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Cost cuts may close Rockingham Health Center —

BY JOE MILLIKEN
The Vermont Journal

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. — In some unfortunate news, an official announcement was recently made by North Star Health that the Rockingham Health Center, located at 1 Hospital Court in Bellows Falls, will be closing its doors, effective Jan. 1.

In a recent email that was sent out by Chief Executive Officer of North Star Joshua Dufresne to all the patients who currently utilize the center, he stated that the main factor in deciding to close its doors was a reported 50% dropoff in the overall number of patients that have attended the center since 2020.

According to the issued document, The Rockingham Health Center currently serves an estimated 2,300 patients, and when the Bellows Falls facility closes, they are encouraged to transfer to the other nearby North Star centers in Springfield, Vt., or Charlestown, N.H.

Four years ago, Springfield Medical Care Systems separated from Springfield Hospital during a bankruptcy restructuring, and in 2022, the small network of clinics rebranded as North Star Health, offering facilities in Bellows Falls, Springfield, Ludlow, Chester, Londonderry, and Charlestown, N.H.

However, North Star

has struggled recently, and therefore it was decided to close and consolidate the Rockingham facility because it was simply the most expensive to operate. The Rockingham providers will be moving to other North Star clinics in Springfield, Vt., and Charlestown, N.H., and patients will be able to follow their current providers, or choose other area facilities that are accepting new patients. Unfortunately, not everyone is lucky to be mobile enough to follow their doctor to Springfield, Ludlow, Chester, or Charlestown.

The ultimate decision to close the Rockingham facility was recommended after a 2024 study was commis-

sioned by the Green Mountain Care Board, where it was determined that a number of Vermont's smaller medical facilities and hospitals should, given their financial conditions, ultimately close and/or merge with larger parent facilities.

The closing of the Rockingham Health Center has been met with surprise, uncertainty, and dismay from many Bellows Falls residents, especially those who utilize the local facility regularly. Marty Gallagher is the executive director of Greater Rockingham Area Services (GRAS), the local nonprofit organization that owns the building, which was previously the Rockingham Memorial Hospital. Springfield

Hospital's Windham Center for Psychiatric Care, which also operates out of the same building, will not be affected by the changes.

In a recent community forum held at the Rockingham Health Center in late November and attended by Dufresne and the Rockingham Selectboard, the town and community is rallying behind the health center and GRAS, in hopes of changing the minds of North Star Health on the decision to close the health facility.

Rockingham town manager Scott Pickup also reported at the forum that attempts to contact Sen. Bernie Sanders, Sen. Peter Welch, and Rep. Becca Balint with a plea for fund-

ing have thus far been unsuccessful.

Gallagher also attended the forum and reported that the GRAS building was in no danger of closing, and that plans to install a new heating system in the building remain all systems go. She also indicated that if something cannot be worked out with North Star, the goal will be to hopefully bring in some other kind of urgent medical care facility.

The building currently houses, along with the aforementioned Windham Center for Psychiatric Care, a health club and physical therapy facility, as well as the Bellows Falls public access television station FACT TV.

Our Place Drop-in Center provides holiday love —

BY JOE MILLIKEN
The Vermont Journal

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. — Although this writer has certainly been aware of — and written about — all the wonderful gestures and services provided by the Our Place Drop-in Center over the years, somehow it can still be easily forgotten, or perhaps taken for granted at times. Therefore, when I, indeed, “dropped-in” on the center by happenstance the day before Thanksgiving, I was wonderfully surprised and greeted by many warm, smiling faces and a staff that were working hard on what looked like one big, oversized Thanksgiving feast.

I was visiting the modest walk-in center after receiving a tip that they could run-off some quick copies for me, as my printer at home was on the fritz. An energetic and thoughtful volunteer, Amanda, was happy to provide me with copies, providing the service in be-



Student volunteers peel potatoes. PHOTO BY JOE MILLIKEN

was providing, so she could travel to Brattleboro for a job interview. She asked to remain anonymous, but was obviously grateful for the kind gesture as she left the center to a round of “good lucks.”

Amanda was both kind and helpful, giving me the business card of Our Place

tween troubleshooting and answering questions as the other volunteers kept hustling along with preparing the meal.

One duo was preparing sweet potatoes, while some local student volunteers huddled around a pot peeling potatoes. Others were also moving about the kitchen and pantry areas as I took a few photos for the article I now knew I was going to write. Another local visitor was there to pick up a gas card that the center

Drop-in Center Executive Director David Billings. When I reached out to Billings via email, he was happy to respond to my questions and provide more information about their grassroots operation. He was also happy to hear about my positive experience at Our Place, and then expand upon their annual efforts and accomplishments.

“We are grateful that

See **LOVE** on Page 2

Springfield takes on challenging budget season

BY PAULA BENSON
The Vermont Journal

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. — As part of the local control agenda at the Nov. 25 Springfield Selectboard meeting, the board approved a Tier 2 manufacturer's license for Ridgetop Farms LLC Alternatives, a cannabis production operation.

The board had reviewed a comprehensive packet submitted by the applicant, which included maps of the property and proposed cultivation facilities, descriptions of on-site security measures, as well as state-of-the-art air purifying, heating, and freezing systems. Selectboard Chair Kristi Morris commented that he had never seen such a thorough presentation of this type before, and he appreciated the attention to detail.

Amanda Sidler from the Springfield Regional Development Corpora-

tion (SRDC) updated the board on the work SRDC has been doing within the Springfield community since 2021. SRDC was recently recognized by the Vermont Working Communities Challenge (WCC), an initiative to advance “local collaborative efforts that build strong, healthy economies and communities in Vermont's rural towns, regions, and smaller cities.”

Sidler said WCC's overarching goal is to increase “local workplace participation,” and listed some obstacles Springfield residents face when they are unable to accept employment because, for instance, they don't have access to transportation, or cannot afford childcare. Additionally, Sidler pointed out that there are not enough qualified early childhood educators to meet current demand.

WCC supports a variety of programs and free classes in subjects such as digital literacy, where they were able to provide 104 devices

for students. WCC also helps employers connect with resources to find qualified applicants, and to better understand the various challenges their employees might be dealing with.

Morris thanked Sidler for coming in, commenting, “I have to say, I have heard [you speak about WCC] before, but I learn something new every time.”

After undergoing multiple revisions and updates implemented over the past 10 years, town manager Jeff Mobus presented the current version of what will replace the 1983 Employee Handbook to the board for review. Due to the document's length, Mobus told the board he would put the request for approval on the agenda of an upcoming meeting to give the board time for review.

Mobus reported that, “like every town in Vermont,” Springfield is going through their town budget season,

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Bellows Falls Woman's Club November recap

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Members of the Bellows Falls Woman's Club will meet on Dec. 10, at the United Church, School Street, beginning at 1:30 p.m. A Christmas party is planned.

At the Nov. 12 meeting, members heard a presentation given by Kathy Cray. She displayed her antique quilt, and her collection of early 1900s preprinted fabric panels, which could be stitched and made into dolls and small animals as playthings for children. Many of the features of the animals are sewn into the quilt. Also

at the meeting, club members chose the name of a resident of Sterling House and/or of Morning Glory Manor for whom to buy a gift. Wrapped gifts should be brought to the December meeting for distribution to the homes and residents.

Club members were invited to attend Kurn Hattin's annual holiday luncheon and concert on Dec. 13. Announced at the November meeting was the date of the Dec. 14 Parade of Lights event in the village, for which the club will furnish cookies for the Rotary Club's warming tent.

Also announced was Central School's annual Shopping Day, Dec. 18, when the children may buy gifts for their family members; volunteers to wrap the gifts are needed. This fun event starts at 8:30 a.m.

The local club is a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, an international women's organization, whose signature project is domestic and sexual violence awareness and prevention.

Area women interested in joining the club and helping with its projects benefiting area communities may call Membership Chairman Sally McGaffigan at 603-445-2527.



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Liberty Food Fest returns

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The second annual Liberty Food Fest, featuring national and regional leaders in the local food movement and newly elected Vermont lieutenant governor and hemp farmer John S. Rodgers, will be held Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 12-14, at the Bellows Falls Opera House and The Hungry Diner restaurant in Walpole, N.H.

