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# THE MESSAGE OF THE WEEK

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## Eagle Times owner indicted on federal fraud charges

BY NICK GIBERTI

*The Message*

**NEW YORK, N.Y.** – Jay Lucas, owner of the now-defunct Eagle Times, has been indicted by the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York on charges of securities fraud, investment adviser fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering.

A press release from the U.S. Attorney's office alleges that Lucas, through his company Lucas Brand Equity LLC, based in Manhat-

tan, "raise[d] more than \$50 million from investors by falsely representing that their money would be invested in early-stage health and wellness companies, when in fact it was diverted to cover personal expenses, promote unrelated ventures, and make Ponzi-like payments to earlier investors."

The attorney's office goes on to allege that Lucas represented himself as the co-founder of a "well-known private equity firm," which eventually prompted the firm in question to serve

him with a cease-and-desist order. While so doing, Lucas is said to have taken money from investors, and used it on "personal expenses including alimony, rent, a vanity newspaper project in his hometown, and political consultants."

Lucas grew up in Newport, N.H., and purchased the Eagle Times, based in Claremont, in 2022. After a tumultuous period beginning in late 2024, which included delivery interruptions, claims of unpaid wages, and an employee walk-out, the

Eagle Times ceased operations in July of this year. In an open letter to the community at the time, posted to its now-inaccessible website, the Eagle Times said it was "not able to achieve business results sufficient to make the paper financially viable."

The investigation into Lucas' activities was carried out in part by the FBI. All but one of the counts with which Lucas is charged carry a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison; investment adviser fraud carries a maximum sentence of five years.

## Claremont citizens react to school budget proposals

BY PAULA BENSON

*The Message*

**CLAREMONT, N.H.** – The Claremont School Board met on Dec. 17. A presentation of the proposed budget options for fiscal year 2026-2027 was previewed by senior comptroller and interim business manager Matt Angell, and interim Superintendent Kerry Kennedy.

School board member and Finance Committee Chair Candace Crawford reminded attendees that no action would be taken that evening. "As we have come to understand, last year's budget had many flaws, including missing and incorrect data," Crawford stated. "Mr. Angell has had to get information corrected in the system before he can put the new budget together. This process has been long and cumbersome."

Crawford said the budget projections "had to address declining enrollments in our schools." She relayed that there will be no reduction in existing teaching staff, but "a redeployment of staff in an effort to improve student

achievement." Crawford also noted that the budget reflects "pay increases for bargaining groups with multiyear approved contracts, including teachers and paraprofessionals. For nonunion employees, a 3% increase is budgeted."

An increase of 11.8% in health care costs resulted in an estimated \$600,000 in additional expenses, as required by contractual obligations, said Crawford.

Crawford mentioned potential expenses not included in the proposed budget. For instance, there is no money to cover any upgrades or repairs that may be needed at any of the school buildings, and there is no money allocated for the search for a new superintendent.

The full packet is available to view on the school board website, [www.sau6.org](http://www.sau6.org).

Some of the problems identified by the presentation were low achievement scores at all grade levels, declining enrollment numbers, insufficient student support services, and the significant financial deficit crisis Claremont schools are facing.

Short-term goals include increasing student achievement levels, maximizing resources across the district, balancing classroom size, and reducing special education costs.

In each of the models, the Sugar River Valley Regional Technical Center remains as an extension of Stevens High School, and funding for the machine tool class that had been cut during the current fiscal year will be restored. No plan to continue with the current configuration of the district for fiscal year 2026-2027 was presented.

The overview of Model A, the four-school breakdown, utilizes either Maple Avenue or Disnard for prekindergarten through second grade, or third grade through fifth grade. Claremont Middle School would serve sixth through eighth grade, and ninth through 12th grade would attend Stevens High School.

Angell recommended Model A, and explained, "One of the ideas for doing a four-school model is eventually we would be transition-

ing to a two-school model, years down the road," stated Angell. "The reason behind that is because your student population just can't support it."

In Model B, the three-school plan, Maple Avenue or Disnard would accommodate prekindergarten through second grade, the same as in the first proposal. Claremont Middle School would be renamed to Claremont Upper Elementary School, and would enroll third through sixth graders. Students in grades seven through 12 would attend Stevens High School.

The current fiscal year's operating budget is \$43,179,564, and the combined state and local tax rate is \$17.45 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Model A proposes a budget amount of \$44,861,008, and a tax rate of \$18.82 per \$1,000, an increase of 3.89%. Model B is slightly less expensive, at a proposed budget of \$43,968,104, and the tax rate would be \$18.09 per \$1,000, a 1.83% increase.

Some concerned citizens

were worried about the proposal to utilize Bluff School as a location for a "special education collaborative," in an effort to lower the cost of special education programs across the school district.

The mother of a student with Down syndrome, Erica Abbey, remarked, "If you are even considering segregating special education... as a whole, this district is so lucky it doesn't have more lawsuits." Abbey told the board how her daughter had been excluded over the years within the Claremont School District. "That you have a plan that excludes them even more is disgusting."

Others, including resident Molly DeLuca, a parent of two Claremont students, expressed a feeling of déjà vu. "Once again," DeLuca commented, "I feel like we're rushing to make this happen before fully understanding the impact of the restructuring." Many other attendees nodded in agreement.

DeLuca also told the board she had "serious concerns about moving seventh and eighth graders into the high

school...I don't know how you can think that [moving younger students in with high school students] is realistically a good idea with the current setup. Have you talked to your teachers and your staff?" DeLuca asked. "What is their feedback?"

