

THE

FREE

Vermont

Journal

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## 2025 Town Meeting results

**Andover**  
Selectboard, three years – Richard Pierce  
Selectboard, one year – Chris Walker  
Town budget, \$1,241,653.28 – Yes  
Town meeting changed to Monday, March 2, 2026 – Yes  
Town treasurer changed to three-year terms – Yes  
**Cavendish**  
Article 3, town budget, \$2,450,400 – Yes  
**Chester**  
Selectboard, one year – Arianna Knapp, Tim Roper  
Article 2, highway grader purchase/Flamstead Road paving, \$524,000 – Yes  
Article 3, Depot Street sewage pipe/First Avenue pump station replacement, \$2,982,900 – Yes  
Article 4, solar field purchase, \$1,140,000 – Yes  
Article 6, town budget, \$4,225,000 – Yes  
**Londonderry**  
Selectboard, two years – Taylor Prouty  
Selectboard, three years – James Ameden Jr.  
Town clerk, one year – Allison Marino  
Lister, three years – Sandra Clark  
Article 4, town budget, \$3,150,324 – Yes  
Article 11, highway improvement reserve fund, \$340,000 – Yes  
Article 13, add “housing” to the purpose of the community economic improvement reserve fund – Yes  
Article 14, raise and appropriate additional \$25,000 to the community economic improvement reserve fund – Yes  
**Ludlow**  
Article 2, fire engine and ladder truck purchase, \$3,623,000 – Yes  
Article 3, 1% local options tax on meals, alcohol, rooms, and sales – Yes  
Article 4, change town clerk from elected to appointed position – Yes  
Article 5, change town treasurer from elected to appointed position – Yes

**Mount Holly**  
Article 3, town budget, \$582,685 – Yes  
Article 4, highway fund, \$532,950 – Yes  
Article 5, Mount Holly Fire Department budget/vehicle replacement fund, \$162,000 – Yes  
**Plymouth**  
Selectboard – Rick Kaminski  
Lister – Natalya Bochkov  
Article 2, eliminate office of listers and replace elected listers with appointed assessor – Yes  
Article 5, town budget, \$1,592,689.50 – Yes  
**Weston**  
Selectboard, one year – Linda Saarnijoki  
Selectboard, two years – Brian Gehlich  
Selectboard, three years – Katie Moriarty-Fitzpatrick  
Article 5, increase town garage loan from \$375,000 to \$525,000 – Yes  
Article 8, highway equipment reserve fund, \$140,000 – Yes  
Article 9, highway maintenance fund, \$75,000 – Yes  
Article 10, fire apparatus fund, \$40,000 – Yes  
Article 11, \$30,000 to repair roof of Weston Fire Station – Yes  
Article 12, new fire hoses, \$20,000 – Yes  
Article 14, bridge repair fund, \$40,000 – Yes  
Article 24, general fund expenditure, total \$763,132, with \$562,952 raised by taxes – Yes  
Article 25, highway fund expenditure, \$1,119,548 – Yes  
**Green Mountain Unified School District**  
Article 1, budget, \$18,627,678 – Yes  
Article 2, \$357,395 in fiscal year 24 surplus funds to facilities reserve fund – Yes  
**Ludlow-Mount Holly Unified Union School District**  
Article 1, budget, \$10,153,619 – No

## Ludlow Town Meeting

BY NICK GIBERTI

The Vermont Journal

**LUDLOW, Vt.** – Ludlow held its annual Town Informational Meeting on Monday evening, March 3, at 7 p.m., at Ludlow Town Hall.  
Several articles on the Town Warning were to be voted on the following day by Australian ballot, and voters heard presentations from town officials on these ballot articles. The first presentation was given by Ludlow Fire Chief Ben Whalen, in favor of replacing two of Ludlow’s aging pieces of fire apparatus, namely Engine 3 and Tower 1. Both pieces of equipment are nearing or exceeding their projected service lives, with Tower 1 in particular being more than 30 years old. Whalen also said that Engine 3 is prone to breaking down while on calls, causing safety issues for firefighters. The total cost for the two trucks was \$3,623,000.  
Ludlow resident Peter Girouard questioned Walen on whether or not the town was planning to use money from the fire

equipment fund that Ludlow taxpayers contribute to on a yearly basis. Whalen responded that that money, “roughly \$460,000,” was not being used to purchase the two new trucks. Instead, Whalen said he intends to use that money for other equipment which needs to be replaced more frequently at less substantial cost. The article passed the following day.  
Town manager Brendan McNamara then rose to speak on the proposal to adopt a 1% local options tax on rooms, meals, alcohol, and sales within the Town of Ludlow. McNamara said that he believed the tax was a way for the town to fund necessary infrastructure projects without directly affecting the municipal tax rate of Ludlow taxpayers. To support this argument, McNamara used figures from fiscal year 2023 to show that Ludlow would have generated a total of \$662,509 after the State of Vermont took its share of 30%. Of that amount, McNamara projected that only about \$40,000 would come from Ludlow residents, meaning the vast majority would come from visitors to town.

Some residents expressed concerns that this tax would drive business into neighboring towns without the extra tax, as well as fearing that the increased revenue would result in increased spending. Ludlow resident Dean Alexander said that he believed that any potential uses for the funds generated by the local options tax should be put before Ludlow voters, and wanted to know if the money could eventually be used to offset other taxes for Ludlow residents. McNamara explained that if, after several years, the town has a large surplus of funds generated by the local options tax, Ludlow voters could propose a Town Meeting article to use the money to offset the municipal tax rate. The local options tax was approved by Australian ballot the following day.  
McNamara then addressed Articles 4 and 5, proposing to make town clerk and town treasurer appointed, rather than elected, positions. McNamara explained that, while Ludlow is lucky to have current town clerk Ulla Cook, he is concerned that, when Cook retires, the

See **LUDLOW** on Page 2

## Londonderry Town Meeting

BY SHAWNTAE WEBB

The Vermont Journal

**LONDONDERRY, Vt.** – The Londonderry Town Meeting began with voters electing their town moderator Douglas Friant, and then hearing from State Rep. Chris Morrow, who was present to answer public questions and concerns.  
Morrow addressed a few pending bills regarding housing, one regarding the homeless population, and another working with affordable housing, “giving money to housing agencies that are good at building affordable housing.” Though, he said, “It’s not nearly the amount given during the

Covid days.”  
Morrow continued to discuss education reform and school choice, reporting that the governor is trying to remove some of the local power and create statewide standards, “Some of which needs to happen,” Morrow believes. “But in order for that to be successful, we need a very strong Agency of Education,” and a strong education board. Morrow is in favor of leaving the school boards the way they are.  
The meeting moved to approve Article 2, to act on the report of the town officers, as well as Article 3, electing town officials, including Taylor Prouty for a two-year selectboard seat, James

Ameden Jr. for a three-year seat, Allison Marino town clerk for one year, and Sandra Clark lister for three years.  
Article 4 presented a general fund budget of \$3,150,324, which was approved without discussion. Article 5 was also approved, for taxes to be paid on or before Oct. 1, 2025.  
Article 6 was approved, to allocate funds in the sum of \$91,250 to organizations such as Champion Fire Company #5, Phoenix Fire Company #6, and Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad. Article 7 was also approved to appropriate funds in the sum of \$45,222 to community organizations

such as My Community Nurse Program, Senior Solutions, SEVCA, and Neighborhood Connections.  
Articles 8, 9, 10, and 12 passed, allocating funds to the Emerald Ash Borer Fund, highway equipment reserve fund, town buildings reserve fund, and Pingree Park reserve fund.  
Article 11, to appropriate \$340,000 to the highway improvement reserve fund, was approved, which, Prouty explained, is for repaving projects, and has been underfunded for quite some time. Prouty stated it is supposed to be allocated \$40,000 per year, and is up this year from \$300,000, so it is “on schedule to complete needs for the

mileage of roads” that need repaving.  
Article 13 proposed the town amend the community economic reserve fund to add “housing” to the purposes for which the fund can be used. Currently, the fund’s stated purpose is “to support municipal efforts to plan, promote, and implement economic recovery, revitalization, and development efforts in Londonderry.” Citizen concerns were that Londonderry intended to become a “landlord.” Selectboard Vice Chair Martha Dale expressed that, “The idea is we want to make this community attractive to others,” including those who might put resources back

into the community, thus creating more opportunities within and for the town.  
The board addressed that the previous 1% local options tax discussion to fund the economic reserve fund was eliminated, as that tax revenue had been allocated elsewhere.  
Upon a close vote, citizens were asked for a division, or revote by standing, and Article 13 was approved.  
Article 14, to appropriate an additional \$25,000 to the community economic improvement fund, also brought public discussion and concern. Treasurer Tina Labeau reported there is