Rodgers, who operates his family's hemp farm in Glover, Vt., will speak on "Growing Cannabis and Freedom" on Saturday, Dec. 14, at 1 p.m., at the Bellows Falls Opera House. He'll be joined at the three-day event by a compelling lineup of national and regional champions of the local food movement, including self-styled "lunatic farmer" Joel Salatin of

Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, Native American activist and former Green Party vice-presidential candidate Winona LaDuke of Minnesota, and national thought leader and filmmaker Matt Kibbe.

Organized by documentary filmmaker Graham Meriwether of Saxtons River and sponsored by Windham's Meadows Bee Farm, the food fest will kick off Thursday evening, Dec. 12, with a sold-out dinner at Walpole's popular Hungry Diner restaurant, with remarks by Salatin, whose passion for local food systems has made him one of the most sought-after opinions and perspectives in the country. Salatin also will speak at food fest sessions on both Friday and Saturday, at the Bellows Falls Opera House.

A full lineup of speakers and films on Friday

and Saturday, at the Opera House, will include lawyer, farmer, and author John Klar; leading organic dairyman Pete Miller of Miller Farms; and Teresa and John Janiszyn of Pete's Stand in Walpole. There will also be a special dinner Friday night in the Bellows Falls Opera House, with warm chili from local favorite Smokin' Bowls, as well as fire-roasted, pasture-raised suckling pigs.

Both days there will be a holiday market in the basement of the Opera House, with a variety of local vendors selling clothes, artwork, and food. There will also be live music and kids' activities.

For more information, please contact Graham Meriwether at graham@leaveitbetter.com, or 802-335-5059, or Heath Meriwether at heath@leaveitbetter.com or 860-806-3073.

LOVE

From Page 1

you had an opportunity to see our little operation at work," Billings responded in his recent email. "Our Place has been serving meals and operating a food pantry here in Bellows Falls for over 30 years. We use monies received from Project Feed The Thousands, a regional food drive started by Larry Smith and the late George Haynes that raises money for Windham

County, Vt., and Hinsdale, N.H., community food centers like ours to purchase all the supplies we need for the dinner baskets each year.

"We source, put together, and deliver approximately 100 turkey meals for the November holiday, and we also do 100 ham dinners for the December holiday. We utilize local products whenever economically possible.

"Throughout the rest of the year, Our Place serves between 100-150 hot meals every single day, depending on demand. This equals out

to 15-25 breakfasts daily, and 80-125 lunches on a daily basis, Monday-Friday. Additionally, Our Place provides supplemental groceries to over 100 families in our catchment area of Rockingham, Athens, Cambridgeport, and Westminster, Vt., and Walpole, N.H."

"We accomplish all this in a safe, friendly, and non-judgmental atmosphere," Billings said. "There is no criteria for service, and all are welcome at Our Place. Of course, we always accept cash donations, which are always needed because [Our Place is] predominantly a community funded entity. Donations can be made by mail to Our Place,

P. O. Box 852, Bellows Falls, VT 05101, and also dropped off at our facility, located at 4 Island Street in Bellows Falls. Nonperishable food items are always accepted and, of course, all donations are tax deductible.

"We especially want to thank...The Vermont Journal for showing interest in promoting our organization and helping to make the community more aware of our dedication to the work we do year-round, ensuring that no one ever goes hungry here or feels there is no one who cares." The Our Place mantra remains, "Connecting people to food and each other." To learn more, please visit www.ourplacevermont.org/donate.

BUDGET

From Page 1

and, "As expected, this is going to be a very difficult

year."

Many communities are looking at larger-than-expected budget increases, and Mobus wanted to take a moment to prepare the town for something similar. "Montpelier was in the news last week looking at a 24% increase. A week earlier, Brattleboro was discussing a 14% increase." Mobus thanked the budget advisory committee and department heads "for taking this challenge head on."

Morris reminded Mobus of a previous discussion the board had that referred to an expected 3.5% expense increase, and that these highly inflated numbers in neighboring communities were disturbing.

Mobus said there would be further discussion, but that many departments were facing considerable challenges, and some were severely understaffed. Some of those department heads were in attendance to address the board during the ensuing budget workshop that followed the regular selectboard meeting.

Monday, Dec. 9, will be the next selectboard meeting and third budget workshop.

Fletcher Female Seminary

BY RON PATCH

802-374-0119
ronpatch27@gmail.com

Recently I was reading an older typewritten document regarding Fletcher Female Seminary. I copy it here as typed. The typist copied what he, or she, read in the 1836 newspaper. There are a couple errors. These errors are probably the work of the typist. It is not easy copying others' work.

Many readers will know this landmark. It's the Huyler-Kibbe place on Route 11, Chester-Springfield Road. In Chester, this area is known as "Kingdom Valley."

Fletcher Female Seminary

"A Circular of the Fletcher Female Seminary published in the Bellows Falls Journal of March 4, 1836.

"The spring and summer terms of this Institution will commence the second Wednesday in March, the fall and winter the fourth Wednesday in August. Each term will consist of two quarters consisting of twelve weeks. The object of opening the Seminary

was to elevate the standing of female education, and it is desirable that the pupils may continue here until they complete a regular course of study.

"The school has been so well patronized that it will the present season consist of three departments, and have a teacher assigned to each, at the same time, all will be superintended by the Principle, Mrs. Fletcher, who will form into a class all wishing to become teachers, and give them instructions as to the best method of successfully explaining the sciences and leading forward the young intellect.

"As the members of Seminary board and receive instructions in the same building, they breathe a literary air constantly. The hours of study, recitation, retirement, and conversation are promptly observed. Little Misses, from five to ten years of age, will be received and have their teacher with them at all times, and will take charge of their drapery and sleeping rooms.

"Branches of science taught here embrace all that

are persued in female Seminaries, together with Latin, Spanish, French and Italian languages. Various kinds of painting, projection of maps, linear and prospective drawing. Lectures will be delivered occasionally upon the different philosophical, chemical, and astronomical apparatus. History, embracing the manners, customs, and costumes of different nations, and revolutions that have occurred, together with other objects too numerous to mention, are explained and illustrated by means of illuminated diagrams, which exercise is very pleasing and interesting.

"Pupils are required to attend public worship on the Sabbath, and when there is no preaching at the Seminary, and are conveyed to and from Church; and as they are usually members of different denominations in choice as to what meeting they attend here.

"The building is well arranged for the accommodation of scholars a number of rooms will be occupied by two only, others by four. It is located in a very retired place and favorable



The Fletcher Female Seminary circa 1910, now a private residence. District School No. 2 in the foreground. Notice the broken glass plate.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE CHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

for study, two miles east of Chester Academy, on the main stage road leading from Maine and New Hampshire to the western states. The stage passes and repasses daily. Although it is desirable that pupils enter the school at the commencement of a term or quarter, yet they will be admitted at any period and charged for the time they spend here. Ladies are requested to furnish their own napkins, a small wash bowl, and a glass tumbler for their rooms; also light if convenient.

"Terms; Including board,

tuition, room, fuel, and washing, from \$15 to \$20 per quarter, payable in advance if convenient. Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher tender their thanks to the patrons of this Seminary which has been in operation only about a year.

"The Superintendent, Principle and teachers would like for the coming season a class of little lads, about twenty in number, from six to twelve years of age, and give them the same watchful care and instruction that Misses receive, though they will occupy separate room, in order to convince themselves if one sex is capable of making greater proficiency in the sciences as the other."

"N.B. The above Institu-

tion is in no way connected with Chester Academy."

The photo with this article is a glass plate negative from Chester Historical Society. It is the Seminary mentioned in this story. You'll notice the glass is broken at upper left. This could easily be touched up in Photoshop, but something would be lost.

There's a very famous glass plate negative of Abraham Lincoln, taken by Matthew Brady. That glass negative is also broken. The broken negative adds something I lack words to describe.

This week's old saying: "People who live in stone houses shouldn't throw glasses."

Cavendish Historical Society Holiday Fiesta

CAVENDISH, Vt. - On Saturday, Dec. 14, from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., the Cavendish Historical Society (CHS) will be hosting a holiday fiesta at the Cavendish Library, 573 Main Street, Proctorsville, thanks to a grant from the Cavendish Community Fund.