Overall, the public comments supported more communication between the board, and teachers and staff; opposed another move so soon after the closing of Bluff School and relocation of its students; and demanded a long-term, sustainable, transparent plan.

Mimi Ryans, an employee at the high school, commented, "I appreciate that you guys have jobs and lives, and I get that, but I really hope you [are all] going to school activities in the buildings and talking to families, talking to staff, not just principals."

Angell requested citizens email him at [mangell@sau6.org](mailto:mangell@sau6.org) with questions, and he will compile all questions into one document, and provide answers to the public at the Jan. 7, 2026, school board meeting.

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### DEADLINES

**All content due Tues., Dec. 23 for the Dec. 31 paper; Wed., Dec. 31 for the Jan. 07 paper.**

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# Third generation owners of GMSH learn from the best

BY PAULA BENSON

The Vermont Journal

**LUDLOW, Vt.** – In March of 1985, Ann and Doug Rose took over the Green Mountain Sugar House (GMSH), located at 820 Vermont Route 100, from Ann's parents Marjorie and David Harlow. Ann recalled that she and Doug signed the papers while they were at the store, boiling sugar for maple syrup.

Ann and her siblings grew up working at the Sugar House, and Ann was running the gift shop for her parents by 1974, when she was 19 years old. "They both had other jobs," Ann explained with a shrug.

The Rose's store and sugar house has become a favorite

destination for visitors to the Okemo Valley, as well as a local institution, and, as Doug said, "the only agricultural business left in Ludlow." Their customers return year after year for freshly tapped Vermont maple syrup, homemade maple candy treats, maple creemee ice cream, and lovingly curated Vermont products.

Over the past 40 years, Ann and Doug raised three children, and expanded both the scope and footprint of GMSH, which sits on the peaceful shores of Lake Rescue.

Now, at 70 years of age, Ann and Doug feel it is time to pass the business on to the third generation – their son Josh, his wife Jamie, and their three sons: 6-year-old

Smith, 3-year-old Vaughn, and Zeland, 18 months.

Josh grew up working "the woods" with his dad, meaning he learned firsthand how to maintain the more-than-180 tap lines owned and operated by GMSH. Josh still remembers the first time he asked his father to allow him to drill a tap.

"They were old gas tappers called Tanakas," Josh recalled. "I remember following Doug for a long time, and finally I asked, 'Do you mind if I drill a hole?'"

Doug asked Josh if he was sure he felt ready, and Josh said he was. "So, I picked a good spot, I drilled a nice hole, then I [realized] the drill was kind of heavy, so I went to hand it back to Doug... 'No, that's yours,' Doug said. "That's yours now."

"Summers at the lake, summers in the woods," Josh reminisced. He looks forward to his boys having the same memories of their childhood. Just like their father and grandfather, the Rose boys enjoy learning about and helping with the tapping process.

"I love it when Josh takes

the boys to the woods," Jamie remarked. "Smith will come back and tell me, 'I fixed three lines this time, Mom, three lines!'"

It was three years ago when Josh became operations manager of the woods, allowing Doug to step away from that part of the process, which is more involved, and more technical, than one might imagine. The current technology used to track the tap lines works via an application accessed by cell phone or smart television, allowing the monitoring of lines without having to physically inspect each one. If there is a problem detected, the system will pinpoint the exact location, which is a huge labor and time saver.

The mountainous terrain of the two tapping locations in South Reading can be difficult to traverse, and the family has given names to different sections, such as Death Mountain, Upper Death Mountain, and The Lost Valley.

Josh and Jamie are preparing to step in as of January 2026, and will slowly transition into full ownership. "We're going to work for



Left to right: Doug, Ann, Jamie, and Josh Rose.

PHOTO BY PAULA BENSON

them on a part-time basis," Ann said.

The mechanics of managing such a large agricultural business are complicated, and Josh and Jamie will need more time for on-the-job training. For instance, the reverse osmosis process adopted by Ann's parents in the 1970s requires a machine that now only Doug knows how to operate.

Ann has developed the candy-making business completely on her own, so she will be sharing her secret recipes with Jamie beginning next year.

"There is no recipe book," Jamie said, laughing. "There is nothing written down, it's all word of mouth. But," she added with a sweet nod to her mother-in-law, "I will be learning from the best."

"When I met Josh," Jamie commented, "I knew I was

marrying the Sugar House." However, Jamie also said that when the couple first met, there was "no retirement in sight for Ann and Doug, and they seemed like people who may never retire." Jamie feels a duty to maintain the traditions of quality and customer service that has been established at GMSH.

Ann said that once she and Doug are finally able to walk away, knowing they are leaving their business in capable and caring hands, they would like to travel. She relayed that her parents had visited all 50 U.S. states, and even though her father was a "true Vermonter" who loved winter sports like skiing and snowmobiling, "his most favorite state to visit was Hawaii. That's what we hope to do this coming year, take a trip to Hawaii."



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## Tri-Mountain Lions recognize Pat Glabach

**LONDONDERRY, Vt.** – Pictured here is Pat Glabach, center left, celebrating with her family after receiving The Melvin Jones Award. This award is given to Lions Club members who go above and beyond within the club. Glabach has been doing an outstanding job as Tri-Mountain Lions Club secretary. She also attends and works at our fundraising events. Congratulations, Pat.