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# Ludlow Rotary hears from Neighbors Together

LUDLOW, Vt. – Paula Vanguilder, chairman of the Ludlow group Neighbors Together, addressed the Ludlow Rotary Club (LRC) at its recent weekly meeting. The group offers support to the local community in the form of mental health and addiction recovery support, cooking classes led by local chefs, snacks for school children, fresh flowers for seniors at the Gill Home, and many more goodwill outreach ef-

forts. The group originated during the flood of 2023, when Paula and Shannon Barton saw an opportunity to help flood victims. Co-chairman Bridgette Willis joined the effort, as have several others since its inception. They have continued doing good deeds around the community since. The group’s mission states it is to create a welcoming and inclusive space where individuals and families can

come together to learn, grow, and thrive. Through programs, activities, and community services, we strive to foster connection, wellbeing, and empowerment for all. Committed to diversity and accessibility, we aim to be a hub of support and enrichment that strengthens the bonds of our neighborhood and enhances the quality of life for everyone.

## LUDLOW

From Page 1

town could find itself in a position where nobody runs for the position, and the town is left without a clerk, a necessary position for the administration of the town. Ludlow resident Chris Miele pointed out that Cook has been in her position for nearly three decades, as was her predecessor, and felt that a transition from accountability to the voters to accountability only to the selectboard was an undesirable situation. “Those appointed people answer to who? To [the selectboard], not to [the voters] any more,” Miele said, asking rhetorically whether a lack of se-

lectboard candidates would result in the appointment of selectboard members or the elimination of the selectboard entirely. “We start slipping and eroding away our local government, and it’s a very dangerous slope,” Miele added. Despite these arguments, Ludlow voters passed both articles the following day. Voters then addressed the Ludlow town budget from the floor. Brendan told voters that the overall budget had been increased by 5.3% over the previous year. “Some of these things are unfortunately uncontrollable for us,” McNamara said, indicating that rising insurance costs account for about 3% of the increase.

Ludlow Deputy Fire Chief Francis Kissell proposed to amend the budget to add \$2,500 for Okemo Valley Technical Rescue, a 501(c)(3) organization created by the heads of local fire and ambulance departments to “provide training and equipment to a technical rescue company group that would cover Proctorsville, Ludlow, Mount Holly, and Plymouth.” The amendment passed, bringing the total budget to \$4,936,295.40. The amended budget then passed. Articles 10 and 11 were also passed from the floor, allotting \$222,500 to be raised by taxes for the town capital fund, and approving \$7,250 in funding for the MOOver.

# Neighbors Together Mom Prom

LUDLOW, Vt. – Local organization Neighbors Together will host Mom Prom 2025, on March 14, at the Ludlow Community Center. This exciting, ladies-only event is designed to bring together mothers and women from our community for a night of fun, friendship, and fundraising. Mom Prom is not just about dancing and dressing up – it’s about making a difference. Neighbors Together is an organization dedicated

to bringing the community together, from children to adults, offering free of charge cooking classes, snacks at schools, holiday celebrations, beds, clothes, crafts, etc. Through ticket sales, raffles, and generous donations from community partners like you, we aim to raise much-needed funds to support this worthy cause. We would be honored if you would consider donating to our event via sponsorship (monetary contributions to help cover event costs), in-kind donations (items for our raffle, auction, or giveaways), or services (gift cards, professional services, or other offerings).

As a donor, your generosity will be recognized through event promotions, social media shout-outs, and on-site signage, ensuring your business receives exposure to a wonderful and engaged audience. More importantly, you’ll be helping to create lasting change in our community. We would love to discuss how we can partner together to make this event a success. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions, or would like to contribute. Your support means the world to us and to the families we are working to help. Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your generosity, and look forward to partnering with you for this meaningful event.

## Local author visit at FML

LUDLOW, Vt. – Local author Pollyanna Porter will visit with community members and library patrons on Monday, March 31, at 6 p.m., at Fletcher Memorial Library. Come visit endearing and memorable characters in Porter’s fictitious Langdon, Vt. Each novel explores different themes, but shares one key question – can the wrongs of the past ever be truly made right? Lots of local connections are found in these three titles: “Rectified,” “Relinquished,” and “Redeemed.” This event is free and open to the public. For additional information, please call the library at 802-228-8921, or visit [www.fmlnews.org](http://www.fmlnews.org).

## DERRY

From Page 1

currently \$15,000 in the fund, and a number of residents generally felt this was a large sum to give to the fund, questioned whether other fundraising efforts were attempted, and others were unsure of what the fund would be used for. The housing commission explained that, “Adding a little more to the fund [allows us] to make a difference.” Dale, also a member of the housing commission, expressed that fundraising efforts have happened. She provided the example that the Mountain Towns

Housing Project raised over \$300,000 in cash and in-kind donations to build one affordable home. She explained that that was one model they tried, and “an extraordinary amount of money” was raised. She said they are looking for other vehicles that are replicable to contribute to other projects. Dale continued, saying that the economic reserve fund is controlled by the selectboard. Upon request for an allocation, the board would be able to decide if the project meets all of the criteria. She said the article is not necessarily a current project, but to help make funds available for projects

that come up. FEMA representative Kelly Pajala added that projects for flood recovery are a great example, and will at some point need funding or grant matching. “While you can say it’s money that is chasing projects, there are already projects being thought of,” Pajala continued, “Everyone is thinking ‘housing’ because of the previous article,” stating there are plenty of projects that the funds can be used for. Board Chair Tom Cavanagh provided a list the board had drafted, including developing an emergency preparedness plan for the next flood; creating standing volunteer organizations and training; mitigation and erosion projects; evasive species work; a scoping study on the North Village; and a watershed study, flood storage outside of town, and creating a watershed management task force. The housing commission suggested local projects such as increased accessory dwelling units, which could create more housing options, and “other incentivized projects.”

After a division vote, 46 were in favor, and 27 opposed, passing Article 14. In other business, Melissa Brown requested information on the exit interviews for volunteers and public officials who have resigned. Board member James Ameden reported that he and Dale conducted interviews, and plan to share the information on March 17. Retiring town administrator Shane O’Keefe announced his last day of work, and the meeting adjourned with a round of applause for O’Keefe.



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# Goin’ to town

BY RON PATCH  
802-374-0119  
ronpatch27@gmail.com

The first photo with this article was taken in Bellows Falls.

**The Bellows Falls photo**  
This is a mounted photo with black mount. Dating photos can be determined by the color of the mount. As decades passed, colors of mounts changed as tastes changed. This photo would date from 1900-1910, give or take a couple years.

There is some history written on the reverse: “This was taken in Bellows Falls Vt when I was visiting Phil my brother They in that town were to have a Fourth of July Parade So I helped my brother & wife to trim their automobile Their son is in the Small Auto on front which was all ‘red’ The car we trimmed

with white cheese cloth and Hydrangeas which grew on their land.”

Check out the detail in the decoration. The hydrangeas are a wonderful complement. The car is completely covered, so identifying it might be impossible.

Notice the boy in his pedal car sitting on the hood. His car is decorated too. I love his smile. The driver is dressed rather smartly with a cap. His wife sits next to him. Behind her is a young girl with a white hat. Behind her are two well-dressed women. The one closest is holding a baby.

I’m hoping there’s enough of the house visible for someone to identify the location. It has a rather distinctive porch.



The Bellows Falls parade car. PHOTO PROVIDED BY RON PATCH

**Upper Bartonsville photo**

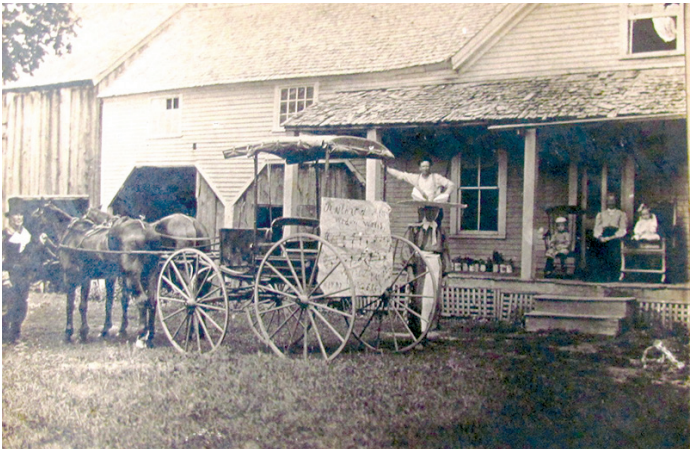
This photo was taken in Upper Bartonsville. The buggy is drawn by two horses. There’s a large sign on the rear. I can’t read it all, but can make out, “Merry widow Willis.” Below that is a music score. They are likely headed to a parade.