Historical societies often have old books they aren't

sure what to do with. CHS is no exception. However, it turns out they make beautiful ornaments. Using pages from old hymnals, you can make a variety of ornaments, from angels, to birds, paper chains, stars, and more. Other projects and treats will be on hand to explore, enjoy, and taste, including a piñata for children.

This event is free and open to the public. All materials provided with projects suitable for different ages. In the event of severe weather, please check www.facebook.com/cavendishvt for updates. For more information, email margocaulfield@icloud.com or call 802-226-7807.

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obituaries

CHURCH SERVICES

Charles A. Burr, 1972-2024

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Charles A. Burr, 51, died unexpectedly at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Mass., on Friday, Nov. 22, 2024. He was born Dec. 16, 1972, in Gainesville, Fla., the son of Barbara (Whitehorn) Burr. He graduated high school in Ocala, Fl.

He married Deborah Horton in Springfield, Vt.

Charlie was employed with McDonald's in Springfield, Vt., for three years, and for the past 12 years has been employed in maintenance with the Fall Mountain Regional School District.

Charlie enjoyed video games, Lego Architecture sets, diamond art, wood-working projects, fishing, and working on cars.

He is survived by his wife Debbie Horton Burr, sister Tammy Fox (Mike), brother Tom Burr (Jodi), brother-in-law Wilbur Horton, sister-in-law Sherry Horton, niece Christina Lawrence, and many nieces, nephews,



Charles Burr, 1972-2024. PHOTO PROVIDED

grandnieces, and grand-nephews.

He was predeceased by his mother Barbara Merritt.

A memorial service will be held at on Saturday, Dec. 14, at 11 a.m., at the Calvary Baptist Church in Springfield, Vt. The Rev. Malcolm Fowler, pastor, will officiate.

Burial will be in the Oakland Cemetery in Springfield, Vt., at a later date.

Davis Memorial Chapel in Springfield, Vt., is assisting with arrangements.

Richard Bilodeau Sr., 1960-2024

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Richard Bilodeau Sr., 64, of New Britain, Conn., passed away on Nov. 19, 2024, at home. Born in 1960, he was the son of Gloria Beauregard and Fernand Bilodeau.

Richard was a kind and loving man, always quick with a story and eager to make everyone feel welcome. He was a true people person, and his engaging conversations and warm personality will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Richard was a dedicated employee at Markem-Image Corporation in Keene, N.H., for 18 years. Even after a progressive disability forced him to leave the workforce, he never lost his passion for creating. He spent countless hours in his workshop, crafting beautiful woodworking pieces that he shared with others at local craft fairs.

A man of many interests, Richard was deeply involved in his community. He served as the president of the Keene Pub Dart League for 21 years, where he shared his love of the game and his skills with his sons and fellow dart enthusiasts. A car enthusiast, Richard cherished his time cruising in his 1970 GTO Judge, and before selling his beloved car, he showcased the carousel red GTO as president of the Keene Area Classic Car Shows.

Above all, Richard was a devoted family man. He was predeceased by his parents. He is survived by his wife Mary Frances (Geary)



Richard Bilodeau. PHOTO PROVIDED

Bilodeau; his sons Shane Bilodeau and his wife Danielle Bilodeau, and Ricky Bilodeau; his stepsons Derek Boardman and his wife Danielle Boardman, and Josh Boardman; his stepdaughter Becky Schrader and her husband Brian Schrader; his cherished grandchildren Ella, Quinn, and Oliver; his stepsiblings; and his dog Welby. His memory will live on in the hearts of his family and all who were fortunate enough to know him.

Calling hours will be held on Dec. 5, from 4-6 p.m., at Fenton and Hennessey in Bellows Falls, Vt. A funeral service will take place on Dec. 6, at 11 a.m., at St. Peter's Church in North Walpole, N.H. Burial will take place in the spring, at Evergreen Cemetery in Winchester, N.H. In lieu of flowers, please consider making donations to the Monadnock Humane Society, where he has adopted two amazing dogs.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Fenton and Hennessey Funeral Home, 55 Westminster Street, Bellows Falls, Vt.

Andrea M. Shattuck, 1950-2024

CUTTINGSVILLE, Vt. – Andrea Marion Shattuck, 74, of Cuttingsville, died peacefully on Nov. 19, 2024, after a courageous battle with an aggressive cancer. She was surrounded by her loved ones in her final moments.

She was born in Rockingham, Vt., on June 2, 1950, the daughter of Andrew Shattuck and Sophie (Salamucha) Fischer. She lived in Vermont for her entire life, primarily in the towns of Bellows Falls, Vergennes, Danby, and Cuttingsville.

Andrea graduated from Bellows Falls High School in 1969. She married Steve Hearne, and they welcomed son Joshua in 1972. Whenever possible she would share about Josh with pride. More recently she had a 19-year relationship with Sam Kinker until his passing in 2019, and considered his daughter Titiana dear to her heart.

Andrea had a great love for others, and often welcomed them into her heart and sometimes home. For many she provided an additional measure of safe haven and unwavering support, including her "number two son" Dave Perron, and her "girls" Amy, Ashley, Heather, Hilary, and Becky Parker.

Andrea was a lifelong learner, and worked a variety of jobs over the years, bringing her sense of style and eye for beauty with her. She especially enjoyed her time working at Ethan Allen Furniture and the Enchanted Dollhouse helping others find just the right pieces to create thoughtful homes. Most recently, she loved her job at the Weston Village Christmas



Andrea Shattuck, 1950-2024. PHOTO PROVIDED

Shop. Her own home was filled with plants, perfectly placed thrifted items, music, books, and on many days with the aroma of a good soup or dessert meant to be shared. She loved cats, and always had one as a companion. Her time with people was precious, and she was able to take a trip to Ireland with Josh, Aunna, and Lizzy, which she often talked about. Talk, yes, she would talk, with the people dear to her heart, phone calls lasting hours or an hour goodbye at the door were not uncommon, were signature Andrea, and are missed already.

She is survived by her son Joshua Hearne; her granddaughters Aunna, Lizzy, and Kyrsti Parker, Kalleigh Hearne, and Kaydence Silva; her sister Mary Ann Broughton; nephews David, John, and Adam; and nieces Patty, Francine, and Allison. She is predeceased by her parents, stepmother, and sister Sabina Evarts.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Fenton and Hennessey Funeral Home, 55 Westminster Street, Bellows Falls, Vt.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Subject to space. May be edited for clarity, grammatical errors, and libelous statements. Must be kept under 400 words. Must include name and town for publication. Viewpoints do not necessarily reflect the views of The Vermont Journal.

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Chester Baptist Church, 162 Main St.

Worship is Sundays at 10:30 a.m. For more information, including online streaming, go to www.chesterbaptist.org.

Andover Community Church, 928 Weston-Andover Rd.

Sunday school at 9:30 a.m. and worship service 10:45 a.m. For more information, go to www.andovercommunitychurch.org.

LONDONDERRY, VT.

First Baptist Church, 62 Crescent St., S. Londonderry

Worship service is Sunday at 10 a.m. at the church. Services will still be live streamed. For more information, visit www.firstbaptistlondonderryvt.org or call 802-856-7266.

LUDLOW, VT.

Ludlow Baptist Church, on the Green, 99 Main St.

Weekly worship services are in-person. Sunday school is at 9:30 a.m. for all ages, and Sunday worship is at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Wednesday's prayer meeting is at 6:30 p.m. For more information, go to www.LudlowBaptist.org.

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CHURCH SERVICES

obituaries

Jane F. Putnam, 1932-2024

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Jane Frances Putnam, 92, of Springfield, Vt., passed away peacefully at home on Nov. 26, 2024, surrounded by her loving family.

Jane was born Sept. 30, 1932, to Ralph and Julia (Slattery) Barber. She grew up in Bellows Falls, Vt., with her four siblings. She attended St. Charles Catholic grammar school, where she made lifelong friends. She graduated from Bellow Falls High School, Class of 1950, and was always very proud of her hometown.

She met and married the love of her life Forrest John "Putt" Putnam in 1954. Together they were married 52 years until his passing in 2006.

