 4-5 days/month, includes menu planning, prep work, cooking, and serving local community meals. A program of Black River Good Neighbor Services, meals are offered twice monthly. Experience with large quantity cooking necessary, 20-24 hours/month. Competitive salary offered. Please contact Krey Kellington at 802-228-3663.

CHARLESTOWN, N.H. - FT/PT Second shift available, hours between 3-9, Direct Care for Elderly in Family-owned Assisted Living. Call 603-826-0840.

PT Manager for the Chester Andover Family Center Thrift Shop, 25-30 hours per week, \$25/hour. Full job description at www.chester-andoverfamilycenter.org. Email resume to cafc302@gmail.com.

Looking for a reliable person to snowplow and take care of sidewalks. Snow Blowers on site to use. Easy plowing, apartment complex. Must be able to salt and sand. Salt provided for walkways. Willing to do a contract price or per plow. Readsboro, Vt. Call 802-388-6174.

Seeking a maintenance position for an apartment complex, full/part time with a monthly salary along with hourly billables. Call 802-338-6174 for details.

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LUDLOW, Vt. - Snowplowing and sanding, Ludlow area, residential only. Reasonable rates. Contact SK Logging at 802-384-0313.

featured pet



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 802-885-3997
 www.spfldhumane.org

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 4 Cylinder
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2016 Jeep Patriot Sport
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 Auto
 4x4



2016 Honda HRV
 AWD
 Cruise Control
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 Fully Loaded

2015 Honda CRV EX-L
 AWD
 Auto
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Weekly SUDOKU
 Answer

3	4	1	9	8	5	6	2	7
9	6	5	4	2	7	3	8	1
8	2	7	3	6	1	9	4	5
7	3	6	5	4	2	1	9	8
4	5	9	1	3	8	7	6	2
1	8	2	7	9	6	5	3	4
5	9	4	8	7	3	2	1	6
2	1	8	6	5	9	4	7	3
6	7	3	2	1	4	8	5	9

King Crossword
 Answers

Solution time: 22 mins.

H	A	L	O	I	M	P	J	U	T	E	
O	P	E	R	A	T	O	R	E	H	U	D
C	R	O	N	K	I	T	E	T	O	N	G
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Y	E	A	R	N	D	E	C	K			
A	S	H	Y	T	E	R	M	I	T	E	
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C	A	L	F	N	O	T	Q	U	I	T	E
O	G	L	E	D	O	E	S	G	O	O	D
T	S	A	R	S	O	S	S	U	N	S	

yellow page BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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See <http://galleryvault.org> for workshop details and to register:
 Joyful Calligraphy Workshop with Jorika Stockwell 11/11

Current Shows:
 Painted Silk Scarves by Teresa Hillary
 Wonders of Fall by VAULT Artists
 (01/24/24 - 1FN - 13)

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 (11/22/23 - 52)

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 (11/22/23 - 52)

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 (11/08/23 - 13)

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 (08/14/24 - 1FN - 52)

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 (11/08/23 - 13)

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 (11/22/23 - 13)

Okemo Valley TV

LOCAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS THIS WEEK

- Ludlow Halloween Celebration
- Mount Holly Emergency Services
- Yoh Theatre Players
- Green Horn Live
- John Specker fiddle

Okemo Valley TV now has its own app on all of the main streaming platforms! Apple TV, Roku, Amazon Fire TV, Google Play, and mobile (iOS & Android)
 (01/03/24 - 1FN - 13)

arts & events HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Sam Robbins and Sandy Bailey at Stage 33

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Sam Robbins and Sandy Bailey will co-headline Stage 33 Live, 33 Bridge Street in Bellows Falls, Vt., on Sunday, Nov. 19, at 7 p.m. Advance tickets can be purchased through www.stage33live.com for guaranteed entry. There is limited seating, and the event will be recorded and filmed.