PHOTO PROVIDED



## CONGRATULATIONS!

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# ESBR shares updates —

**LUDLOW, Vt.** — The Expeditionary School at Black River (ESBR) started this year with 22 students, which was quite a jump in numbers. The school receives tuition money from the state for students from choice towns, such as Ludlow, Mount Holly, Weathersfield, and Grafton. Families of students from other towns pay tuition to attend, and have a variety of reasons for wanting to attend our unique small school in Ludlow.

Head of School Mike Kell continues to do a wonderful job of helping to grow and lead our school. His vast experience has been invaluable. The students have begun a student government, and several students attended a school fair presentation recently to assist Kell in sharing ESB's opportunities. There is even a parent group which has also started this year. Furthermore, please visit ESB's website at [www.esblackriver.org](http://www.esblackriver.org), where you will meet the staff and see the new student local news show. This production takes a crew of students to write, direct, produce, act, and edit. It is well worth the watch.

Lastly, over the years we have had a number of stu-



ESBR students at a recent school fair for prospective students.

PHOTO PROVIDED

dents take part in Springfield's River Valley Technical Center (RVRTC) programs. This year, we have two students who are finishing their second year in the health science program and the criminal justice program. The students take classes in the morning at ESB, and then travel to RVTC in Springfield to take their programs. This partnership is another valuable educational opportunity for our ESB students. These seniors are both looking to pursue further education in those areas.

The board of directors continues to meet monthly, usually the second Thursday of each month, at 6 p.m., and visitors are welcome. If you have any questions, or would like to attend a meeting, please feel free to reach out to Board Chair Patrick Pullinen at [ppullinen@esblackriver.org](mailto:ppullinen@esblackriver.org).

If you have questions, or would like more information for a student looking to attend ESB, please contact Kell at [mkell@esblackriver.org](mailto:mkell@esblackriver.org).

# OMS raises record amount at Ski and Snowboard Swap

**LUDLOW, Vt.** — The 2025 Okemo Mountain School (OMS) Ski and Snowboard Swap, which took place at the Okemo Mountain Resort from Nov. 21-23, raised over \$40,000 for OMS, more than \$2,500 over our previous record amount. The swap proceeds are used to help keep OMS' tuition as affordable as possible for all students. 2025 swap attendees found outstanding

deals on new and used winter outdoor gear, including race and recreational skis, bindings, and boots, snowboards and snowboard equipment, winter clothing, helmets, goggles, gloves, snowshoes, and more.

"OMS gratefully acknowledges the many volunteers who generously donated their time, as well as the Okemo resort staff who went above and beyond

their regular duties to support this event," said Mariel Meringolo, Head of School at OMS. "This swap plays a vital role in helping us keep OMS' tuition as affordable as possible, and its success would not have been possible without this incredible community effort. Our entire school community deeply appreciates everyone's hard work and support."

# SEVCA welcomes new members to board of directors

**WESTMINSTER, Vt.** — Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) is pleased to welcome the appointment of three new members to its board of directors: Gary Stroud, Mimi Yahn, and Jessica Ucci as the Head Start Policy Council representative for the board.

Their addition strengthens SEVCA's ongoing commitment to ensuring that its leadership reflects the perspectives and voices of the communities it serves.

As a tripartite board, SEVCA's governance structure includes representatives from the public, private, and client sectors, ensuring that the organization remains responsive, inclusive, and

community driven. The new members are joining the client sector, which represents the interests of individuals and families with low incomes — the very people SEVCA exists to empower and support. And one is joining the private sector, which represents the communities that support our work.

"We are thrilled to welcome Jess, Gary, and Mimi to SEVCA's board," said Josh Davis, SEVCA's executive director. "Their expertise, insight, and dedication to community action will be invaluable as we continue our mission to eliminate poverty and create opportunities for all in southeastern Vermont."

Southeastern Vermont Community Action is a 60-year-old nonprofit serving Windham and Windsor counties by helping families overcome hardship and build stability. This past year, SEVCA supported 3,500 people in 2,000 households with more than 7,500 services. From housing and fuel assistance, to financial coaching, early childhood education, microbusiness support, tax prep, home repair, and weatherization, we are here to help create thriving communities.

If you're interested in learning more about SEVCA or its programs, visit [www.sevca.org](http://www.sevca.org), call 802-722-4575, or email [hello@sevca.org](mailto:hello@sevca.org).

# VTel donates \$5,000 to local food pantries —

**SPRINGFIELD, Vt.** — VTel has donated \$5,000 this December to 10 local food pantries across southern Vermont, supporting community food programs during the busy holiday season. The donation was distributed evenly among 10 organizations, with each food pantry receiving \$500.

December's recipients include Black River Good Neighbor Services in Ludlow, Chester-Andover Family Center, Danby Town Office Food Bank, Grafton Community Church Food Pantry, Hartland Community Food Shelf, Our Place Community Food Center in Rockingham, Pawlet Community Church Food Pantry, Springfield Family Center, Wallingford Town Hall Food Cupboard, and Woodstock Community Food Shelf.

The donation reflects VTel's focus on supporting its local communities, and follows the company's annual free Thanksgiving dinner event, which served nearly 800 seniors in Springfield and Pawlet.

For more information about VTel, visit [www.vermontel.com/about-us](http://www.vermontel.com/about-us).



VTel presents \$500 to the Chester-Andover Family Center.

PHOTO PROVIDED



VTel donates to the Grafton Community Church Food Pantry.

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VTel presents \$500 to the Springfield Family Center Food Pantry.