She was a devout Catholic, and was an active member of Holy Family Parish (St. Mary's) church for several years. She had many hobbies, including reading, quilting, knitting, doing puzzles, and researching her family ancestry.

Jane leaves behind her children Debbie Birdsey and partner Susan, of Hampstead, N.H.; Mark Putnam and wife Debbie, of Springfield, Vt.; Mary Neronsky, of Venice, Fla.; Nancy Hadley and husband Kevin, of Keene, N.H.; daughter-in-law Lisa Putnam, of Springfield, Vt.; and Jodi Putnam, of Venice, Fla. She also leaves behind seven grandchildren Michael Birdsey, Katie Cone, Tracy Bushey, Christine Putnam, Tim Putnam, Bridget Wentworth, and Tyler Putnam; six great-grandchildren



Jane Putnam, 1932-2024. PHOTO PROVIDED

Kylee Potter, Peyton Cone, Jonathan Sheldon, Jackson Putnam, Savannah Putnam, and Brynley Patch; and several nieces and nephews. Jane was predeceased by her husband Forrest, son Steven, son-in-law Jeffrey Neronsky, grandson Kenny Hadley, and all four of her siblings.

During the last few months of her life, she had wonderful caregivers. The family would like to acknowledge the kindness of Merridee, Meagan, Deb, Amanda, and Janet, the hospice nurse Jessie, and spiritual provider Lucy, as well as the members of the Springfield Ambulance Service.

Services will be on Dec. 12, 2024. Calling hours will be from 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., at the Davis Memorial Chapel. A funeral Mass will follow at 11 a.m., at Holy Family Parish (St. Mary's); both are in Springfield, Vt. There will be a coffee hour following the Mass, next to the church at the Nolan Murray Center. A private burial will be later in the day, at St. Charles Cemetery in Bellows Falls, Vt.

Cynthia Lee Rawson, 1945-2023

RAWSONVILLE, Vt. – Cynthia Lee Rawson, of Boston, and formerly of Rawsonville, Vt., died on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 24, 2023, at Tufts Medical Center in Boston, from multiple medical disabilities.

She was born in Ohio on May 23, 1945, and spent her early years through high school in Rawsonville, a tiny village of the small Town of Jamaica, Vt., that was settled by a Rawson ancestor. After completing high school at the Lyndon Institute in Lyndon Center, Vt., she moved to Boston, having heard about the wonders of the big city from some of Vermont's summer residents.

She graduated from Simmons College (now University) with a bachelor's degree in communications, received her master's degree

from the Boston University School of Public Communications, and subsequently launched her career in public relations. She worked for a decade in senior professional public relations and marketing communications positions, then returned to school for an MBA at Babson College, which facilitated her career change into management positions in the computer industry.

She was buried in a small private ceremony in the Rawsonville Cemetery with her beloved rescue cats Kairos and Segie, who predeceased her. Her parents Plympton Walter Rawson and Mary Hayes Rawson predeceased her as well, and she leaves several cousins and treasured friends. Any questions may be directed to cczum@comcast.net.

Hanson M. Savage, 1961-2024

CHESTER, Vt. – Hanson M. Savage, 63, of Chester, Vt., died Tuesday, Nov. 12. He was born June 18, 1961, in Newport, Vt. He was a Chester High School graduate. Following school, he owned and operated Savage Trucking and H.M. Savage Farm in Chester, Vt.

Hanson was the backbone of his community, and the hub of his family. He was the hardest worker and greatest businessman. He built a legacy, and touched so many lives.

Hanson loved spending time with his family. He and his wife had many amazing adventures while mountain biking, traveling to Florida in the winter months, and being with their two beautiful dogs. He adored his

three grandchildren.

He had a love for equipment and trucks. He valued his memberships with several logging and trucking associations, and was proud of the various awards he earned over the years. He also was a member of the Chester Rod and Gun Club.

On June 26, 1993, in Chester, Vt., he married Cindy Lapointe, who survives. Also surviving are his two daughters Sami and Olivia Savage, and grandchildren Rhett, Walker, and Whitley Muzzey. He was predeceased by his father Hanson M. Savage Sr.

There will be a Celebration of Life at the Chester, Vt., Legion, on Dec. 8, from 1-5 p.m.

Robert C. Wright Sr., 1957-2024

GRAFTON, Vt. – Robert C. Wright Sr., of Grafton, passed away on Nov. 15, 2024, at his home. He was 67. Robert was born on Jan. 13, 1957, in Bellows Falls, Vt., to Cassius and Ruth (Hurlburt) Wright Jr.

Robert attended schools locally, and graduated from Bellows Falls Union High School in 1975. Robert worked as a carpenter and sugar maker for many years, and belonged to the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association and the Grafton Improvement.

Bob is survived by his wife of 34 years Deborah (Martin) Wright, his son

and daughter-in-law Rob and Kristina Wright, and granddaughters Ruthie and Grace, all of Townshend; his sister and brother-in-law Kay and Tim Johnson of Bellows Falls; brother and sister-in-law Dan and Lucille Wright of Maine; as well as several cousins, step-children, and step-grandchildren.

There will be no immediate services, and a Celebration of Life will be held at another time.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Fenton and Hennessey Funeral Home, 55 Westminster Street, Bellows Falls, Vt.

Patricia Rheame, 1938-2024

CHARLESTOWN, N.H. – Patricia Rheame, 86, died Thursday, Nov. 21, 2024, at the Elmwood Center in Claremont, N.H. She was born July 15, 1938, in Londonderry, Vt., the daughter of Frederick and Eleanor L. (Emery) Wilkins. She graduated from Chester High School.

On May 16, 1970, she married Roger Rheame in Charlestown, N.H. He predeceased her on Oct. 28, 2000.

Patricia was employed as Bookkeeper with the Student Conservation Association in Charlestown for many years.

She was a member of the Charlestown Lions Club and the Bellows Falls Emblem Club.

She is survived by three daughters Candice Lee Cenate, Laura Jean Rheame, and Patti Jo Bushway; two grandsons Chris Cenate (Meg) and Corey Cenate (Allie); and four great-grandchildren Hadley, Easton, Eloise, and Adelaide.



Patricia Rheame, 1938-2024. PHOTO PROVIDED

She was predeceased by her parents, and one brother Malcolm Wilkins.

A private graveside service will be held at a later date, at the Pine Crest Cemetery in Charlestown, N.H.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Vermont Elks Association Silver Towers Camp, c/o Brian Gaura, Secretary, 241 Lincoln Avenue, Rutland, VT 05702.

Davis Memorial Chapel in Springfield is assisting with arrangements.

Michael A. Russo, 1957-2024

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Michael Anthony Russo, 67, passed away, with his family by his side, on Nov. 26, 2024. He was born on July 25, 1957, in Queens, N.Y., the son of Alfred Russo and Alice Lopez.

Michael was a man who brought laughter and joy in the world. He gave years of knowledge as a teacher. Later, he started his own business with much success.

Michael found great peace and beauty in music. He found great joy in playing music and singing for others to enjoy. His love for his family was felt at every family event.

He is survived by his wife Francisca Russo; children Michael Russo Jr. and Monica Russo; grandchildren Bella, Owen, Adelyn, and Jayden; siblings Steven



Michael Russo, 1957-2024. PHOTO PROVIDED

Russo, Alfred Russo, Nora Ann Russo, and Thomas Russo; his mother Alice Lopez; as well as many nieces and nephews.

He is predeceased by his father Alfred Russo Sr.

A funeral service will be held on Dec. 14, from 2-4 p.m., at the Davis Memorial Chapel in Springfield, Vt.

OBITUARIES: A basic 200-word obituary is \$75, and \$0.50 per word thereafter. A black and white photo is an additional \$10. Email to editor@vermontjournal.com by Monday at 12 p.m.

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

SPRINGFIELD, VT.

North Springfield Baptist Church, 581 Giddings St.
It's ok to not be ok at Christmas. Blue Christmas is a time of quiet worship and reflection, on Wednesday, Dec. 18, at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments served following service.

WALPOLE, N.H.

Walpole Unitarian Church, corner of Union and Main St.
Sunday Service begins at 10 a.m. Services are also available via Zoom. For links and updates, go to www.walpoleunitarianchurch.org.