**The family**  
The man on the porch with white shirt is Louis Marshall. Louis was a stee-

plejack, and had been a cowboy in one of the Wild



Louis Marshall at Eagle Ranch. PHOTO PROVIDED BY RON PATCH



The Marshall family, of Upper Bartonsville, going to a parade. PHOTO PROVIDED BY RON PATCH

## Genealogy Interest Group

**REGION** – The next in-person and Zoom meeting of the Windham County Genealogy Interest Group (WCGIG) will focus on an exploration of “The New Full Text Search on FamilySearch,” and “Getting Acquainted with the New Interface at Chronicling America,” on Saturday, March 15, from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., over Zoom and at Brooks Memorial Library. In case of inclement weather, it will be Zoom-only.

Please register at [www.bit.ly/wcgig2025](http://www.bit.ly/wcgig2025). A Zoom link will be sent before the meeting. For those people in the local vicinity, an in-person meeting will also be conducted at Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vt.

FamilySearch’s new Full Text Search is designed to significantly streamline the research process by allowing users to search the text contained within images of documents. Whether it’s a handwritten record or a typed document, this tool not only highlights the name being searched, but also provides an automatic transcription of the document. For documents that have not been indexed, Full Search uses advanced recognition tech-

nology to pinpoint the exact location of a person’s name within the record, eliminating the need for tedious page-by-page navigation. Users can now find relevant information more quickly and accurately, saving hours of painstaking work. This tool will be especially valuable for those working with unindexed or hard-to-read documents, giving them access to hidden gems that were once too difficult to extract. Full Search is currently available as an experimental tool on FamilySearch, and its development will continue to evolve based on user feedback. Come to the meeting and let’s see what we can discover.

Over the past year, the Library of Congress has been redesigning an interface to the all-important Chronicling America. Since 2006, the Chronicling America Historic American Newspapers collection provides access to select digitized newspaper pages produced by the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP), a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Library of Congress. The consortium has digitized more than 3 million items,

and made these historical newspapers accessible for searching through 1963. Over the past year, the library has been redesigning the interface, and will be migrating to the new design very shortly. We will explore the changes from the legacy site to the new site, as well as visit “Chronicling America: A Guide for Researchers” for search tips and how best to use the collection, and a few of the topics in “Chronicling America” compiled by the librarians at the Library of Congress.

This event is free and open to all. For more information, contact the Windham County Genealogy Interest Group at [windhamcounty-gig@gmail.com](mailto:windhamcounty-gig@gmail.com).

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obituaries

OPINION

Geraldine M. Noor, 1935-2025 Nathan J. Webster, 1975-2025

CHESTER, Vt. – Geraldine M. “Gerry” Noor, 89, died Feb. 26, 2025, at the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, after a brief illness. She was born July 10, 1935, in Springfield, Vt., the daughter of Roger C. and Mary (Costello) Drugg. She graduated from Black River High School, Class of 1953, and later from Becker College in Worcester, Mass.

She married George Noor in 1960, at her family home in Proctorsville, Vt.

Gerry worked at General Electric, Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital as a medical secretary, and in many local doctors’ offices in Springfield, before retiring from Ridgewood Associates after many years, in the early 2000s.

Gerry and George enjoyed traveling, taking trips to Finland, Estonia, and Nova Scotia. She enjoyed knitting, cross stitching, was an avid reader, and took great pride



Geraldine Noor, 1935-2025. PHOTO PROVIDED

in caring for the home that George built for them.

She is survived by her husband George.

She was predeceased by her parents, and by her brother John Drugg.

Services will be held at the convenience of the family.

Memorial contributions may be made in her name to the charity of one’s choice.

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

PROCTORSVILLE, Vt. – Nathan J. Webster, 49, died Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at the Jack Byrne Center in Lebanon, N.H.

Nate was born July 22, 1975, in Springfield, Vt., a son of Donald and Janice (Smith) Webster. He graduated from Green Mountain Union High School in 1993, and attended St. Joseph’s College in Rutland, Vt. He worked at Okemo, Vermont Fresh Pasta, and Mack Molding, until health concerns forced him to stop working.

Nate enjoyed playing Dungeons & Dragons, watching anime, playing video games, and following Doctor Who. He had a great sense of humor, and loved making people laugh.

He is preceded in death by his father Donald Webster. Nate is survived by his mother Janice Webster, of Proctorsville, Vt.; his daughter Ariana Webster, of Springfield, Vt.; his brothers Donald Webster Jr., of Burlington, Vt., Neil Webster (Kim), of Braintree, Mass., and Alan Webster (Tre), of Margate, Fla.; his sisters Veronica Web-



Nathan Webster, 1975-2025. PHOTO PROVIDED

ster (Karen Gour), of White River Junction, Vt., and Jennifer Paquette (Terry), of Proctorsville, Vt.; close friend Dean Whitcomb, of North Springfield, Vt.; and several aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews.

Knight Funeral Home in White River Junction has been entrusted with arrangements. A gathering will be announced at a later date. Condolences may be expressed in an online guestbook at [www.knight-funeralhomes.com](http://www.knight-funeralhomes.com).

Memorial contributions may be made to Dartmouth Health Financial Assistance, One Medical Center Drive, Lebanon, NH 03756.

Dear Editor,

Last month I had a fall, and when the pain persisted and the swelling didn’t go down, I was worried that I might have fractured my ankle, so I went to Springfield Hospital to get it checked out. When I got there, the ambulance driver told me I’d have to sit in the waiting room because they were packed. While I was waiting, there was a small child crying in her mother’s lap because her leg was in a lot of pain. Her mother told me that she had been waiting for two hours. An hour later, I finally got moved into a room and got X-rayed. Fortunately, there was no fracture, just an acute sprain, so I went home and have been treating it with ice.

While I was there, a nurse came in with a warm blanket, and told me that it was the last warm blanket. That’s not right – they should have enough medical supplies to provide what everyone needs.

I also heard a staff person say that six ambulances had

pulled in – and they were already overcrowded, which is why other patients and I had long waits. One of the ambulance drivers said that they had seen an increase in calls for Springfield since the Bellows Falls Health Center closed. I myself have been to the Springfield emergency room in the past, and I never had as long a wait as I did this time.

Closing the Bellows Falls Health Center has already put extra demand on Springfield Hospital. I’ve been reading in the news that this hospital may be slated for closure. I, along with other people in Bellows Falls, rely on Springfield Hospital for emergency care as well as other hospital care. Instead of closing, we need the Springfield Hospital to stay open with adequate staffing and all the supplies and medications that the staff need to care for us.

Sincerely,  
Rhonda Holland  
Bellows Falls, Vt.

Dear Editor,

I see where the current administration is getting commitments to invest in America. So, I wonder where our congressional delegation is in trying to get a commitment for some of these industries to be in Vermont, specifically in Springfield, Vt. In the past they have concentrated their efforts in northern half of Vermont instead of southern Vermont. There is an opportunity for Vermont to grow and attract the younger generation, reduce taxes, increase the housing, and keep citizens in Vermont. So, what are you doing?

They also have advised that the federal budget there has a need to cut waste, fraud, and abuse. We can all agree on that, but instead of working with this administration, they fight against it on how it is being done. So, instead of being part of the solution and having input, they are part of the problem. This is where the American citizens are not being represented.

The Republicans, Democrats, and Independents are all guilty for the deficit spending on the federal budget. It’s time to address this, and it’s time for the federal government to live within a budget. The last time a

budget was level funded was with President Clinton.

Let me remind them, they had that opportunity the last four years to address the issues, and they did nothing. Job growth came from the federal government instead of the private sector. You now are seeing people laid off from the federal government, as there is a need to cut expenses. This is no different than the private sector doing the same thing to save their business.