PHOTO PROVIDED

## REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES This Holiday Season



# opinion

To Our Community  
Neighbors,

As 2025 comes to a close, we share our mission's core focus, "neighbors helping neighbors." Fighting hunger and poverty since 1964, Black River Good Neighbor Services continues on a daily basis to be an active community resource. For many, we are the initial point of contact when hardship strikes and folks are struggling to get back to their normal. We are here, this is what we do!

Serving the community in many ways, our priority and an overwhelming need

includes food insecurity. Twice monthly we provide close to 100 bags of food to community residents, and serve free community meals, feeding more than 200 folks. While the meals are nourishing, and especially helpful for those who can't quite make ends meet, we have learned that many also come to make connections with friends and neighbors.

In keeping with those needs, our food shelf is a critical resource, and while recent significant increases have occurred,

we consistently work hard to ensure that every family and individual receives a well-balanced, healthy amount of food. All of this occurs with grateful support from our community, and thrift store and furniture store sales.

Important to share is an amazing volunteer force, who provide critical assistance including community meals, memory cafes, rummage sales, Meals on Wheels deliveries, furniture and trash pickup, music group, Senior Planet, and service on the board

of directors. So many community services!

Trusting in and valuing our work enables Black River Good Neighbor Services to effectively serve those needing help, and for that we are truly grateful. With appreciation and best holiday wishes to all of our community neighbors.

Sincerely,  
Krey Kellington, Executive Director  
Black River Good Neighbor Services

Dear Editor,

We are living in a time and a place where it is easier to blame our neighbor rather than work with them, to use drones to drop explosives rather than food, to look the other way rather than help. But that is not what we are

called to do.

Our faiths remind us that "you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18) and "you shall also love the stranger" (Deuteronomy 10:19). If a neighbor or a stranger has been turned into an enemy, which is happening all over the country and world, then we are told to "love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44).

Imagine how much better this country and world would be if we could lead

with love rather than hate? Love makes us pause when we feel wronged, to try to find the reason why, and maybe consider if we had any part in the problem. Love encourages us to be patient and to forgive. Love makes us work harder to find common ground, and to compromise. Love makes us speak with respect and kindness, even when we disagree. Love allows us to see from another person's perspective.

If the love bar is too high, maybe we could start by remembering some of Robert Fulghum's lessons in his iconic essay "All I ever needed to know I learned in Kindergarten." "Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your

own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you are sorry when you hurt somebody."

We each have a part to play in making this country and world a more peaceful and cooperative place where everyone has at least the basics they need to survive. There are enough resources on this beautiful planet to support all who live on it. It begins by recognizing and respecting the dignity of each person, thinking of everyone as our neighbor despite our differences, and working towards peace and wholeness one neighborhood at a time.

Sincerely,  
Rutland Area Interfaith Council

## Ludlow American Legion donates to Black River Valley Senior Center —



Left to right: John Taylor Jr., Sons commander; Jean Strong, Auxiliary member; Frank Provance, Black River Valley Senior Center Board member; and Ned Bowen, Post 36 commander.

PHOTO PROVIDED

year, the program provided more than 5,000 free home-delivered meals.

The senior center, at 10 High Street, also offers Bone Builders, yoga, tai chi, Pilates, community meals, games, and supportive services that promote health and social connection. Volunteers are always welcome and greatly appreciated.

## HCRS Mobile Crisis holiday reminder —

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. — Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS), southeastern Vermont's nonprofit community mental health agency, is reminding community members that the holiday season can bring more than celebration. For many, it also brings pressure — packed schedules, family obligations, financial stress, and increased exposure to alcohol and other substances. Over time, that pressure can build, making the season feel heavy and harder to navigate.

The Mobile Crisis video series, originally released earlier this year, highlights moments many people recognize: stress that builds quietly, substances that feel more present or harder to avoid, and the difficulty of trying to cope alone. The videos emphasize that Mobile Crisis is not only for emergencies, it is a resource for early support, conversation, and connection.

"As the holidays approach, HCRS is highlighting its Mobile Crisis program and an existing video series that shows what Mobile Crisis support actually looks like — grounded, compassionate, and available before mental health challenges or substance use begin to feel unmanageable."

"The holidays can create heavy expectations to hold everything together," said Mark Young, statewide director of Mobile Crisis at HCRS. "Mobile Crisis is here to help relieve some of that weight by offering calm, compassionate support when things start to feel like too much."

HCRS encourages community members to check in with themselves and with one another during the holidays, and to remember that support can be simple, immediate, and available, even during the busiest time of year.

Mobile Crisis services are available 24/7 by calling 988 or 800-622-4235. To learn more from HCRS' Mobile Crisis video series, visit [www.tinyurl.com/h8m-c3rab](http://www.tinyurl.com/h8m-c3rab).

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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 specific candidate or party.



# calendar

**JAN. 5 –**

CLAREMONT, N.H. – Chair yoga at the Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, will be held on Monday, Jan. 5, at 9:30 a.m. This class is free for members, with a small fee for nonmembers. Bring your own beverage and a snack if you need one. For more information, call 603-543-5998.

**JAN. 9 –**

CLAREMONT, N.H. – Fundraiser bingo at the Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, will be held on Friday, Jan. 9. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., and the games begin at 6 p.m. This event is open to the public; you must be 18 or older to play. Concessions will be available through the intermission. If you are interested in helping with future events, please call Cheryl at 603-543-5998.