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calendar

LEGAL NOTICES

HOLIDAY EVENTS

DEC. 5 –
LUDLOW, Vt. – Fletcher Memorial Library, located at 88 Main Street in Ludlow, will be hosting a Community Appreciation Open House on Thursday, Dec. 5, from 4-6 p.m. Come enjoy holiday music and refreshments as you socialize with friends and neighbors. Also, Santa will be on hand at 4:30 p.m., to greet youngsters and those young at heart.

DEC. 6 –
CHESTER, Vt. – Matilda and Three Bears will be having a holiday open house on Saturday, Dec. 6, from 10:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Please come and enjoy the season. We are located at 26 The Common, Chester, Vt. For more

information, call 802-875-6041.

LUDLOW, Vt. – The annual Tree of Remembrance lighting will held be on Friday, Dec. 6. In Ludlow, the tree lighting and holiday singing begins at 5:15 p.m., in Veterans Memorial Park. For Cavendish and Proctorsville, the lighting and holiday singing begins at 6 p.m., on the Cavendish Green.

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield Garden Club will be hosting a Christmas holidays pop-up market at the First Congregational Church, 77 Main Street, on Friday, Dec. 6, from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. We will be selling our handmade wreaths, centerpieces, and other holiday decorations.

DEC. 7 –
WESTON, Vt. – The second annual Weston Rod & Gun

Club Holiday Bazaar is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 7, from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Tables are available for a small fee, and space is limited, so reserve early. Call or text Anna at 802-379-3161 to secure your spot and showcase your wares.

DEC. 14 –
LUDLOW, Vt. – Join us at the Black River Academy Museum Holiday Celebration on Dec. 14, at 4 p.m., with caroling, the Springfield Ukuleleliens, Linda and George Thomson reading “’Twas the Night Before Christmas,” a silent auction, and much more. This event is sure to bring much merriment and joy to your busy holiday season. Admission is by donation. Refreshments will be served.

DEC. 14-15 –
SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield Community Chorus presents “Gloria!” featuring Vivaldi’s “Gloria” and other beloved songs of the Christmas season. Performances will take place on Saturday, Dec. 14, at 7 p.m., at the Chester Baptist Church; and Sunday, Dec. 15, at 3 p.m., at the Springfield Congregational Church. Admission is free, donations are welcome.

OTHER EVENTS

DEC. 5 –
SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Senior Solutions, 38 Pleasant Street in Springfield, will hold their Annual Meeting on Thursday, Dec. 5. The meeting will begin with a coffee hour from 4-4:30 p.m., followed by the meeting from 4:30-6 p.m. Join us as our staff, volunteers, and the older adults we serve gather to share and reflect on the

past year. Please RSVP to Kevin Golden at 802-731-9468 or kgolden@seniorsolutionsvt.org.

DEC. 6 –
BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – On Friday, Dec. 6, The First Friday Fundraiser at First Baptist Church of Bellows Falls, 9 Church Street, will be a ham dinner, served from 5-6:30 p.m. The menu will be ham, mashed potatoes, squash, salad, dinner rolls, beverages, and dessert. Please call ahead for takeout orders, 802-463-3220. Proceeds will benefit the local Emergency Fuel Fund.

DEC. 7 –
CHESTER, Vt. – A community welcome for House Representative-elect Tom Charlton will be held on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 5-7 p.m., at the Fullerton Inn on the Chester Village Green. All are welcome to attend. Come meet your new voice in Montpelier.

DEC. 14 –
SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Sound Investment will be performing classic rock and modern country music on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 7:30-10:30 p.m., at VFW Post 771, 191 River Street. This performance is open to the public. For more information, call 802-885-6008.

DEC. 18 –
LUDLOW, Vt. – The Black River Valley Senior Center, 10 High Street, will serve lunch on Wednesday, Dec. 18, at 12 p.m. The menu will be hot roast beef sandwiches, fresh green beans, and homemade Christmas cupcakes. Please make reservations by calling 802-228-7421. Free cash bingo will follow, as well as a special visit from Santa. All are welcome.

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.

PLYMOUTH, Vt. – The Plymouth Historical Society, located in the former Plymouth Elementary School on Route 100 in Plymouth Union, is open Sunday afternoons, from 2-4 p.m. Visit our museum, or do research on your Plymouth ancestors. Watch for the “Open” flag.

MONDAYS –
WESTON, Vt. – Bingo is Monday nights at 7 p.m. at the Weston Rod & Gun Club, 982 Route 100, 1.5 miles north of Weston Village. All are welcome.

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield Community Chorus invites you to come sing with us on Mondays, from 6-8 p.m., at the United Methodist Church, 10 Valley Street. These sessions will be led by our new music director, Patty Meyer. No experience is necessary, just a love of singing. Dues are collected, and assistance is available. Concerts will be held on Dec. 14 and 15.

TUESDAYS –
W. TOWNSHEND, Vt. – Burger night is held every Tuesday, from 5-7 p.m., at the West Townshend Country Store, 6573 Vermont Route 30, West Townshend, Vt. There will be live music provided by a different local artist each week. For more information, visit www.westtownshend.org, call 802-874-4800, email info@westtownshend.org, or message the store on Facebook.

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

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.

LUDLOW, Vt. – Yoga with strength, balance, and meditation on Wednesdays, at 10 a.m., at Black River Senior Center. Call Lori at 603-401-8123 to register.

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.

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.

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.

SAXTONS RIVER, Vt. – Main Street Arts, 35 Main Street, will hold the “Originals & Traditionals” Open Mic Night on the fourth Friday of every month, from 7-9 p.m., hosted by musician Putnam Smith. Sign-ups begin at 6:30 p.m. All material should be original or “traditional” (i.e., in the public domain). Each performer can perform two songs or up to 10 minutes, whichever comes first. If you have any questions, please contact Smith at putnamsmith@gmail.com.

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.

W. TOWNSHEND, Vt. – Taco night is held every Tuesday, from 5-7 p.m., at the West Townshend Country Store, 6573 Vermont Route 30, West Townshend, Vt. There will be live music provided by a different local artist each week. For more information, visit www.westtownshend.org, call 802-874-4800, email info@westtownshend.org, or message the store on Facebook.

Town of Plymouth Invitation to Bid

The Plymouth Select Board is soliciting proposals from Design Build Contractors for Phase II, the Energy Conservation Project. The work will include installation of heat pumps in the Municipal Offices and Fire Department as well as radiant heat in a new concrete slab in the Highway Department.

Plans and Specifications can be viewed at the Plymouth Town Office and purchased through Boss Printing located at the Pico Base Lodge. There will be a Pre-Bid Conference on December 4, 2024 at 2:00 PM on site.

Please send bid proposals to clerk@plymouthvt.org or mail to Town of Plymouth, 68 Town Office Road, Plymouth, Vermont 05056, Phase II – Energy Conservation Project no later than 2 P.M. on Monday, December 16, 2024. The Select Board will open bids at their regular Select Board meeting on Monday, December 16, 2024 6:00 PM.

Town Of Plymouth, Vermont Delinquent Tax Collector

A tax collector’s job description includes a variety of responsibilities, such as:

Collecting taxes: Collecting unpaid taxes from individuals and businesses, and ensuring that the correct amounts are received by the government.

Helping taxpayers: Contacting taxpayers who have not paid their taxes, and helping them to set up payment plans.

Analyzing financial information: Conducting background and financial status checks, and analyzing financial information.

Maintaining records: Keeping detailed records of tax receivables, and maintaining files of past tax collection efforts.

Preparing reports: Preparing statistical reports and analyzing tax data.

Collection actions: Including tax sales of the property, when necessary.

Interacting with the public: Dealing with taxpayers and the public in a professional and courteous manner.

Recommended Qualifications

Degree in business administration, finance, accounting or related field preferred; at least two years of experience in business or financial management preferably in a municipal Treasurer and/or Collectors office; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Knowledge of local tax laws and requirements. Strong computer skills and experience with NEMRC a plus.

Please submit a completed application to the Plymouth Town Clerk’s Office at 68 Town Office Road, Plymouth, Vermont 05056 or email clerk@plymouthvt.org. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. The Town of Plymouth is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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LEGAL NOTICES

classifieds

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HELP WANTED

LUDLOW, Vt. – American Legion Post 36 looking for full time bartender, nights, experienced. Starting \$9.50 per hour with insurance assistance. Send resume to 135 Main Street, Ludlow, VT 05149.