Nashville-based Sam Robbins' music nods to classic 70s singer-songwriters like James Taylor and Neil Young while giving it a modern, upbeat edge. He was a winner in the Kerrville Folk Festival New Folk competition,

one of the largest and most prestigious songwriting competitions in the country. A full time troubadour, he plays over 150 shows a year across the country including the Kerrville Folk Festival main stage, Dripping Springs Songwriter's Festival, and Falcon Ridge Folk Festival, where he was voted one of the "Most Wanted to Return" artists. A graduate of Berklee College of Music's songwriting department, Sam has hosted songwriting workshops and masterclasses, including at the Harvard Music Department.

Soul and folk singer-songwriter Sandy Bailey

has been compared to Norah Jones, Patsy Cline, Susan Tedeschi, and Patti Smith – but has a sound all her own, incorporating elements of gospel, blues, soul, and classic Americana. A biracial woman and single mother, she left behind her Pentecostal upbringing in favor of a life of making art and music. Mentored by Gretchen Peters and Mary Gauthier, she was chosen as one of 11 songwriters to attend Club Passim's 2022 Hilltop Songwriting Residency. She's shared stages with artists like Lucy Kaplansky, Eilen Jewel, Christine Lavin, and Heather Maloney. Her new album, "Daughter of Abraham," includes performances by guitarist Ryan Hommel (Amos Lee), bassist and engineer Marc Seedorf (Dinosaur Jr., Lou Barlow), and drummer Don McAulay (The Rolling Stones, Neil Young).

Brighten downtown Springfield for the holidays

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Each year, the Springfield Regional Chamber of Commerce orchestrates the illumination of downtown Springfield, going beyond the lampposts on Main Street. The lampposts, Santa's house, and the community holiday tree are all infused with a festive glow that fosters a sense of warmth and unity throughout the winter months. This cherished tradition not only transforms the townscape into a welcoming spectacle, but also provides a delightful experience for both residents and visitors.

As we diligently prepare for this year's holiday program, we face the challenge of replacing worn-out strands of lights used in previous years. The expense of acquiring new lights is substantial, but with collaborative effort, we can make it a reality. We invite businesses, organizations, and individuals to consider sponsoring Brighten Downtown, contributing to the continuation of this special tradition in Springfield.

With a modest contribution, you can actively support the festive illumination of our downtown area, playing a crucial role in bringing the holiday spirit

to Springfield. Your generosity will be publicly acknowledged through social media channels and a press release, allowing you to be a part of something truly special, and make a meaningful impact on our community.

We appreciate any and all support. Anyone with questions about Brighten Downtown for the Holidays, please contact Alice at the chamber at 802-885-2779 or alice@springfieldvt.com. Checks can be made payable to "Springfield Regional Chamber" and sent to Springfield Regional Chamber, 56 Main Street, Ste 2, Springfield, VT 05156.

Bellows Falls Emblem Club annual Thanksgiving pie sale

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The Bellows Falls Emblem Club will hold their annual pie sale on Nov. 22, at Simone's Styling Salon, 41 Square, next door to the former Richards Group Insurance Co. This pie sale helps with our donations to the local community and to our scholarship fund to Bellows Falls Union High

School and Fall Mountain Regional High School.

Pre-order the pies of your choice by Nov. 18, or stop in and see what we have. Call Simone at 802-463-3573 or 802-463-3992. Leave a message if no answer.



Order your pies today! PHOTO PROVIDED

Walpole holiday fun events

WALPOLE, N.H. – Walpole welcomes you to holiday fun on Saturday, Nov. 18, from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., with several events throughout town.

The Farmers Market on the Common, with multiple vendors of fresh produce, meat, cheese, greens, plus crafts and gift items.

See their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/GreatRiverCoop.

Mistletoe Mart will be at the Congregational Church on the Common with lunch, candy, baked goods, crafts, white elephants, gifts, and trims. Visit www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalWalpoleNH for

more information. And finally, the Holiday Fair at St. John's across from the Common, with a Cookie Walk (choose and pay by the pound), baked goods, preserves, homemade treasures, antiques, and a 50-50 raffle. More information can be found at www.stjohnswalpole.org.