When the Democratic Party, your Democratic representatives, and most of the people all agree on a topic, that is fine, but when the Democratic Party disagrees, the representatives tend to agree with the Democratic Party instead of the people they are supposed to represent. They are afraid to go against the Democratic Party. Its time to work together for Vermonters, instead of pulling the childish act they did during the presidential address.

I would recommend to them to stop gaslighting the Vermonters and get to work.

Sincerely  
Doug Johnston  
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](mailto: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](http://www.VermontJournal.com).

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- 4 Individual Scalloped Potatoes (3.8 oz.)
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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 & The Shopper.

POLITICAL LETTERS Due to the volume of political letters we receive during elections, and the increased cost of adding pages to the paper to print them all, political letters are charged at the rate of \$75 for 200 words, and \$0.50 per word thereafter. Political letters include endorsing, electioneering, or campaigning for, or against, a sepcific candidate or party.



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VERMONT



Cannabis has not been analyzed or approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). For use by individuals 21 years of age and older or registered qualifying patient only. KEEP THIS PRODUCT AWAY FROM CHILDREN AND PETS. DO NOT USE IF PREGNANT OR BREASTFEEDING. Possession or use of cannabis may carry significant legal penalties in some jurisdictions and under federal law. It may not be transported outside of the state of Vermont. The effects of edible cannabis may be delayed by two hours or more. Cannabis may be habit forming and can impair concentration, coordination, and judgment. Persons 25 years and younger may be more likely to experience harm to the developing brain. It is against the law to drive or operate machinery when under the influence of this product. National Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222.



CHURCH / LEGAL

obituaries

Michael A. Dunda Jr., 1940-2025

WESTON, Vt. – Michael A. Dunda Jr., 84, died unexpectedly at his home in Weston, Vt., on Thursday, Feb. 27, 2025. He was born on Sept. 4, 1940, in Philadelphia, Pa., the son of Michael and Hilda (Smyser) Dunda.

On Feb. 13, 1960, he married his high school sweetheart Barbara G. Meister in Runnemede, N.J. They were married for 56 years before she predeceased him on May 13, 2016.

As a senior at Triton Regional High School, Michael received a full scholarship to play baseball at Brown University, and three different MLB teams tried to recruit him. He declined both opportunities to pursue his dream of being a dairy farmer. He worked and lived on a dairy farm for a short period before starting his more than 40-year career as a longshoreman on the docks of Philadelphia, Pa., and Camden, N.J. He owned and operated the Station House, a small family restaurant in Haddon Heights, N.J., from 1990-1998.

Michael, Barbara, and Barbara's mother Althea moved to Weston, Vt., after Michael retired in 1998. Michael enjoyed working on his property with his Kubota tractor, driving his



Michael Dunda Jr., 1940-2025. PHOTO PROVIDED

Mustang convertible, and spending time with his family and friends. He and Barbara could be spotted driving around town with the top down and blasting the heat.

He is survived by his son Michael A. Dunda III (Donna); two daughters Kimberly Dunda (Dennis) and Randi Dunda-Martin (René); daughter-in-law Joanne; 11 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and sisters Carol Stewart (Larry) and Nancy (sister-in-law).

He was predeceased by his parents, one son Scott T. Dunda, brother Thomas, and brother-in-law Larry.

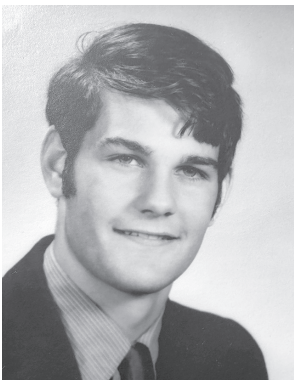
Services will be held at a later date.

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

David C. Merrill Jr., 1954-2025

BENNINGTON, Vt. – David C. Merrill Jr. passed away on March 1, 2025, at the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington. David was born on April 1, 1954, in Bellows Falls, Vt., to David and Jeanne (Jenks) Merrill. He attended Springfield High School, graduating in 1972. He attended West Point Military Academy, and graduated from Franklin Pierce University. He served in the U.S. Army.

David is survived by his son Keith Merrill, of Davenport, Fla.; and daughter Kristina McKeighan (Jason) and grandson Blake



David Merrill Jr., 1954-2025. PHOTO PROVIDED

McKeighan, of Rutland, Vt. David was predeceased by his parents, and two brothers Daniel and Bruce Merrill.

Burial will be private.

BELLOWS FALLS

**First Baptist Church of Bellows Falls, 9 Church St.**  
Traditional Baptist Services held Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. Handicap accessible. 802-463-3220.

CHARLESTOWN

**North Charlestown United Methodist Church, 471 River Rd.**  
Worship is Sundays at 9 a.m. Holy communion is celebrated the first Sunday of every month. Go to [www.facebook.com/UMCOofNorthCharlestown](https://www.facebook.com/UMCOofNorthCharlestown) for more information.

CHESTER

**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](mailto:chestervtuu@gmail.com) for a Zoom link for the service.

LUDLOW

**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

Susan A. Hickey, 1952-2025

WINDSOR, Vt. – Susan A. Hickey, 72, died on Monday, March 3, 2025, at Mount Ascutney Hospital. She was born in Windsor, on Oct. 27, 1952, and lived in Windsor and the surrounding areas for most of her life. She graduated from Windsor High School, and married John G. Hickey on Oct. 7, 1972. She enjoyed her role as a military spouse, living on bases in Germany and across the United States, and welcoming two sons to their family. In 1977, they moved stateside, and settled in the Windsor area.

She wanted the best for her sons, encouraged them to try anything, and taught them to follow through. Once her sons were in high school she embarked on a more than 20-year career with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Susan loved visiting coastal Maine, enjoying the scent of the ocean air, walking in the waves, and relaxing on the beach. Back home, she was a talented gardener with thriving houseplants and large flower and vegetable beds, creating outdoor spaces for her to watch hummingbirds in the summer.

Susan's faith was a guiding light of hope and love



Susan Hickey, 1952-2025. PHOTO PROVIDED

throughout her life; she volunteered for many years helping to lead prayer groups.

She is survived by two sons Chad Z. Hickey and wife Jody, of Cut Bank, Mont., and John Hickey, of Windsor; one sister Barbara Hutchinson, of Springfield, Vt.; nieces and nephews, other relatives, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents and husband.

A visitation was held at Knight Funeral Home in Windsor, Vt., on Friday, March 7, from 1 p.m. until time of service at 2 p.m. A private burial will be held later at the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Randolph, Vt.

Online condolences may be expressed at [www.knightfuneralhomes.com](http://www.knightfuneralhomes.com).

gmail.com, or find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-Church-of-Westminster-Inc-1506511432980057](https://www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-Church-of-Westminster-Inc-1506511432980057).

[churchoftheannunciation.org](http://churchoftheannunciation.org), or call us at 802-228-3451.

PERKINSVILLE

**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

**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](mailto:fccucc@vermontel.net), or go to [www.firstchurchspringfield.org](http://www.firstchurchspringfield.org).

WESTMINSTER

**First Congregational Church of Westminster, 3470 US Route 5**  
Sunday services are at 10 a.m. in our historic church and on Zoom. We have a children's message each Sunday and following church is a time of fellowship in the Hall with coffee and snacks. For more information, call 802-518-0321, email us at [westminstercongonline@](mailto:westminstercongonline@)

Raymond A. Hull, 1931-2025

CHARLESTOWN, N.H. – Raymond Alfred Hull, 94, of Charlestown, N.H., passed away on March 7, 2025.

He was born in Windsor, Vt., on Jan. 29, 1931, the son of Isiah and Marion Hull.

Raymond was in the U.S. Army from 1949-1953, during the Korean Conflict, gaining medals and awards, such as the Hourglass, National Defense Award, Combat Infantryman Award, and the United Nations Award.

He was a member of the Masonic Hiram #9 Lodge in Claremont, Bektash Shriners, life member of DAV, American Legion, and VFW, and also the Charlestown Rotary Club, Paul Harris Fellow, and a Charlestown Congregational Church past trustee and past pastoral relations.

He enjoyed camping, woodworking, and traveling.

Ray is survived by his wife Rosie Smith-Hull, of Charlestown; his daughter Penny Desgagne, of Nashua; grandchildren Jeremy Desgagne, of Florida, and Nikki Desgagne, of Nashua; stepdaughter Deb Costine and Colin, of Chester; several stepgrandchildren; his sister Patricia Simonds, of White River Junction, Vt.; brother Robert Becker, of Florida; and a very special adopted son Harold Booth, of Unity.