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Answer

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

Answers

Solution time: 23 mins.

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STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT
Windsor Unit

PROBATE DIVISION
Docket No.: 24-PR-07043

In re ESTATE of: Gerald F. Skene

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Gerald F. Skene
Decedent

late of Ludlow
Decedent's Town of Residence

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (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 barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.

Dated: 02/12/2024 Signature of Fiduciary: Joelle Syracuse

Executor/Administrator		Mailing Address	
Joelle M. Syracuse, Executor		c/o Law Offices of Amanda L. S. George, PO Box 578	
Phone Number	Email	City, State, Zip	
802-875-7777	amanda@amandageorgelaw.com	Chester, Vermont 05143	

Name of Publication: The Vermont Journal

Publication Date: December 4, 2024

Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court
Address of Probate Court: 12 Green
Woodstock, VT 05091

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT
Unit

PROBATE DIVISION
Docket No.:

In re ESTATE of: Jean R Handly

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Jean R Handly
Decedent

late of Springfield, VT
Decedent's Town of Residence

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (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 barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.

Dated: 11/26/2024 Signature of Fiduciary: [Signature]

Executor/Administrator		Mailing Address	
Isaiah Handly		59 Commonwealth Ave	
Phone Number	Email	City, State, Zip	
(802)245-4216	isaiahhandly@gmail.com	Springfield, VT 05156	

Name of Publication: The Vermont Journal & Shopper

Publication Date: 12/4/2024

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

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with Rob O'Brien, 1/11/25 9:30-4 \$85

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Open Wall: Glistening Wonders
(01/15/25 - TFN - 13)

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holiday & outdoor

Killington Cup results –

KILLINGTON, Vt. – Vermont’s Killington Resort, the largest ski and snowboard resort in eastern North America, hosted the women’s Audi FIS Ski World Cup for the eighth time over Thanksgiving weekend. The first day of racing action was marked by a combination of jubilation and heartbreak as U.S. Ski Team members Nina O’Brien and Paula Moltzan posted their best World Cup giant slalom finishes to date. But as their teammate Mikaela Shiffrin descended the course, on track for her 100th World Cup victory, a dramatic crash took her out



Giant Slalom first place Sara Hector, second place Zrinka Ljutic, third place Camille Rast.

PHOTO BY NEAL MAGNUS

of contention for the rest of the event. Shiffrin was cleared of major injury, but her return to snow is to be

determined. Sara Hector, of Sweden, won the giant slalom, while Zrinka Ljutic, of Croatia, and Camille Rast, of Switzerland, rounded out the podium.

With Shiffrin out of contention on Sunday, Paula Moltzan was the only member of the U.S. Ski Team to make it to the second run. However, she crashed in her second run and did not finish. Rast took her first career World Cup win in the slalom event, with Anna Swenn Larsson, of Sweden, in second, and Wendy Holdener, of Switzerland, in third.



Slalom first place Camille Rast, tied with second place Anna Swenn Larsson, third place Wendy Holdener.

PHOTO BY NEAL MAGNUS

Springfield Lions Club Christmas trees

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Lions Club of Springfield is spreading holiday cheer this season with its annual Christmas tree sale, held in partnership with Community Bank of Springfield. The event will take place on Friday, Dec. 6, from 2-7 p.m.; and Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 7 and 8, from 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. (or until sold out), at Springfield Plaza.

This year, the initiative goes beyond holiday

decorations – \$15 from every tree sold will be donated to the Springfield Family Center Food Bank, with Springfield Community Bank generously matching contributions up to \$750. Together, this effort aims to provide much-needed support to local families during the holiday season.

“Our Lions Club is dedicated to making a difference in our community, and this Christmas tree sale allows us to bring joy to homes while addressing food inse-

curity,” said Club President Joe Wilson. “We are thrilled to partner with Springfield Community Bank and hope to see many smiling faces at Springfield Plaza.”

All proceeds from the event will support the Springfield Family Center Food Bank, helping ensure that no family in Springfield goes hungry during the holidays.

For more information, contact Joe Wilson, club president, at vtlionjoe@gmail.com.

Weston Rod & Gun Club Holiday Bazaar

WESTON, Vt. – Now that it’s officially winter, it’s time to enjoy the holiday cheer. Come join us at the Weston Rod & Gun Club this Saturday, Dec. 7, from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., for our sec-

ond annual holiday bazaar, featuring a wide selection of handmade crafts to help you get your gift shopping finished early. The club is located at 982 Route 100, one mile north of the Weston Green.

Driving into town, you’ll also find the annual Christmas in Weston celebration, from 11 a.m. to dusk, when fireworks start. See www.westonvt.net for details on activities and parking.

Holiday display contest

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – It’s time to spread the

holiday cheer and make our neighborhoods spar-

kle. This festive competition is free to enter, and open exclusively to residents of Springfield and North Springfield, Vt. Decorators of all skill levels are encouraged to showcase their creativity, light up their homes, and fill the community with holiday spirit.

To enter, fill out the short entry form online at forms.gle/3n7oY9yPfZuVjFgG8, or mail or drop off the entry form at Springfield Regional Chamber of Commerce, 56 Main Street #2, Springfield, Vt.

Entry forms must be submitted by Dec. 22. Decorations must be visible from the road, and fully lit from dusk to 9 p.m. each evening, from Dec. 26-31.

Participants will be judged in four categories: Most Whimsical, Clark Griswold, Classic Christmas, and Judges’ Choice

Winners will receive cash prizes, and be announced after the New Year.

By entering the contest, participants agree to have their address included on the official holiday display contest map, and their displays photographed for promotional purposes.

Let’s come together to make this holiday season unforgettable. Don’t miss the chance to light up Springfield and North Springfield with your holiday creativity.

For more information or questions, please email us at spfldprojectaction@gmail.com.

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holiday happenings

Next Stage Holiday Cookie Swap

PUTNEY, Vt. – Next Stage Arts, the heart of cultural expression in Putney, Vt., invites the community to embrace the spirit of giving and sharing at the Next Stage Holiday Cookie Swap. This delightful event, scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 7, from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, promises to add a touch of sweetness to the holiday season.

The Next Stage Holiday Cookie Swap is not just a culinary exchange, it's a

chance for the community to come together and spread joy. Participants are encouraged to whip up their favorite cookie recipes and drop them off at Next Stage on Saturday, Dec. 7, between 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. The event offers two options for participation: the "Little Elf" choice involves bringing two dozen cookies, while the "Big Elf" option calls for four dozen cookies.

The excitement continues in the afternoon, from 1-2 p.m., as participants return

to pick up a thoughtfully curated assortment of cookies, creating a sweet surprise for each contributor. In the event of inclement weather, a snow day plan is in place for Sunday, with the same dropoff and pickup times.

"We're thrilled to host the Next Stage Holiday Cookie Swap as a joyful way to bring our community together during the holiday season," said Keith Marks, executive director at Next Stage Arts. "It's not just about cookies; it's about sharing a moment

of sweetness and connection with our neighbors."

As part of Next Stage Arts' commitment to community wellbeing, any extra cookies will be donated to support a dinner for the families of volunteers of Putney Fire & Rescue.

To participate in this heartwarming event, sign up at www.nextstagearts.org, and join us in making the holiday season a little sweeter for everyone.

Library Cookbook Club Cookie Exchange

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The Rockingham Free Public Library invites cooking and baking enthusiasts to the December Cookbook Club Cookie Exchange. On Monday, Dec. 9, at 5:30 p.m., bring at least a dozen cookies from your favorite cookie recipe – or multiple recipes – and a container to bring home cookies. We'll sample and share our favorite cookies and reci-

pes, and everyone will leave with an assortment of cookies to enjoy at home.

The club meets every other month, and is free to join. Cooks of all skill levels and ages are welcome. For more information, email youthservices@rockinghamlibrary.org, call 802-463-4270, or visit the library online at www.rockinghamlibrary.org, or in person at 65 Westminster Street, Bellows Falls, Vt.