"Autumn Color/Winter White" at the VAULT

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Gallery at the VAULT is proud to present a new Open Wall show, "Autumn Color/Winter White." This show includes beautiful paintings, photographs, clay sculpture, paper sculpture, jewelry, wooden boxes, and knitted and crocheted clothing. We also have hand painted children's and adult furniture by Corky Bond, which is part of our artful flea. The talent of our neighbors and friends around Spring-

field is remarkable. This is a wonderful show. Thank you to all the participants. The works will be on display until Dec. 27.

Open Wall is a non-juried show for any artists living in a 30-mile radius of Springfield. For more information, please call 802-885-7111, email galleryvault@vermontel.net, visit www.galleryvault.org or the gallery's Facebook page, or come into Gallery at the VAULT, 68 Main Street in Springfield. We are open Wednesday,



Howe Williams' work. PHOTO PROVIDED

Thursday, and Saturday, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Friday, 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

OKEMO MOUNTAIN SCHOOL SKI SWAP

SKIS · SNOWBOARDS · GEAR

NOV. 17-19 **ROUND HOUSE AT JACKSON GORE**

FRIDAY 4 PM - 7 PM
SATURDAY 9 AM - 5 PM
SUNDAY 9 AM - 1 PM

NEW AND USED EQUIPMENT
To sell your used equipment, it must be dropped off at the Round House at Jackson Gore from 10 am. - 3 p.m. on the following dates:
SAT, NOV 11 | SUN, NOV 12 | WED, NOV 15

ALL SALES BENEFIT OKEMO MOUNTAIN SCHOOL
OKEMOMOUNTAINSCHOOL.ORG

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

3	4			5		2		
	6			2				1
		7	3			9	4	
7				4				8
		9	1					6
	8			6	5			
5				7		2		
2	1		6				7	
		3			4	8		9

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Angelic ring
5 Little rascal
8 Burlap fiber
12 Switchboard worker
14 Barak of Israel
15 Longtime CBS News anchor Walter
16 Chinese secret society
17 Aachen article
18 Glide
20 Long
23 Pack of cards
24 Wan
25 Wood eater
28 1959 Kingston Trio hit
29 Relinquish
30 Flamenco cheer
32 "Char" lotte's Web' author
34 Boring
35 Unctuous
36 Test versions
37 Catch some Z's
40 Flow out
41 Young cow
42 Almost
47 Leer at
48 Acts altruistically

DOWN

1 Ad —
2 Earth Day mo.
3 Zodiac cat
4 Cantankerous
5 "Don't rub —!"
6 Witticism
7 Keep from spoiling
8 Lakeside rental
9 "Oops!"

10 Casserole base
11 Jittery
13 Related
19 Summit
20 Orange veggie
21 Noble Italian family
22 Pequod captain
23 God
25 Hindmost
26 Talk up
27 First lady of scat
29 Brainiac
31 Goller Ernie
33 Stereo component
34 Fixes, as software
36 Cookouts, briefly
37 Highlander
38 Kvetches
39 Stewpot
40 Summers in Paris
43 Tic-tac-toe win
44 Debtor's note
45 Heavy weight
46 Mag. staff

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Community Lunch

Thursday, November 16th
Serving at Noon
Ludlow Community Center Cafeteria
37 Main Street, Ludlow

A welcoming, homestyle, full-course, Turkey Dinner.

BINGO follows the meal!

Meal provided by:
Black River Good Neighbor Services

All are Welcome, free of charge.

arts & entertainment

“Rising Stars” at Bellows Falls Opera House

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – One of the great joys of concert-going is discovering great new music. Established names may sell tickets, but sometimes the opening act brings down the house on their own. That’s the idea behind the “Catch the Rising Stars” concert at the Bellows Falls Opera House on Nov. 16 – three acts that wowed Bellows Falls audiences are returning for a co-headlining triple bill that is sure to pack a wallop.

Crys Matthews, Peter Mulvey, and BettySoo are three immeasurably talented – and very different – acts. Matthews was unknown to most of the audience when she took the stage at the very first Ray Massucco Concert Series show in February of this year. She left to a standing ovation.