He was predeceased by



Raymond Hull, 1931-2025. PHOTO PROVIDED

his parents; children Steve Hull and Michael Hull; and siblings Richard Hull, Juanita (Becker) Larkin, Alta (Becker) Connolly, Warren Becker, David Becker, and Roberta Becker.

Visiting hours will be held at the Charlestown Memorial Chapel on Saturday, March 15, from 10-11 a.m. Service will be at 11 a.m. Following the service, lunch will be at the Charlestown Senior Center.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Ray's memory to the Shriner's burn unit of St. Jude's.

Arrangements are with Stringer Funeral Homes and Crematorium, 146 Broad Street, Claremont, N.H. To view an online memorial or send a private message of condolence, visit [www.stringerfh.com](http://www.stringerfh.com).

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STATE OF VERMONT	
SUPERIOR COURT Windham Unit	PROBATE DIVISION Docket No.: 25-PR-00656
In re ESTATE of: Raymond Gregory, Jr.	
NOTICE TO CREDITORS	
To the Creditors of: Raymond Gregory, Jr.	
late of Grafton, Vermont	
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: 3-7-25	Signature of Fiduciary: John E. Gregory, Sr.
Executor/Administrator John E. Gregory, Sr. Phone Number 802-885-2582	Mailing Address c/o Parker & Ankuda, PC, PO Box 519 City, State, Zip Springfield, VT 05156
Name of Publication:	Vermont Journal
Publication Date:	March 12, 2025
Name of Probate Court:	Vermont Superior Court, Windsor Unit Probate Division
Address of Probate Court:	12 The Greene Woodstock, VT 05091



# calendar

# LEGAL NOTICES

**MARCH 13 –**  
LUDLOW, Vt. – Join Create Together at Fletcher Farm on Sunday, March 13, from 4-7 p.m., at 611 Vermont Route 103 South, for an open house to explore our new, professionally equipped studios, meet our teaching artists, enjoy refreshments, and try making something new. Thanks to tremendous community support, we’ve transformed into a dynamic, year-round creative space for everyone in the community. Come learn about our new workshops.

**MARCH 15 –**  
WESTMINSTER, Vt. – The First Congregational Church of Westminster, 3470 Route 5, will host a St. Patrick’s

Day dinner on Saturday, March 15, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., at the church. Dinner will include corned beef, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, and homemade pie. Kids age 5-12 are discounted, and kids under 5 eat free. Takeout meals will be available; order your takeout meals by March 14 by calling 802-518-0321.

**MARCH 17 –**  
LUDLOW, Vt. – The American Red Cross will hold a blood drive on Monday, March 17, from 12-5 p.m., at the Ludlow Community Center. Call 1-800-RED-CROSS to make an appointment.

LUDLOW, Vt. – The Black River Valley Senior Center, 10 High Street, will serve a community lunch on

Monday, March 17, at 12 p.m. The menu will be hearty beef stew, homemade rolls, and cupcakes by Whitney. Free cash bingo will follow. All are welcome. Please make reservations by calling 802-228-7421.

**MARCH 19 –**  
SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield First Congregational Church, 77 Main Street, will serve a community lunch on Wednesday, March 19, from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. The menu will be chicken, rice, and peas; coleslaw; rolls; and cookies and fruit.

**MARCH 22 –**  
WINDSOR, Vt. – There will be a cribbage tournament held on Saturday, March 22, at 12 p.m., at the

Windsor Welcome Center. This is a fundraiser organized by the Friends of Windsor Library. There is an entry fee per player. All players will play five games. Scores will be kept for each player, the top total combined score of all five games will split the entry fee money with the library. There will be a prize for highest hand. Refreshments will be sold to support the library. We ask that you bring a cribbage board and cards, just in case we need them. Please email librarian@windsorlibrary.org to let us know you’re coming.

School, on Route 100 in Plymouth, Vt. Watch for the “Open” flag.

**MONDAYS –**  
PROCTORSVILLE, Vt. – On Mondays at 6:15 p.m., join Mikayla for a yoga class. Email mikayla@mikaylasmantra.net to register. Visit www.dgbodyworks.com for more information. Private classes are available.

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 –**  
SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Senior Solutions, in collaboration with Tai Chi Vermont, continues its Tai Chi for Fall Prevention beginner/intermediate class in the Great Hall, 100 River Street (parking at Pearl Street entrance), on Tuesdays, from 10:40-11:40 a.m. Tai chi not only helps to lower the risk of falling, but also improves concentration, leg strength, balance, and coordination, and reduces joint pain and stress. Come join us – it’s fun, and it’s free. For more information, contact suerubl@aol.com.

**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.

**THURSDAYS –**  
LUDLOW, Vt. – The Black River Memory Cafe is held on the second Thursday of each month, at the United Church of Ludlow, 48 Pleasant Street, from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. The memory cafe is free to attend, snacks included, and offers a safe and comfortable space where caregivers and their loved ones living with dementia or Alzheimer’s can socialize, listen to music, play games, and enjoy other appropriate activities. This is a program of Black River Good Neighbor Services. For more information, contact Vicki at 802-376-3388, or Krey at 802-228-3663.

### Human Resource Manager

Two Rivers Supervisory Union located in Ludlow, Vermont has an opening for a full-time, exempt Human Resource Manager. This hands-on position is responsible for policy administration, benefits, insurances, compensation and contract administration. The HR Manager will be directly involved in and responsible for employment related procedures including but not limited to workers compensation claims, unemployment claims, FMLA and background checks. We offer competitive wages, comprehensive benefits, and a friendly, productive work environment.

Send resume and cover letter to:  
Cheryl Hammond, Business Manager  
Two Rivers Supervisory Union  
609 VT Route 103 South  
Ludlow, VT 05149  
cheryl.hammond@trsu.org E.O.E.

### PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY HERBICIDES RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE

To prevent safety hazards and the interruption of electric service, National Grid is obligated to maintain its rights-of-way and carefully control the growth of certain tree species under transmission lines. The most effective method of accomplishing this is selective herbicide treatment. The herbicides that are used have been registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Certified and experienced applicators will apply the treatments with handheld tools. A permit has been applied for through the Secretary of Agriculture by National Grid for the purpose of making a selective ground-based treatment of the following herbicides: Garlon 4 Ultra (Triclopyr); Krenite S (Ammonium salt of Fosamine); Escort XP (Metsulfuron Methyl); Rodeo (Isopropylamine Salt of Glyphosate); Polaris (Isopropylamine salt of Imazapyr), Milestone Triiopropanolammonium salt of 2-pyridine carboxylic acid), or Vastlan (Triclopyr choline acetic acid, choline salt) on its rights-of-way in the following towns:

1331	Pownal, Readsboro, Stamford, Whitingham
1433	Readsboro
1538	Readsboro, Whitingham
1697	Readsboro, Searsburg, Whitingham, Wilmington
1699	Searsburg, Wilmington
1802	Rockingham, Springfield
1813	Concord, Lunenburg, Waterford
1821	Barnet

The treatment will start on or about June 2, 2025

National Grid uses GIS based topographic maps to locate public water supplies, which will be avoided. Vermont regulations require National Grid to warn residents to protect private water supplies and environmentally sensitive areas. It is the responsibility of the residents to notify the Company contact person of the existence of private water supplies or other environmentally sensitive areas located within 100 feet of the right-of-way.

Landowners with questions regarding private water supplies on the Company’s rights-of-way maintenance program should contact:  
Mariclaire Rigby  
National Grid  
939 Southbridge Street  
Worcester, MA 01610  
Telephone: (781) 290-8310 or mariclaire.rigby@nationalgrid.com

Residents who wish to submit comments regarding this vegetation management treatment should contact:  
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets  
Public Health & Agricultural Resource Management Division  
116 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620  
(802) 828-1732

### TOWN OF WESTON CEMETERY COMMISSION PO BOX 98 WESTON, VT 05161 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL


The Cemetery Commission for the Town of Weston is seeking bids for the maintenance of the three town cemeteries for the next three years (through summer of 2027). Work includes regular mowing, spring and fall clean ups, and brush clearing as necessary throughout the year. Bids will be accepted at the Weston Town Office until noon on Friday, April 4, 2025.

### TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD ANIMAL LICENSE NOTICE

Animal Licenses are available at the Town Clerk’s Office. The state has increased its fee by \$2.00. A spayed/neutered dog license is \$16.00 before April 1st and an un-spayed/un-neutered dog license fee is \$20.00 before April 1st. All dogs and wolf-hybrids six months or over must be licensed by April 1 each year and wear a collar and tag at all times. A dog or wolf-hybrid without a tag is presumed to be unlicensed and is not protected by law. A tag must not be used on any dog or wolf-hybrid other than the dog or wolf-hybrid in the license bearing the corresponding number. If you are unsure if your dog/wolf-hybrid needs a new rabies vaccination before being licensed, please contact this office. Barbara A. Courchesne, Town Clerk CVC, 96 Main Street, Springfield, VT 05156 (802) 885-2104 FAX (802) 885-1617 tosclerk@vermontel.net

### TOWN OF CHESTER

Looking for an opportunity to serve your community? The Town of Chester has volunteer positions open for appointment on the Housing Commission, Planning Commission, and the Citizens Advisory Committee. Interested parties should submit a letter to julie.hance@chestervt.gov or Town of Chester, P.O. Box 370, Chester, VT 05143.



**Town of Westminster**  
P.O. BOX 147 WESTMINSTER, VT 05158  
Tel. 802-722- 4524 Fax 802-722-9816

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

### Legal Notice

The Westminster Development Review Board will meet at 6:00 pm on **Monday, April 7, 2025** to consider the following:

<b>Application # 25-35</b>	Application #25-35 Jonathan Whitman (Owner ) – property located at 18 Metcalf Drive. The Applicant is requesting a 16’ x 16’ shed adjoined behind/beside the garage with a small 4’ x 5’ breezeway attachment, sided to match house & garage in the Historic District. This Application will be reviewed under <b>Section 311 Site Plan Review, Section 445 Village District Zone and Article IX Historic Preservation District Zone</b> of the adopted 2017 Zoning Bylaws.
<b>Application # 25-36</b>	Application # 25-36 Jason Perry (Applicant) Burt & Lisa Nowers (owners) property located at <b>1755 Kurn Hattin Rd.</b> The Applicant is requesting a Change of Use – temporary storage of construction equipment & supplies. Application will be reviewed under <b>Section 311 Site Plan Review; Section 446 Residential District; and 215 Zoning Permit Procedures</b> 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.



CLEAN OUTS

EZ-Dump Enterprises is available for old boiler removal, and home/apartment/storage clean outs and disposal, and trash and junk removal. Serving Springfield and all surrounding areas in VT & NH. Call 802-376-1168 or email ezdump.bl@gmail.com.

HELP WANTED

LONDONDERRY, Vt. – We are small property management company looking for someone who can follow daily tasks. Shoveling snow, spring clean-ups, mowing, firewood deliveries, tree clean-ups, and anything that needs to be done daily. This job can be part time, or full time, perfect

for someone who is retired and wants to fill in some days. Driver’s license required. Give us a call 802-345-5110.

WANTED

WANTED: Used, working 33 RPM record player. Call 802-885-4826.

classifieds

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH

PUBLIC NOTICE - REQUEST FOR BIDS: NEW ALL-WHEEL DRIVE MOTOR GRADER

The Plymouth Select Board is seeking sealed bids for the purchase of one (1) new All-Wheel Drive Motor Grader. This machine will be utilized for vital infrastructure maintenance, including road grading, snow removal, and construction support within our jurisdiction.

The complete RFP document, including detailed specifications and submission instructions, can be obtained from the Town’s website [www.plymouthvt.org](http://www.plymouthvt.org) or the Town Office located at 68 Town Office Road Plymouth, VT 05056.

Bids should be marked “Grader” and emailed to [clerk@plymouthvt.org](mailto:clerk@plymouthvt.org) or mailed to Town of Plymouth, 68 Town Office Road, Plymouth, Vermont 05056 no later than 2:00 P.M. on Thursday, March 27, 2025.

Bids will be opened at the Select Board regular meeting on Monday, April 7, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.

Town of Plymouth, Vermont  
Part-Time Assessor

An assessor is a local government official responsible for determining the market value of all real property within a town, by conducting physical inspections, analyzing market data, and maintaining property records, ultimately creating the basis for property tax calculations within the municipality; their primary duty is to ensure fair and equitable property tax assessments for all residents by accurately valuing each property according to established guidelines.

Key responsibilities of a town assessor include:

- Conducting field inspections of properties to assess their condition, size, and features to determine market value.
- Researching comparable sales data, market trends, and property appraisal techniques to support valuation decisions.
- Maintaining a comprehensive list of all taxable properties within the town, including property descriptions and assessed values.
- Reviewing and approving property tax exemptions for qualified individuals or properties.
- Responding to property owner inquiries regarding assessments, explaining valuation methodologies, and addressing concerns.
- Staying updated on local and state property assessment laws and regulations.
- Participating in periodic revaluation projects to ensure assessments reflect current market conditions.
- Generating reports on assessment activity, maintaining detailed property records, and complying with data reporting requirements.

Required skills and qualifications:

- Thorough understanding of real estate appraisal principles, market trends, and property valuation methodologies.
- Ability to analyze complex data, draw accurate conclusions, and make sound valuation judgments.
- Meticulous recordkeeping and accuracy in data entry to ensure proper property assessment calculations.
- The job requires interaction with the general public, so a professional demeanor, good public relation skills and interpersonal skills are required.
- Experience with assessment software (NEMRC, CAMA, Proval, VTPIE) is desirable.
- Assessor Level Certification is required.

Please submit your resume and/or a completed application to the Plymouth Town Clerk’s Office at 68 Town Office Road, Plymouth, Vermont 05056 or email [clerk@plymouthvt.org](mailto: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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# health & wellness

## AudioNova brings expert care to Springfield

**SPRINGFIELD, Vt.** – For many people, hearing loss can feel like an invisible barrier, creating distance between them and the world around them. But thanks to AudioNova, Springfield residents now have access to top-tier hearing care right in their own community. Located at 100 Springfield Plaza, AudioNova is helping locals reconnect with their loved ones and daily life through free hearing evaluations, expert consultations, and cutting-edge hearing aid solutions.

At the heart of AudioNova's Springfield location is Jason Udeen, an experienced hearing care provider dedicated to improving the lives of his patients. With years of expertise in hearing healthcare, Udeen is known for his patient-first approach and deep understanding of the latest advancements in hearing aid technology.

"Hearing loss doesn't just affect the person experiencing it – it impacts families, relationships, and overall

quality of life," says Udeen. "Our goal is to help people regain the ability to fully engage in conversations and enjoy the sounds they may have been missing."

Hearing loss often develops gradually, making it easy to overlook the early signs. Many people wait years before seeking treatment, not realizing that untreated hearing loss can lead to cognitive decline, social isolation, and even an increased risk of falls.

Research has shown that addressing hearing loss early can help preserve brain function and improve long-term communication skills. Identifying changes in hearing sooner allows individuals to take advantage of advanced hearing solutions and maintain a high quality of life. That's why AudioNova offers free hearing evaluations, making it easier for Springfield residents to take a proactive approach to their hearing health.

AudioNova provides a full range of hearing care ser-

vices designed to meet individual needs, including free hearing evaluations to assess hearing health and discuss personalized solutions; a variety of hearing aid options, featuring the latest technology for improved

clarity, comfort, and natural sound; and ongoing support and maintenance to ensure optimal performance, long-term success, and patient satisfaction.

If you or a loved one is experiencing hearing dif-

ficulties, don't wait – early detection makes all the difference.

For more information about hearing care services, or to schedule a free hearing evaluation, call AudioNova at 802-213-5398 today.

Taking the first step toward better hearing can truly improve your quality of life. Don't miss out on the sounds that matter most.

*Article written by AudioNova.*

## BRACC Teen Center

**CHESTER, Vt.** – Last year, the Black River Area Community Coalition (BRACC) launched an after-school pilot program in response to needs voiced by the community. The teen center program now serves more than 70 local youth, offers regular weekly drop-in hours, and continues to see a rise in attendance with new and returning participants showing up each week.