**JAN. 24 –**

ROCKINGHAM, Vt. – Join Vermont Vines Vineyard on Saturday, Jan. 24, from 5:30-8:30 p.m., for Jamelot, featuring wine in the vineyard and some great '70s and '80s dancing goodness. It may be chilly outside, but things will be hopping at Vermont Vines. Our tasting room opens at 12 p.m., so feel free to come early, sip some of our finest wines, and get ready for an unforgettable evening. Come for the wine, stay for the tunes. We can't wait to see you there. Cover charge supports local farms and music.

**SUNDAYS –**

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Catamount Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol meets Sundays, from 3:30-5:30 p.m., at Hartness Airport in Springfield. The Civil Air Patrol is the auxiliary unit of the U.S. Air Force tasked with the mission of supporting America's communities with emergency response, diverse aviation and ground services, youth development, and promotion of air, space, and cyber power. Cadets as young as 12 and senior members of any age make up this diverse group of volunteers.

**MONDAYS –**

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Overeaters Anonymous 12-Step Recovery Program is Mondays, from 6-7 p.m., at Parks Place, 44 School Street Extension in Bellows Falls. The program is free. For more information go to [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org).

WALPOLE, N.H. – Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. in St. John's Parish Hall, Walpole.

CLAREMONT, N.H. – The Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, holds chair yoga every Monday morning, at 9:30 a.m., with Brianna Renner. Free for members, small entry fee for nonmembers. For more information, call 603-543-5998.

CLAREMONT, N.H. – Women's pool games are played every Monday, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., at the

Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights. Come be a part of this fun activity with likeminded women. For more information, call 603-543-5998.

**TUESDAYS –**

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

CHESTER, Vt. – Bone Builders Class in Chester every Tuesday, from 10-11 a.m. Classes will be held in the First Universalist Parish of Chester community room. Classes are free and open to all. Drop-in class, no registration needed. For details, contact Barbara at [bwquilter1778@gmail.com](mailto:bwquilter1778@gmail.com).

CLAREMONT, N.H. – Cribbage is played at the Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, on Tuesdays, at 1 p.m. For more information, call 603-543-5998.

CLAREMONT, N.H. – Men's pool games are played every Tuesday and Thursday, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., at the Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights. All men are welcome. For more information, call 603-543-5998.

**WEDNESDAYS –**

LUDLOW, Vt. – A gentle

yoga flow class with strength building with bands and body to reconnect to your center, build strength, and invite ease into your body and mind will be held Wednesdays, from 10-11 a.m., at the Black River Valley Senior Center, 10 High Street. All levels welcome. Mats and blocks available. Contact Lori Wright at [loriwright163@gmail.com](mailto:loriwright163@gmail.com) or 603-401-8123 to register, or with any questions.

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Every Wednesday morning, from 8-11 a.m., at the Springfield VFW Post 771, 191 River Street, we get together with fellow veterans for coffee and donuts, and socialize for a few hours.

All veterans of all ages are welcome. You do not have to be a VFW or American Legion member to come. Call 802-885-6008 for more information.

**THURSDAYS –**

CHESTER, Vt. – The Black River Memory Cafe is held on the first Thursday of each month, at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 313 Main 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. For questions, please call 802-885-2669 or 866-673-8376, or email [memorycafe@seniorsolutionsvt.org](mailto:memorycafe@seniorsolutionsvt.org).

TYSON, Vt. – The Tyson Ladies Aid Library

Association meets the first Thursday of each month, typically at the Tyson Library. Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. and meetings start at noon. New potential members are always welcome. Please call Janine Norman at 802-228-8764 for more information or to verify meeting location.

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.

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

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](mailto:putnamsmith@gmail.com).

**SATURDAYS –**

W. TOWNSHEND, Vt. – Taco night is held every Saturday, 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](http://www.westtownshend.org), call 802-874-4800, email [info@westtownshend.org](mailto:info@westtownshend.org), or message the store on Facebook.

**DAILY –**

REGION – If you want to drink that's your business, but if you want to stop, that's ours. Contact Alcoholics Anonymous at [www.aavt.org](http://www.aavt.org) or call your local hotline at 802-802-2288 and join a meeting.

**STATE OF VERMONT**

**SUPERIOR COURT**  
Windsor  Unit

**PROBATE DIVISION**  
Docket No.:

In re ESTATE of: Andrew G. Searle

Decedent

late of Springfield, VT

Decedent's Town of Residence

Signature of Fiduciary

To the Creditors of: Andrew G. Searle

Decedent

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:

82-11-25

Signature of Fiduciary



Executor/Administrator	Mailing Address
Rae Susan Taylor Phone Number 802-885-2582	c/o Parker & Ankuda, PC, PO Box 519 Springfield, VT 05156

Name of Publication:

Vermont Journal

Publication Date:

December 24, 2025

Name of Probate Court:

Windsor Superior Court

Address of Probate Court:

12 The Green  
Woodstock, VT 05091

**WARNING**  
**SPECIAL VILLAGE MEETING**  
**VILLAGE OF BELLows FALLS**

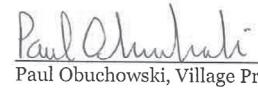
January 12, 2026 & January 13, 2026

The legal voters of the Village of Bellows Falls are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Town Hall Lower Theater in said Village on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. for an informational meeting, and then to adjourn to the Bellows Falls Fire Department (170 Rockingham Street) in said Village from the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, to vote by Australian Ballot on Article 1 and Article 2 as set forth below.