She jokes that she is “the poster-child for intersectionality,” but her songs of compassionate dissent are, as Justin Hiltner of Bluegrass Situation put it, “a reminder of what beauty can occur when we bridge those divides.” She is made for these times. “By wrapping honest emotions around her socially conscious messages and dynamically delivering them with a warm heart and a strong voice, she lifts our spirits just when we need it most,” says American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers creative di-

rector Eric Philbrook.

“I’m so incredibly excited to be returning to the Bellows Falls Opera House,” says Matthews. “Getting to open for Dar Williams there was one of the highlights of that tour, and the community made me feel so welcome and at home. I’m looking forward to singing for and with you all again.”

Peter Mulvey has played Bellows Falls numerous times over the last two decades, and his opening set for The Steel Wheels in April was a tour-de-force. Moving assuredly from his own stunning compositions to songs from the American songbook, to spoken-word pieces, to dazzling, understated guitar work, Mulvey riveted the capacity audience.

“As a young songwriter, without quite knowing it, I did my best to stand up for human decency, and the surest path there: pluralistic democracy. As usual in life, these days I find myself learning from those younger than me,” says Mulvey, who, although in his 50s, recently became a father. “And I’m delighted to get to learn from BettySoo and Chrys, onstage and in real time.”

BettySoo, the “Asian-Americana queen of Austin,” appeared at the 2018 Roots on the River stage as one third of vocal trio Nobody’s Girl. Fresh off a sum-

mer tour with Texas songwriter James McMurtry, she made national news this year when, during encores in Tennessee and Texas – states that have recently passed laws restricting drag performers – the two cross-dressed for the final song of the night. “We were just doing our little bit for humanity,” explained the laconic McMurtry.

“I’m so looking forward to sharing the night with Crys and Peter,” says BettySoo. “They are not only masters of their craft, but they are also vocal champions for justice and compassion.”

Ezra Veitch of Ray’s the Roof Productions is excited for the show. “Ray loved to discover new music, he liked progressive politics, and he would absolutely love this lineup,” says Veitch. Massucco, a beloved local lawyer and music promoter, passed away suddenly last September. The final Ray’s the Roof show of the year will be Karla Bonoff and Livingston Taylor’s “Home For The Holidays” concert on Dec. 16. Media sponsor for all shows is Great Eastern Radio.

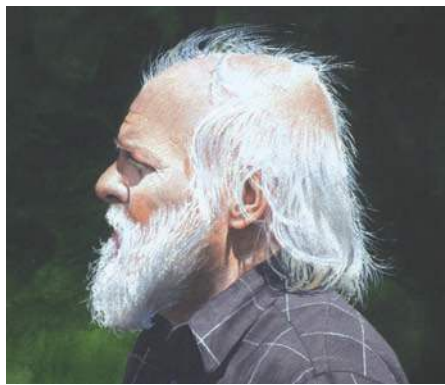
The Bellows Falls Opera House is located at 7 Village Square, Bellows Falls, Vt. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., showtime is 7:30 p.m. Tickets and information can be found at www.bellowsfallsoperahouse.com.

Saxtons River Art Guild portrait workshop

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The Saxtons River Art Guild (SRAG) announces a one-day workshop given by Vermont watercolorist Robert J. O’Brien on Saturday, Nov. 18, at the United Church of Bellows Falls, 8 School Street in Bellows Falls, Vt., from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Workshop fees are discounted for SRAG members. SRAG will have coffee and tea, please bring a lunch.

The theme of the workshop is “Portraits.” The human portrait will be explored in this workshop. Painting from a photographic reference, students will learn how to paint a portrait with all of its nuances and subtleties in watercolor, using a layering process. For a demonstration, Robert will paint a finished portrait, while explaining each step of the painting process.

Please bring your watercolors, paper, and a reference photo featuring a person to work from. You will be working on your own artwork as Robert does his demonstration. A critique and class discussion will be held at the end of the session. If needed, Robert will have several reference photos available to work from. This is open to all abilities, with some drawing and watercolor experience suggested. O’Brien has been painting in watercolor for over 40 years, and is a popular workshop instructor. More information



A portrait by Robert J. O’Brien. PHOTO PROVIDED

and images of his artworks can be found on his website, www.robertjobrien.com.