The Chester Teen Center provides a safe space in the community for teens to connect with each other, have fun and be creative, develop leadership skills, and get access to support and mentorship. On Wednesdays and Fridays, groups of students walk from school to the space to spend a couple of hours hanging out, playing games, painting, listening to music, and planning their own activities. In addition to offering regular drop-in hours, the teen center has held special events like movie nights, bonfires, karaoke, dances, and birthday parties. They've also ventured out in the community for field

trips to local ski hills and to the Okemo Valley TV studio for a youth-led podcast project. BRACC director Lauren Ingersoll and program supervisor Andrew Moore work together off site and on site at the teen center to facilitate activities for between 15 and 30 youth attendees each day. In the last couple of months, participating teens ran their own bake sale fundraiser, designed a new logo for their space, and started their own creative projects and committee groups.

BRACC's program continues to grow in capacity and see success with support from its community, volunteers, donations, and numerous partnerships with local businesses and organizations. Thanks to many individuals who have donated their time and resources, BRACC has been able to raise more than \$9,000 in community donations, receive funding through grant opportunities, hire a third staff member, and begin the process of expanding their program space. The building renovation project for the space



Lauren Ingersoll and Andrew Moore with area youth outside the new Chester Teen Center building.

PHOTO PROVIDED

expansion is scheduled to be completed by this spring, with an open house celebration event to follow. Once their new space is up and running, they plan to start holding specialized activities like creative writing workshops, guitar lessons, homework and tutoring hours, cooking classes, and educational presentations. BRACC also intends to integrate more outside support into the teen center related to life skills, behavioral development, mental health, and making healthy choices.

"We're grateful for the overwhelming support we've had since the very start of this project and all the way through," Ingersoll expresses. "The teen center is prevention work at its core. Everyone's hearts are in the same place, and we all want to see this program

succeed. Thanks to this collaborative effort from our community, we're able to provide a place for kids to go outside of home and school – and it's something they look forward to every week."

Registration for the teen center program is free and exclusive to youth in grades 6-12, or aged 13-19. Teens are invited to come by the space any time during regular drop-in hours, on Wednesdays and Fridays, from 3-5:30 p.m., at the Green Mountain Church, located at 469 Main Street in Chester. More information about the program, how to register, and a list of upcoming events can be found at [www.braccvt.org/teen-center](http://www.braccvt.org/teen-center).

*Article written by Black River Area Community Coalition.*




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# health & wellness

## Understanding retinal detachment

**SPRINGFIELD, Vt.** – The human eye is a marvel of biological engineering, allowing us to see the sparkle of light in the night sky from millions of miles away, or the dazzling array of colors in a sunset. But what happens when this delicate structure experiences the dramatic event known as a retinal detachment? Buckle up, as we embark on a journey through the eye to find out.

What is a retinal detachment? If the eye was a movie camera, the retina would be the film, and the light entering the eye would be the projection. If the film was suddenly damaged, what would happen to the projection? A suddenly distorted or dark screen.

Retinal detachment occurs when the retina, the thin “wallpaper” in the back of the eye, becomes separated from its supportive tissue. This can lead to permanent vision loss if not diagnosed and treated promptly.

Retinal detachment can occur for many reasons. Some common culprits include age, high myopia (nearsightedness), eye trauma, eye surgery, and diabetes. As we mature, the vitreous gel that fills the eye can shrink and pull away from the retina, leading to a detachment. If you have a strong glasses prescription for nearsightedness, your retina is thinner and more stretched than the average person, putting it at a higher risk for a retinal hole

or tear. If you have vision changes after a hard hit to the eye or eye surgery, get your eyes checked. Retinal detachment is a common complication of eye trauma. Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to diabetic retinopathy, or bleeding and abnormal blood vessel growth, that can detach the retina.

How do you know if you’re having a retinal detachment? There are often warning signs. Symptoms are often described as seeing persistent flashes of light in your peripheral vision, or increasing new black spots or “floaters” in your view. In some cases, there will be a dark shadow or curtain over a portion of the vision. These are all serious symptoms that need

immediate attention.

If you suspect a retinal detachment, schedule a visit with your eye doctor as soon as possible for timely diagnosis and treatment. Your doctor will dilate your eyes and determine if a detachment is present. If so, there are many treatments available depending on the type of break. Retinal surgeons may use a laser to seal down the retina. In some instances, a scleral buckle, or belt, will be placed to hold the retina intact. Another procedure, pneu-

mat-ic retinopexy, is the process of injecting a gas bubble in the eye to push the retina back against the eye wall.

Retinal detachment may sound scary, but with timely diagnosis and management, many people regain their vision. So, keep your eyes peeled for any unusual symptoms, and don’t hesitate to seek help. After all, we only get one pair of eyes.

*Written by Dr. Mercedes Smith, optometrist, Springfield Family Eyecare.*



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# PTO Comedy Night —

**REGION** – Celtic powerhouse Gypsy Reel will be warming up for St. Patrick's Day with a special show at the New American Grill in Londonderry, on Friday, March 14, from 6-9 p.m. Superb food and beverages, and a dedicated music room make for a great atmosphere to hear the

best Irish music this side of Galway.

On Monday, March 17, Gypsy Reel are thrilled to be returning for their 20th annual St. Patrick's Day show at The Killarney in Ludlow, at 5 p.m. Based in Ludlow, Gypsy Reel have toured all over the world, but love to stay near home

for their favorite holiday. Incorporating fiddle, banjo, mandolin, guitar, standup bass, and four-part harmony, Gypsy Reel will perform traditional sing-alongs, as well as toe-tapping dance tunes from the Irish tradition. As always, traditional food and drinks will be served, along with great music.

If you want a quieter venue to hear Gypsy Reel strut their Celtic rhythm and songs, they will be wrapping up the festivities at the Ransom Tavern at the Kedron Valley Inn, in South Woodstock, on Wednesday, March 19, from 6-8 p.m.

**WEATHERSFIELD, Vt.** – Weathersfield's PTO has organized a Comedy Night fundraiser for March 29, at 7 p.m., at The Common Man Restaurant, located at 16 Mill Road in Claremont, N.H. This is an 18 years and older event. The comedians performing are Christine Hurley and Kelly MacFarland.

Hurley loves what she does, making people laugh. Hurley is the favorite comedian of Matt Siegel, of Kiss 108's "Matty in the Morning Show." She has performed several times at the Boston Garden for Denis Leary's "Comics Come Home" show that supports the

Cam Neely Cancer Foundation. You have seen Hurley on Nick at Nite's "Search for America's Funniest Mom Contest," season 9 of the "The Great Food Truck Race" on the Food Network, and "America's Got Talent." Hurley is a regular at Aruba Ray's Comedy Club in Aruba, the Montreal Comedy Festival, the Laugh Factory in Las Vegas, and every comedy club, restaurant, and fraternal hall in New England. Hurley is the most booked comic on the East Coast, and lives up to her title as "The Queen of Boston Comedy."

MacFarland is a stand-up comedian, writer, and actress. She has an extensive resume, including comedy clubs, theaters, colleges, festivals, television appearances, and entertaining U.S. troops overseas. MacFarland has appeared on the TV Guide Channel, Comedy Central, NBC's "Last Comic Standing," AXS "Gotham Comedy LIVE," "Up Early Tonight" on Hulu, Prime Video, and Denis Leary's "Comics Come Home" at the Boston TD Garden. Check out MacFarland's Dry Bar comedy special "Sleepy-

time Baby.” She has several comedy albums available on iTunes, and can be heard on SiriusXM. For all things MacFarland, visit [www.kellymacfarland.com](http://www.kellymacfarland.com).

Tickets are available via cash or check by emailing [wsptocomedy@gmail.com](mailto:wsptocomedy@gmail.com); via Venmo @WSPTO; via CheddarUp on Weathersfield School's PTO Comedy Night Facebook page; or at the door.

"We wanted to do something different and fun to raise money for our great school community. Comedy is a fantastic way to bring people together, laugh, and relax. These comedians are talented, and we are lucky that they are spending an evening in our area. So, book your babysitters and join us for a funny night out on the town," says Comedy Night Committee Chair Meredith Kelley.

The event will also feature a raffle and game that all can participate in with a small donation.

Proceeds from this event will support Weathersfield School PTO's mission to support students, faculty, and staff.

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# arts & entertainment

## Vermont Comedy All Stars at Next Stage

PUTNEY, Vt. – Gordon Clark and his Vermont Comedy All Stars return to Next Stage on Friday, March 21, at 7:30 p.m., for an unforgettable night of stand-up comedy. Featured performers are listed below.