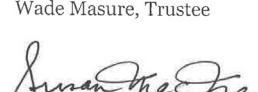
ARTICLE 1: Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Village of Bellows Falls in an amount not to exceed Eight Hundred Twelve Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and Zero Cents (\$812,500.00) be issued under Chapter 53 of Title 24, Vermont Statutes Annotated, payable from the Village's water fund, derived from the revenue from the provision of water over a period not to exceed thirty years, and subject to reduction by available grants-in-aid or other funding sources, be issued to finance the Village's cost of Kissel Hill and Colony Road Water Line Improvements (the Project)?

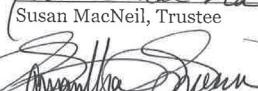
ARTICLE 2: Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Village of Bellows Falls in an amount not to exceed Three Hundred Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$300,000.00) be issued under Chapter 53 of Title 24, Vermont Statutes Annotated, payable from the Village's sewer fund, derived from the revenue from billing for sewer service over a period not to exceed thirty years, and subject to reduction by available grants-in-aid or other funding sources, be issued to finance the Village's cost of Laurel Avenue Sewer Improvements (the Project)?

Adopted and approved at a meeting of the Trustees of the Village of Bellows Falls, duly called, noticed, and held on December 2, 2025.

  
Paul Obuchowski, Village President

  
Wade Masure, Trustee

  
Susan MacNeil, Trustee

  
Samantha Snow, Trustee

  
Taylor Pichette, Trustee

ATTEST:  
Kathleen Kelly, Town Clerk

# LEGAL NOTICES

## BUYING/SELLING

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



## CLEAN OUTS + MORE

EZ-Dump Enterprises has a 15-yard dump trailer available. We're also here for heating equipment, appliance removal, home/storage unit clean outs, stump grinding, and refinishing/repairing gravel driveways. Serving Springfield, Vt. area. Call/text

## PROJECT LISTING SPRINGFIELD, VT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Project: VCT Flooring Replacement – Springfield High School

Location: Springfield High School, 303 South St., Springfield, VT.

Description: Install VCT Flooring & Cove Base

\*Specifications available from Martha Tarbell, 802-885-5120\*

Proposal Due Date/Time: Monday, January 5, 2026, at 2:00 p.m., submitted to owner (below) in a sealed envelope marked "SHS Tile Project" on the outside of the envelope.

Mandatory site inspection and walk through must be scheduled through Tim Bixby, 802.282.3434 no later than Wednesday, December 31, 2025.

Documents Required: Proof of Insurance, Details per Specifications

Owner/Contact:  
Springfield School District  
Richard Pembroke  
301 South Street Springfield, VT. 05156  
Telephone: (802) 885-5120  
rpembroke@ssdvt.org

## Town of Chester Highway Department Laborer/ Parks and Cemetery

The Town of Chester is seeking an energetic dependable individual to fill the role of Highway Department and Parks and Cemetery Laborer. In the winter, this role includes working with the Highway Department which includes operating heavy equipment for snow removal as assigned. This position performs a variety of unskilled and semi-skilled maintenance work, and operates a variety of equipment in the construction, operation, repair, maintenance and replacement of town roads and storm drain facilities and systems. In the summer, this job includes assisting with burials and grave location, mowing and trimming Town of Chester cemeteries and outdoor public areas.

The ideal candidate will have a high school diploma or GED, and two years of experience in a comparable position is required. The applicant must possess a CDL or be able to obtain a CDL within 6 months of hire. The Town of Chester offers competitive wages along with an excellent benefits package including health insurance, FSA, VMERS retirement, paid time off.

Interested parties should submit a resume to Town of Chester, P.O. Box 370, Chester, VT 05143.

## Art Crafts Gifts

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611 Rt.103S, Ludlow, VT 802-228-8770

[www.CreateTogetherVT.org](http://www.CreateTogetherVT.org)

(12/9/26 - 52)

### GALLERY AT THE VAULT

68 Main St., Springfield VT 802-885-7111

#### OPEN Wed. to Sat. 11-5

Art, Crafts, Gifts, Exhibits & Workshops

*Joyful Moments* - Open Wall Show

[Workshops](http://Workshops.galleryvault.org/workshops)

*Painting the Winter Landscape in Watercolor* with Rob O'Brien - Jan. 10. 9:30-4 \$85.

Beginner Pysanky March 14 1-4:30 \$75.

(01/14/26 - TFN - 13)

## Builders/Contractors

### PETER JORDAN CONSTRUCTION

Over 25 years of experience in all phases of construction. Framing, finish carpentry, custom showers and tile work, hard wood flooring, decks, and siding. Fully insured and registered with the State of Vermont. Lead Paint Certified. Located in Proctorsville. 802-558-5267.

(02/11/26 - 13)

802-376-1168 or email [ezdump.bl@gmail.com](mailto:ezdump.bl@gmail.com).

4dr/4wd, Inspected, good condition, \$8500. Call 802-732-8494.

## FOR SALE

GRAFTON, Vt. - 2005 GMC Sierra, SLE 2500HD DSL

Sierra SLT 2500HD DSL. Loaded. 4dr /4wd, 2025 Fisher V-plow w/2025 Fisher Sander, 5th wheel set up, side tool boxes, \$38,000. Call 802-732-8494.

## SNOW PLOWING

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

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**Water/Waste Water Licensed Superintendent - FT**

**FT Police Officers**

**Building Inspector - PT/On Call**

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For more information Visit [Charlestown-nh.gov](http://Charlestown-nh.gov), click on Volunteer & Employment.