For workshop registration or more information, please contact Carolyn Berglund at poohbear@ne.rr.com. Masks and Covid vaccinations are suggested for those attending the SRAG workshops.

“Dragon Land” at NXT Gallery

PUTNEY, Vt. – NXT Gallery is excited to announce the opening reception of “Dragon Land,” an exhibition by artist and acupuncturist Sarah H. Paulson. The event will take place on Sunday, Nov. 19, from 4-6 p.m.

Paulson is an artist and acupuncturist based in Putney, Vt. She combines various artistic disciplines, including drawing, painting, music, dance, movement, video, and visual art, to create large-scale, multi-disciplinary pieces. Her work has been exhibited and performed at numerous galleries and venues worldwide. She is also the author of the book of poems, “To My Companion: within the room within the room,” published by the 3 Lights Press.

“My art practice is performative,” says Paulson. “I believe that performance, in its sacred form, has the capacity to bring the human being closest to what it means to be human. This sentiment is at the heart of all my work, including my drawings and paintings.”

Paulson’s “Dragon Land” presents inner worlds, creatures, and dynamic com-

munication through her paintings. The unique aspect of this series is the canvas itself: a collaborative creation, involving artists, dancers, writers, and musicians who dipped their feet in pigment and contributed to the foundation of these artworks. Natural earth-based inks, crafted from a variety of organic sources, serve as the primary medium for this series.

“It is my hope that these landscapes can speak to the viewer in a language that

transcends the spoken word,” Paulson explains. “Art teaches me with every brushstroke and every gesture.”

The Next Stage Gallery is open during events and by appointment with the artist, or by contacting Next Stage at info@nextstagearts.org or 802-451-0053. The exhibit will continue through Feb. 11.

For further information, please contact Heather Ahrenholz at heather@nextstagearts.org or 802-451-0053.

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3. Sign in or Sign up
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5. Pick up at the Ludlow Shaw's Drive Up & Go tent in our parking lot

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 Colchester, VT - (802) 655-2536
 Waterbury, VT - (802) 241-4113

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community news

The MOOVer announces new stops

ROCKINGHAM, Vt. – The MOOVer is adding new stops on its Route 57 Bellows Falls-Ludlow schedule, and on its Route 61 Ludlow Village schedule.

Effective Nov. 24, the MOOVer will add stops at Cavendish Green and at 841 Main Street in Cavendish.

The schedule has been revised slightly to accom-

modate the two stops. It will operate daily Nov. 24, 2023 – April 7, 2024. The bus departs the Penguin Mart in Bellows Falls at 6:20 a.m. and 3:20 p.m., arriving at the Okemo Base Lodge at 7:47 a.m. and 4:47 p.m. The bus leaves Jackson Gore for the Okemo Base Lodge and Bellows Falls at 7:55 a.m. and 4:55 p.m., arriving at the Penguin Mart at

9:25 a.m. and 6:25 p.m.

The Route 61 Ludlow Village route has added stops at The Point, Stoney Fields, West Woods, and Alpen Meadows. The schedule runs weekends and holidays, Dec. 23, 2023 – March 31, 2024.

The full schedules are available at www.moover.com.

Southeastern Vermont Youth Opportunity Regional Forum

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Residents throughout Windham and Windsor counties are encouraged to attend the upcoming Youth Opportunity Regional Forum on Nov. 14, from 5:30-7 p.m., at the River Valley Tech Center at the Howard Dean Educational Center in Springfield, to think together about how we can improve opportunities for youth in our communities. Free pizza and desserts will be served.

On Nov. 14, youth and adults will come together to answer the questions, “What are the youth opportunity success stories and bright spots today in Vermont?” “What are the current gaps, challenges, and concerns about the ability for our youth to succeed and achieve their ambitions?” “What are your ideas or vision points for how we can best support our youth in achieving career, educational, and life success?” The forum will be co-facilitated by the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD), and a local youth facilitator.

These regional forums, taking place across the state, are a chance for people of

all ages, backgrounds, and experiences to come together and share their ideas on a range of topics, including education, job training, community connection, youth voice, mentoring, and more. This input will be combined with ideas gathered from forums across the state, a statewide survey, and stakeholder interviews, and will then be shared with the Future of Vermont Action Team, who will make concrete policy and programmatic recommendations for how Vermont can better support youth in engaging in their communities, participating in the economy of today and the future, and seizing opportunities here in Vermont and beyond.