Nico D’Elisa is a Burlington-based comedian and musician who has been making audiences laugh for nearly five years – though she has been attempting to do so since her birth in 1991. The lead singer of Nico Suave and The Mothership, D’Elisa was also a finalist in the 2024 Vermont’s Funniest Comedian contest. D’Elisa has opened for SNL’s Alex Moffat, and shared the stage with comedy heavyweights like Kyle Kinane and Beth Stelling. Her dramatic and unhinged storytelling, often laden with singing and dancing, makes her a comedian to watch out for.

Al Ghanekar is a stand-up comedian in the Maine comedy scene. He was born in Dallas, Texas, where all he did was drink baby formula for seven months before his parents moved. After leaving the acting world, he developed an interest in stand-up comedy in 2015. Since then, Ghanekar has performed all over New England, and hosted for national headliners at Funnybone Comedy Club in the Midwest. He has

performed in different parts of the U.S.; Sydney, Australia; and Mumbai, India. And he learned that if you are going to write a bio for your website, always write in the third person to make yourself look like you’re important enough that someone else wrote your bio.

Meredith Gordon is a local Vermont standup who has opened for national headliners including Michael Ian Black, Ron Funches, Cameron Esposito, and many others. She’s also taken part in the Gilda Laugh Fest and the Portland Comedy Fest. Gordon has been a Vermont’s Funniest Comedian finalist and a two-time winner of the Seven Days’ Best Vermont Comic Award, and can be seen throughout Vermont, either doing comedy, or playing mom to her two amazing children.

Comedian, writer, and actor Adam Groppman grew up in Massachusetts, but became a comedian in Los Angeles, where he graduated from the Second City Conservatory, studied method acting, and jumped into stand-up. Groppman has performed at comedy clubs around the country, and at festivals in San Diego; Palm Springs; Ventura Harbor; Burbank; Boston; Big Fire; Portland, Maine; and Vermont. He has writ-

ten and starred in short films at the HBO Aspen, Montreal JFL, Smithwicks Cat Laughs, and Idyllwild festivals. Groppman’s group Sketch Armstrong was seen at Sacramento All Sketch and SF SketchFest, and at the premium LA venues Comedy Central Stage and UCBLA, and the variety show Comedy Cocktail with Workaholics and Jordan Peele. Groppman has written for the LA Weekly, and his collection of real stories of Southern California, “An Imaginary Real Place,” is available on Amazon. His piece in the national hit show “Mortified” has been acclaimed, and you may have seen him in comedic national TV commercials. Groppman likes mustard, Pomeranians, and cash.

Gordon Clark, the host, is proof that you can teach an old dog new tricks. A lifelong organizer and activist, he took up comedy when he was nearing 60, and never looked back. Mostly because it hurts his neck when he turns that way. Clark is the director of the nonprofit Vermont Comedy All Stars, through which he produces and hosts monthly stand-up comedy showcase specials in Burlington at the iconic Nectar’s, and Montpelier at Bent Nails Bistro, as well as the quarterly showcase here at the Next Stage Arts The-

ater in Putney. He lives in Burlington with his wife, dog, and cat.

For more information, or to purchase tickets, visit [www.nextstagearts.org](http://www.nextstagearts.org).

Next Stage is located at 15 Kimball Hill, in downtown Putney, Vt. Next Stage will provide a beer, wine, and cocktail cash bar. For information, call 802-387-0102 or visit [www.nextstagearts.org](http://www.nextstagearts.org).

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

H	A	N	F	O	P	M	A	D	A	M
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A	M	O	R	E	D	A	L	A	D	E
B	Y	N	O	W	O	R	I	L	S	E

## Audubon bird talk in Cavendish

PROCTORSVILLE, Vt. – Two experts from the Mount Ascutney Audubon Society will give a talk about birds commonly found in Vermont yards, forests, and fields. Bird experts Marianne and Michael Walsh will focus on the different species we may see in our area, the nature of the different birds, and what they can tell us about our changing environment.

The talk is scheduled for Friday, March 28, from 6-7:30 p.m., at the Cavendish Fletcher Community Library, 573 Main Street, Proctorsville. No reservations are required, but seating is limited.

This presentation is sponsored by the Walk and Talk series, a committee of the Cavendish Community and Conservation Association. For more information, contact Robin Timko at 802-417-5324.

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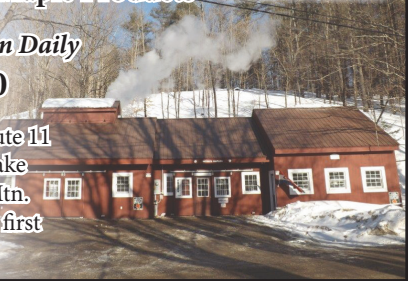
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HOME Sweet HOME

Barrett & Valley Associates Inc. welcomes Rob Weltz

GRAFTON, Vt. – Barrett & Valley Associates Inc. is pleased to announce that Rob Weltz has joined their team as a real estate professional, licensed in both Vermont and New Hampshire. With more than 24 years of experience in education and a longstanding commitment to community involvement, Weltz brings a wealth of knowledge, leadership, and passion to the real estate industry. A Bellows Falls native, Weltz's dedication to his community is evident through his various roles, including serving as the board chair of Bellows Falls Union High School and as an active member of the

BPOE #1619 Elks Lodge. His deep connection to the area and his knowledge of the region are assets that will enable him to provide outstanding service to his clients. "Rob's extensive experience in education and his active involvement in local organizations provide him with a unique perspective on the needs of our clients," said Jessica Landers, principal broker at Barrett & Valley Associates. "His ability to connect with people, work collaboratively, and think strategically aligns perfectly with the values and goals of our firm." Weltz earned a Bachelor of Science in education

from the University of Vermont, and a Master of Education from Springfield College. Throughout his career in education, Weltz has demonstrated exceptional leadership and problem-solving abilities, skills that will now serve him well in helping clients navigate the complexities of buying and selling real estate. Barrett & Valley Associates Inc. is a leading real estate agency serving clients throughout southern and central Vermont and New Hampshire. With a reputation for integrity, personalized service, and deep knowledge of the local market, Barrett & Valley is committed to helping clients throughout the sales or



Rob Weltz. PHOTO PROVIDED

purchase process. For more information about Weltz, or to work with him on your next real estate transaction, contact Barrett & Valley Associates Inc. at 802-843-2390, or visit [www.barrettandvalley.com](http://www.barrettandvalley.com). Weltz can be reached directly at [rweltz.bva@gmail.com](mailto:rweltz.bva@gmail.com), or by calling his direct line at 919-986-4207.

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106 UPPER LOOP | LUDLOW

The "Treehouse" is on a .52+/- acre lot in the West Village Area. This Three Bedroom and 2.5 Bath Home features lots of windows and mountain views. Deeded access to Okemo's Sachem Trail. Contact Listing Agent Ty Murray at 802-777-8047 for more info.

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**Weekly SUDOKU**

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

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 Solo of "Star Wars"  
4 Dandy guy  
7 Sir's counter-part  
12 Coach  
13 Parseghian  
14 Lab eggs  
15 Mountain crest  
16 Roulette bet  
18 "Absolutely not!"  
19 Genetic letters  
20 Long journeys  
22 Informal pronoun  
23 JFK's predecessor  
27 Slightly wet  
29 Id counter-part  
31 Small burger  
34 Majestic  
35 Paris school  
37 Diocese part  
38 Tennis score  
39 Author Umberto  
41 Slightly open  
45 Stand-in  
47 Japanese sash  
48 "Absolutely not!"  
52 Eggy quaff  
53 Love, Italian-style

**DOWN**

1 Wizard Potter  
2 Sports venue  
3 Tennis star  
4 Rafael  
5 Type choice  
6 Go too far  
7 Macadamized  
8 Earth's neighbor  
9 Common verb  
10 "Lion" actor  
11 Chowd down  
12 Sea, to Henri  
13 Stretches (out)  
14 Bolshevik leader  
15 Formal decrees  
16 Fuss  
17 Season Torme  
18 Season opener?  
19 Dept. store inventory  
20 Luau souvenir  
21 Transcript no.  
22 "Awesome!"  
23 "Entourage" role  
24 Olympian queen  
25 Freight train unit  
26 Homebuyer's option  
27 Singer Nick  
28 Home  
29 Star in Orion's foot  
30 "Close one!"  
31 "Holler"  
32 "Terrific!"  
33 Author Tan  
34 Heavy weight  
35 — Magnon

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**T H M**  
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