Open House at the VAULT

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Mark your calendars for the holiday open house at Gallery at the VAULT on Dec. 7, from 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. It is a great place to shop for one-of-a-kind gifts made by Vermont and regional artists. A place where creativity shines.

There will be a special "trunk show" of Dianne Yelton's exquisitely woven scarves and handmade bird ornaments. Eden Specialty Ciders will offer a wine/hard cider/ice cider tasting from 12-3 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Seasonal music will add to the festivities.

Gallery at the VAULT is located at 68 Main Street, Springfield, and is open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, from 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.; and Fridays, from 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. For more information, call

802-885-7111, email galleryvault@vermontel.net, visit www.galleryvault.org or the gallery's Facebook or Instagram page, or stop into the gallery. Gallery at the VAULT is handicap accessible.

Wassail Concert at Fletcher Memorial –

LUDLOW, Vt. – Please join Fletcher Memorial Library for a Wassail Concert with Gypsy Reel on Friday, Dec. 13, at 7 p.m. We are excited to host live music in the library and welcome the season.

Christmas favorites, wassail songs, familiar carols, traditional Celtic instrumentals, and a few surprises you won't hear anywhere else. With deft guitar work, sweet fiddle, impeccable harmonies, and infectious rhythms, Gypsy Reel will break your heart while raising your spirits.

Graham and Camille Parker, and Claudine Languille have long provided fiddle, octave mandolin, and stirring vocals for Vermont's favorite Celtic band, Gypsy Reel. Now they've teamed with singer-songwriter and storyteller Jon Clinch for this holiday concert. The band focuses on original songs, traditional material, and classic Americana. For this special wassail show, the quartet will bring a centuries-spanning range of festive music – modern

This program is free and open to the public. Fletcher Memorial Library is located at 88 Main Street, Ludlow, Vt. If you have any questions regarding this event or other programming at the library, please call 802-228-8921 or visit www.fmlnews.org.



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holiday happenings

Holidays in Chester

CHESTER, Vt. – Here is a look at upcoming holiday events in Chester, Vt.

Dec. 7 and 8 is Customer Appreciation Weekend, with special events at some of the Chester Village Green businesses.

The Overture to Christmas on the Village Green with Santa will be Saturday, Dec. 7, from 4-6 p.m.

DaVallia Gallery, 39 North Street, will hold their holiday open house on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 4-6 p.m., featuring a bonfire, refresh-

ments, and special offers.

The INNdulgence Tour will take place on Saturday, Dec. 7, and Sunday, Dec. 8, from 12-5 p.m. This is a tour of nine inns, including the Stone Hearth Inn and The Inn Between.

On Saturday, Dec. 14, Erskine's Grain and Garden, 54 Grain Store Road, will host Meatball Day, featuring wagon rides. Santa will be present for gingerbread house making at the Stone Hearth Inn, 698 Vermont Route 11. Sip and Shop will

be held at Smokeshire Design, 3630 Route 103N, from 4-7 p.m.

On Saturday, Dec. 21, from 4-7 p.m., the Starry Starry Night event will be held. This is a night lit by luminaries throughout Chester, with 20 participating businesses. Refreshments will be served.

The Okemo Valley Holiday Express will run from the Chester Depot on Saturday, Dec. 21, and Sunday, Dec. 22, from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. both days.

W. Windsor Christmas

W. WINDSOR, Vt. – Plans are all set for the West Windsor Community Christmas Celebrations on Dec. 7, 22, and Christmas Eve.

Starting on Saturday, Dec. 7, there will be the much-anticipated Brownsville Community Church Christmas Bazaar with crafts, bake sale (9 a.m. – 2 p.m.), and luncheon (11 a.m. – 1 p.m.), at town hall. There will be live holiday music as well to enjoy while you shop.

Come down to the corner of Route 44 and

Brownsville Hartland Road for the annual community tree lighting at 4 p.m. Before the trees are lit, there's a very good chance that there will be a visit to town by Mr. and Mrs. Claus. And, you'll usually find festive, light refreshments and a glowing fire pit to warm you inside and out when you get there.

The day will wrap up with a live Christmas Nativity, at 5:30 p.m., at the Brownsville Community Church pavilion, 66 Brownsville Hartland Road. Accompanying the live Nativity pageant, there will be live music, and possibly live animals, too.

On Sunday, Dec. 22, en-

joy a special pre-Christmas Festival of Nine Lessons and carols, which will include hymns, anthems, solos, and special music at the Brownsville Community Church, at 9:30 a.m.

On Christmas Eve, at 7 p.m., there will be the beautiful Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. The church will be adorned with poinsettias and the glow of candlelight for all to enjoy at this special service.

Bring your friends, family, and neighbors to usher in the Christmas season. All are welcome at these Brownsville, Vt., community holiday events.

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Plymouth holiday

PLYMOUTH, Vt. – Plymouth Emergency Services presents their second annual holiday party on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., at the Plymouth Town Office, 68 Town Office Road. This party is for

Plymouth children 18 and younger. There will be refreshments, activities, and a gift for each child. Thank you to our supporting sponsors William Raveis Vermont Properties and Killington Resort.

Senior holiday dinner

CHESTER, Vt. – The Chester-Andover Senior Christmas Dinner will be held Saturday, Dec. 14, at 12 p.m., at Green Mountain Union High School. This free meal and fun Christmas gathering is for all seniors in Chester and Andover.

The menu includes turkey, mashed potatoes, squash, stuffing, gravy, rolls, and cranberry sauce, and dessert is homemade pie from the Andover Church. There also will be takeout meals available.

If you would like a takeout meal to pick up after 12:30 p.m. or to be delivered, call the town hall at 802-875-2173, or Pat Budnick at 802-376-6643.

This dinner has been held annually for 51 years. It was started by a small group of community members concerned about the seniors having a proper Christmas meal and camaraderie. It has been held at the Congregational Church, The Chester-Andover Elementary School, and at the Green Mountain Union High School.

It has been held as a thank-you to all our town's seniors for all they had done during their years in Chester and Andover.

Many area agencies and individuals have always come forward with support by paying for the meals, helping with cooking, and serving and delivering meals, as well as providing entertainment and small gifts. This meal and gathering has always been free for the seniors because of this support. We would like to keep this meal and event free, but we need folks to pitch in.

If you would like to make a donation, you can drop it off at the Motel in the Meadow, or mail it to 936 Vermont Route 11W, Chester, VT 05143. Make checks out to Pat Budnick, and in the memo line write "Chester-Andover Senior Dinner."

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holiday happenings

“White Christmas” screening

S. LONDONDERRY, Vt. – This fall’s session of the Vermont Film Festival concludes with a showing of the seasonally-appropriate “White Christmas” on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 7 p.m. The venue is the South Londonderry Depot, on Route 100.

The film showcases Bing Crosby reprising the famous Christmas ballad he debuted in the earlier film “Holiday Inn.” Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney, Dean Jagger, and Vera Ellen

round out a star-studded cast.

The story is a romantic comedy starring Crosby and Kaye as two World War II Army buddies who form a musical act after the war, where they meet and interact with a sister act, Rosemary and Vera Ellen.

The story gravitates to the fictional village of Pine Tree, Vt., aka Hollywood, where the entire cast comes together on Christmas Eve for a benefit performance to honor and support Cros-

by and Kaye’s beloved, retired general (Jagger). You can find a lengthier description on Wikipedia.

The Vermont Film Festival is the joint effort of the Friends of the West River Trail, the Londonderry Arts and Historical Society, and the Weston Historical Society. There is no cost to attend the films; freewill donations to the sponsoring organizations are always welcome.

Springfield Christmas Farmers Market

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – As you welcome the holidays, stop in at the Christmas Farmers Market on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., at the United Methodist Church in downtown Springfield, Vt.

We offer natural meats, free-range eggs, artisan breads, holiday pies and baked goods, custom-designed batik clothing and accessories, beeswax candles, honey, delicately crafted gifts from locally sourced woods,

fabric arts and yarn creations, jewelry, tiles, jams, jellies, pickles, relishes, original art, and a full range of maple products.

You’ll find all the necessities for holiday gifting and entertaining.