VCRD community engagement and policy director and initiative lead Jenna Koloski says, “We have the opportunity in Vermont to craft a narrative of hope, aspiration, equity, and potential for all youth around the state. Whether you’re a young person with a vision for the future, or an adult with ideas on how to make a difference, your input is important.”

The Vermont Youth

Opportunity Initiative emerged through The Vermont Proposition Initiative, which was coordinated by the Vermont Council on Rural Development in 2021 through input from thousands of Vermonters. A youth opportunity advisory group of statewide leaders and youth members has developed a statewide engagement process to hear from thousands of Vermonters, and then review findings to make action recommendations to the Future of Vermont Action Team, a diverse group of 20 leaders convened and facilitated by VCRD to implement the ten elements of the Vermont Proposition.

To learn more and stay up to date on the progress of the Youth Opportunity Initiative, additional forums, and the Vermont Proposition, join the VCRD Partnership for the Future of Vermont mailing list at lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/IKMkesB, or visit www.futureofvermont.org/youth-opportunity-initiative.

Password protection strategies

REGION – We all know that the more complicated a password is, the better. They should include a mixture of numbers, punctuation marks, symbols, and uppercase and lowercase letters. But are these precautions enough to keep your digital information safe?

Twitter, Yahoo, and LinkedIn have all fallen prey to online attackers who have stolen entire databases full of passwords. The passwords are scrambled for security, but this offers little comfort when computer programs can make millions of guesses in just a few hours. Because most passwords are based on words in a dictionary combined with a number or symbol, it can take these sophisticated programs even less time to hack them.

The end result is that common password policies don’t prevent the theft of many users’ passwords, which creates a complex, sophisticated, and lucrative shadow industry. Believe it or not, stolen passwords can fetch big money on the black market.

So, what does that mean to you? It means

that every password you’ve created is a valuable and vulnerable commodity worth protecting.

To do so, you should go a step beyond choosing passwords that are hard for a human to guess. Your passwords need to also be difficult for a computer to figure out. Here are some tips.

Favor length over complexity

Longer passwords are more difficult to crack. A minimum of 12 characters is recommended. Consider stringing together the first couple letters of a favorite movie quote, song lyric, or poem. For extra-sensitive accounts, it may make sense to change your passwords on a regular basis. If you like the idea of optimal password protection, but worry you won’t be able to handle many, frequently changing passwords, password managers can help you organize, store, and use multiple passwords safely.

No plain english

Simple strings of numbers, along with passwords that can be found in the dictionary, are the easiest to crack. A strong password should contain one or more uppercase and lowercase characters, numbers, symbols, and even unicode characters.

Mix it up

Many people use the same password for multiple accounts because it’s easier to remember. But this could lead to serious consequences. You may not be too concerned about the personal information stored in your LinkedIn or Twitter accounts, but what would happen if hackers used your compromised password to access your email, brokerage, or bank accounts? If you have trouble remembering multiple passwords, you may want to keep a list on your computer, but don’t store it on your desktop or in your inbox. Give the file a misleading name and bury it in a folder where only you can find it.

There’s no such thing as an impregnable password. Still, putting personal information behind a basic password is like leaving your Porsche in a parking lot with your keys on the dash. By taking preventative measures to strengthen your password, you may be able to help safeguard your sensitive personal data and your privacy.

Written by Huntley Financial Services, www.huntleyfs.com, 802-228-5774.

Senior Solutions Veterans Day observance

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – On Nov. 9, two days before Veterans Day, Senior Solutions is holding a reception in its office at 38 Pleasant Street, Springfield, Vt., from 10 a.m. –

12 p.m. We want to honor those who have served our country in the armed forces. All veterans are invited to attend with family members. We will be recognizing your service and

continued dedication to your communities and each other. Please come share a buffet lunch and companionship with us during this very important and meaningful week.

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*Subject to availability and eligibility