Application available on the website or come in to the Town Office at 233 Main St. Charlestown NH

## TOWN & VILLAGE OF LUDLOW DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing before the Ludlow Development Review Board will be held on Monday January 12, 2026 at 6:00 P.M., in the Howard Barton Jr. Conference Room, at the Ludlow Town Hall, 37 Depot Street, and via Zoom, to hear the following applications:

- Vincent and Lucinda West application 502-24-SITE Amendment #1, and 506-24-FHR Amendment #1 for a Flood Hazard Review and elevation of home substantially damaged by the flood of July 10th 2023.
- Donuts of Rutland appeal 117-98-AP, Amendment #1, for the Notice of Violation dated October 30, 2025 regarding sign violations.
- Jonathan Dubinski application SUB26-001 to subdivide one +/- 2.45 Acre parcel into three (3) parcels, 0.61, 0.62, and 1.24 Acres.
- Aaroods Corp., LLC application 509-25-FHR for a Flood Hazard Review due to the flood of July 10th 2023.

The meeting Agenda will be available on Ludlow's Web page, [www.ludlow.vt.us](http://www.ludlow.vt.us) with the Zoom ID and the URL link. Additional information about this application is available in the Planning and Zoning office at the Town Hall.

Erin Ladd  
Director of Planning & Zoning

## TOWN OF LONDONDERRY

The Town of Londonderry, Vermont is accepting bids for tree removal for the South Village Wastewater project. Bids are due by 1/5/2026 by 12:00pm. Please contact Aileen Tulloch, Town Administrator via email [townadmin@londonderryvt.org](mailto:townadmin@londonderryvt.org) or 802-824-3356 ext. 5 for more information or visit our Request for Proposals page at [www.londonderryvt.gov](http://www.londonderryvt.gov).

## TOWN OF LONDONDERRY

The Town of Londonderry is seeking a qualified contractor to remove trees and stumps at Pingree Park. Should potential bidders wish to view trees and site with a Town representative prior to bidding, please contact Liam Elio, Mountain Towns Recreation Director, at 802-824-3356, ext.8, or email [recreddirector@londonderryvt.org](mailto:recreddirector@londonderryvt.org). The full bid document is here: <https://www.londonderryvt.gov/Documents/Departments/Town%20Administrator/RFPS/RFP%202025-13%20-%20Pingree%20Park%20Tree%20Removal.pdf?t=202512161409000>. Bids are due January 9, 2026 at 2:00 PM.

## TOWN OF LONDONDERRY

The Town of Londonderry, Vermont, is soliciting Construction Inspection Services for the Spring Hill Road Culvert Replacement Project. Construction includes, but is not limited to, the following: replacement of an existing 72-inch culvert on Spring Hill Road (TH #41) at Eddy Brook with a new 20-foot box culvert and all related site work. Bids are due January 16, 2026 at 4:00 pm. Contact: Matt Bachler, Municipal Project Manager (Windham Regional Commission), #802-257-4547 ext. 112, [mbachler@windhamregional.org](mailto:mbachler@windhamregional.org). All questions related to this request for proposal shall be addressed to this individual no later than January 7, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. For the full bid document, please visit our Request for Proposals page at [www.londonderryvt.gov](http://www.londonderryvt.gov).

## Job Opening - Londonderry Transfer Station

The Town of Londonderry, Vermont is accepting applications for part-time (5 hours per week) Transfer Station Attendant to work on weekends. Backhoe experience preferred.

Applicants are asked to submit a required Employment Application, which can be found in the Employment section of the Town web site: <https://www.londonderryvt.gov/employment>.

Submit via email to [townadmin@londonderryvt.org](mailto:townadmin@londonderryvt.org) or mail to: Town of Londonderry, 100 Old School Street, South Londonderry, VT 05155.

Position opened until filled. The Town of Londonderry is an equal opportunity employer.

## Electrician

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(01/28/26 - 52)

## Masonry

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(02/18/26 - 13)

## MOORE MASONRY

Fireplaces, chimneys and liners, chimney sweeps, patios, walls, steps, restoration and repairs. Fully insured, free estimates. Contact Gary Moore at 802-824-5710 [mooremasonry802@gmail.com](mailto:mooremasonry802@gmail.com).

(04/08/26 - 26)

## Tools

### \$\$ CASH PAID FOR OLD TOOLS \$\$

PLANES, AXES, STANLEY ITEMS, ETC.

802-579-5891

(03/18/26 - 13)

# classifieds

# outdoor/history

## Okemo Innkeepers Race Series returns

LUDLOW, Vt. — Okemo's Innkeepers Race Series is back for its 45th year. With age categories for both skiers and snowboarders, we race Mondays, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., on the Wardance slope. The series runs for eight races, starting on Jan. 5 and continuing into March. There are both teams and individual racers, ranging from 18 to 80 years of age, with various skill levels from intermediate through accomplished racers. Teams consisting of up to seven skiers or snowboarders, along with individuals, compete in what

we have designed to be a fun yet competitive league, with awards and trophies presented at the end of the season. There is an apres gathering for racers on Monday evenings, from 5-7 p.m., at local restaurants and bars.

For more information, contact Ken at [oke-moracing@gmail.com](mailto:oke-moracing@gmail.com).