The Dance Factory delights with “The Nutcracker”

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Join Clara on her magical journey to the Kingdom of the Sweets in the Dance Factory’s 33rd annual “The Nutcracker” on Saturday, Dec. 14, at 7 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 15, at 2 p.m., at Springfield High School in Springfield, Vt.

Ashley Hensel-Browning directs a cast of youth and adult dancers in the beloved holiday tradition that includes a lighted, growing tree, a whirling snowstorm, and dazzling, custom costumes. The family-friendly show is Vermont’s longest-running production of the classic story ballet.

The Dance Factory’s “The Nutcracker” is an inclusive event that has given hundreds of regional ballet students the invaluable experience of working their way up to soloist roles that most productions outsource to hired professionals. This year’s featured dancers include Springfield senior Sabyn Tennis as the Snow Queen, and Chester senior Niavh Gibney as the Sugar Plum Fairy. Clara will be performed by Gwendelyn Kelley of Weathersfield, with Samantha Cross as the Nutcracker Prince.

Tickets for “The Nutcracker” can be purchased at Tina’s Hallmark and Woodbury Florist in Springfield, and Sage Jewelry and Gifts in Chester, or online at www.dancefactorynutcracker24.eventbrite.com. Limited tickets will be available at the door. A portion of ticket sales will benefit the Springfield High School Drama Club, adding to over \$25,000 of “The Nutcracker” proceeds that have gone to support

area arts programs.

To ensure “The Nutcracker” is accessible to the wider community, the full performance will be filmed and broadcast by SAPA TV. Additionally, selections from the show will be performed for students at

Springfield’s Elm Hill and Union Street Schools, and Weathersfield School, and for residents at Springfield Health and Rehab.

Support for “The Nutcracker” has been generously provided by Amy Hill/Bean Group, Daire

Christmas in Weston

WESTON, Vt. – Awaken the spirit of the season with a visit to Christmas in Weston, and enjoy a day of holiday fun for the whole family on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 11 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Now in its 39th year, this annual celebration is filled with free events and activities for all ages that are sure to become memories that will last a lifetime.

Throughout the day, enjoy classic holiday activities like visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, horse-drawn wagon rides, Christmas caroling, readings of holiday tales, cookie decorating, children’s craft making, face painting, and a tree lighting on the Village Green. The day’s events conclude at dusk with a spectacular fireworks display over the Village Green.

A special addition to this year’s festivities will

be a live drawing session with Paddington Bear artist R.W. Ally, as he creates an original illustration that will be raffled off, followed by a kids’ art class led by Ally and a reading of his original children’s book, “Firefighters to the Rescue.”


All daytime events and activities are free for all who attend, which is a welcome and unusual feature that distinguishes Christmas in Weston from other holiday events. Meals, snacks, and beverages are available for purchase at nearby restaurants, food trucks, and vendors on the Village Green.

Stay for evening entertainment at a delightful performance of “A Weston Winter Cabaret,” a hilarious holiday parody by the nationally renowned Weston Theater Company, with shows on Dec. 6 and 7, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at www.westontheater.org.

Christmas in Weston celebrates the spirit of generosity that exists within the tight-knit community, as local businesses and community organizations come together to create a festive kickoff to the holiday season, one that has become a beloved tradition for people throughout the region.

The event raises funds through the sale of raffle tickets, event merchandise, and donations to support The Little School, Weston’s nonprofit early childhood education center, and the Weston Volunteer Fire Department.

For a schedule of Christmas in Weston events and details about the raffle, visit www.westonvt.net.



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real estate

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Nine popular house styles

REGION – Single-family homes include the house and the land surrounding it. In a single-family home, you are responsible for maintaining the property.

Ranch – These are one-story homes with a low roof line. Since they are simple and have an open floor plan, they offer flexibility for improvements and remodeling. Many homeowners think about adding a second level for bedrooms, or expanding the home's footprint with one side for bedrooms and the other for open

living.

Cape Cod – This style became popular during the 1930s to 1950s. Named after the Massachusetts coastal region, Cape Cod houses are generally small homes with a steep roofline and hardwood floors, many of which were built with an unfinished upstairs. Capes are cozy and simple. If you need room to grow, you may be able to remodel the second floor.

Colonial – Inspired by the design of houses in America from the 1600s and 1700s.

These homes have two stories and a symmetrical design with a front door in the middle and windows on either side. They offer space for families with multiple bedrooms and two or more baths, a main floor living area with a central fireplace, and a basement. These homes often have attached garages.

Craftsman – These homes emerged during the early 1900s, and were inspired by the British Arts and Crafts movement. Craftsman-style homes continue to be popular today with a simple design, low-pitched roofs, wide porches, and thick columns. A fireplace is typical for Craftsman homes, as are exposed beams, built-in bookshelves, hardwood floors, and a large living room bay window. These homes are great for smaller families, because they often have two to three bedrooms on the second floor.

Mediterranean/Spanish – Similar to the ones you can see in Spain, Italy, and France. They feature a sprawling structure, low-pitched terra cotta roof, stucco or brick construction, arched doorways, outdoor living spaces, and courtyards. Inside, you can find colorful tiles, exposed beams, wrought-iron banisters, and more. Mediterranean/Spanish homes are great for large families. You'll find them in warmer climates like Florida, California, and the Southwest.

Victorian – These homes were popular during Queen Victoria's reign in the United Kingdom. You can find them in many locations, as well as in Victorian-era neighborhoods such as Kalamazoo, Mich.; Richmond Hill, N.Y.; Woodruff Place, Ind.; Guthrie, Okla.; and Huning Highlands, N.M. They are large houses

with two and sometimes three stories, steep roofs, towers, bright colors, and a mix of materials like stone and wood. Victorian houses have many rooms, nooks, crannies, and doorways, which makes them unique. The ceilings are high, and the rooms are narrow.

Split and bilevel homes – Popular between the 1950s and 1970s, these home styles are not often built today. A split-level home has three levels, the main area where the kitchen and living room are, an upstairs for bedrooms, and a lower level for a family or recreation room. These homes offer more privacy than a bilevel. Bilevel homes have two levels that you face once you enter the door, steps going up to the kitchen, dining room, and bedrooms, then steps going down to a family room and potentially another bedroom and bath.

Condos – Can be more affordable than single-family homes listed above because the property you own is in-

side the walls of your home. The exterior of your condo building and shared spaces are owned in common with the other condo owners. The maintenance of the outside of your property and shared communal areas are managed by an association, and paid for with a monthly fee. While condo fees are an added expense, they often cover pools and exercise rooms, as well as snow removal, landscaping, and maintenance.

Townhomes – Have many levels and offer space for families. They can have a front and backyard that you need to maintain. Townhomes are privately owned, but part of a larger community that also has association fees like condos. The association fee includes shared services, like trash pickup, snow removal, and maintenance of other common areas, such as a community gym or pool.

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Weekly SUDOKU

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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 Winter coast-er
5 Gear tooth
8 Guesser's words
12 "Arrivederci!"
13 Notre Dame coach
14 German refusal
15 Well-known
17 Body powder
18 "Now, where - I?"
19 Novelist Deighton
20 One of the Kardashians
21 Squeak stopper
22 Golfer Trevino
23 Lake flock
26 Neighbor of Germany
30 Penny
31 Physique
32 Sci-fi race
33 Boise native
35 Labor group
36 Work unit
37 Prof's degree
38 Presentation aid
41 Romance
42 "Right you -!"
45 Petty of "Tank Girl"
46 Working
48 "Topaz" author

DOWN

1 Garbage barge
2 Director Wertmuller
3 Comestibles
4 Homer's lament
5 Caravan beast
6 Algerian port
7 Hiatus
8 Getting better
9 Authentic
10 Missile shelter
11 Formerly
16 Yale students
20 "Community" actor Jeong
21 Up-and-coming
22 Guided
23 Biol. or chem.
24 Marry
25 Santa - winds
26 Mafia boss
27 Foreman foe
28 Aussie hopper
29 Family
31 Satchel
34 Scrap
35 "Oops!"
37 VIP on Air Force One
38 Sandwich type
39 Circle dance
40 Bone-dry
41 Connecticut Sun's org.
42 Trojan War hero
43 Memory method
44 Black, in verse
46 Feedbag tid-bit
47 - -friendly

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