## Hike into the new year at VT State Parks

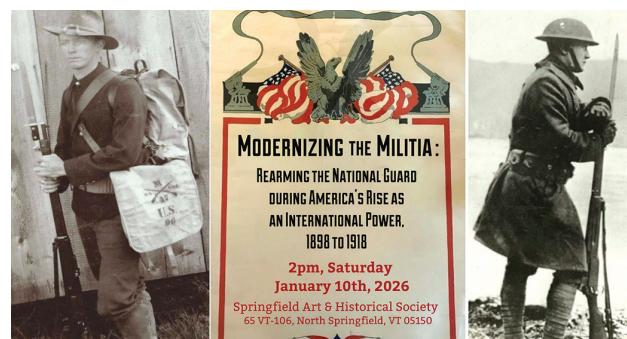
REGION — Start off the new year on the right foot with Vermont State Parks' First Day Hikes. On Jan. 1, everyone is invited to join free, guided hikes taking place at state parks, state forests, and other public lands

across Vermont. Hikes are led by knowledgeable guides eager to share their love of Vermont's outdoors.

From Allis State Park to Willoughby State Forest, a First Day Hike is happening somewhere near you. Learn

## “Modernizing the Militia”

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. — The Springfield Art and Historical Society will present “Modernizing the Militia: Rearming the National Guard During America's Rise as an International Power, 1898-1918” on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026, at 2 p.m., at the historical society building, 65 Vermont



Historical photographs of U.S. servicemen from the late 19th and early 20th century. PHOTO PROVIDED

in Vermont, a state park or state forest is always close by. Admission is free on New Year's Day and all winter long. You'll discover a whole new world in winter.

Route 106 in North Springfield. This program is free and open to the public. For more information, call 802-886-7935, or email [sahs@vermontel.net](mailto:sahs@vermontel.net).

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ATHENS, VT 05143

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## Efficiency Vermont winter resources

**REGION** – As 2025 draws to a close, many Vermonters are facing uncertainty and rising costs. When budgets are tight, projects that improve comfort and reduce energy bills may feel out of reach. Recognizing that households and businesses are feeling stretched, Efficiency Vermont has gathered a collection of free resources, practical tools, and affordable projects that can help Vermonters begin to improve their homes and get more from their energy budget.

Do you want to understand what's driving your electricity costs? Try our electricity usage calculator to see how your energy bill adds up with your appliances, lighting, and other needs, and see where you can save.

Do you need to diagnose the cause of high energy bills? Call Efficiency Vermont's energy advisors to see how your home is using

energy, understand what equipment could be wasting money, and learn about services and rebates that can help you reduce costs.

Looking for a deep dive into ways your home can save energy? Schedule a free virtual home energy visit, and take a virtual tour of your home with an Efficiency Vermont energy consultant. Get personalized advice for using less energy at home, plus a customized list of next steps tailored to your needs and priorities.

Get \$100 back for a do-it-yourself (DIY) weatherization project. Use our \$100 DIY weatherization rebate to get cash back for completing simple projects like air sealing windows or adding weather stripping.

Businesses, nonprofits, and other commercial operations can also take advantage of helpful resources and rebates, such as those listed below.

Free business energy consultations – Understand where your business is losing energy, and what you can do to fix it, through a business energy consultation. Our energy advisors can help you identify cost-effective opportunities, find efficient equipment, and connect you with our Efficiency Excellence Network of contractors.

Up to \$25,000 in bonus rebates for custom projects – Businesses can double their incentive, up to \$25,000, for custom projects tailored to an operation's specific needs.

These bonuses are available for businesses, nonprofits, farm operations, and institutions that complete projects by November 2026.

Increased incentives for preapproved lighting projects – Businesses that switch to energy-saving LED lamps can get up to 100% of the product costs covered when they replace existing linear

fluorescent lamps. Agricultural businesses upgrading to LEDs in livestock or sugaring facilities can get up to 100% of project costs covered.

Efficiency Vermont's 2025 holiday gift guide also offers inspiration for sustainable, local, and fun holiday shopping. The guide has a collection of thoughtful gifts and experiences, including ways to donate previously used items, implement energy savings, give the gift of rebate-eligible appliances, and support local businesses.

Federal home energy tax credits expire at the end of December, but Efficiency Vermont's rebates and programs will remain available in 2026 and beyond. Whether you're just starting to think about energy efficiency, or you're ready to begin a project, visit [www.efficiencyvermont.com/rebates](http://www.efficiencyvermont.com/rebates) to find ways to meet your energy goals.

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## TRORC receives grant to assist buyouts —

**REGION** – The Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) has been awarded a \$3 million grant from the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development. These are disaster recovery funds that come through the state from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The funds will be used to help towns as they buy out flood-damaged properties from the 2023 floods. Most of this work will be concentrated in Lamoille and Washington counties, but will also take place around the state where floods hit hard. Kevin Geiger, TRORC's chief planner, will lead this effort. Geiger was instrumental in managing HUD funds for the state after Tropical Storm Irene. Ann Karlene Kroll, the federal programs director at the department, expressed confidence in the regional planning commission, noting that, "We have worked together with TRORC a long time, and have a strong relationship with a history of successful outcomes."

As part of purchasing a site from an owner whose property was damaged, towns need to also ensure they are not unwittingly buying any soil contamination they will

need to clean up. Sites with known or suspected contamination are called brownfields. TRORC has decades of managing brownfields assessment and remediation on sites. Where needed, these new HUD CDBG-DR funds will also support any cleanup that has to occur. Peter Gregory, TRORC's executive

director, stated, "By looking at sites and doing any needed testing, we can help buyouts not get hung up because of concerns about what is in the ground. Devastated owners want to be able to move on."

For information on this grant, contact Geiger at 802-457-3188, Ext. 3003, or at [kgeiger@trorc.org](mailto:kgeiger@trorc.org).



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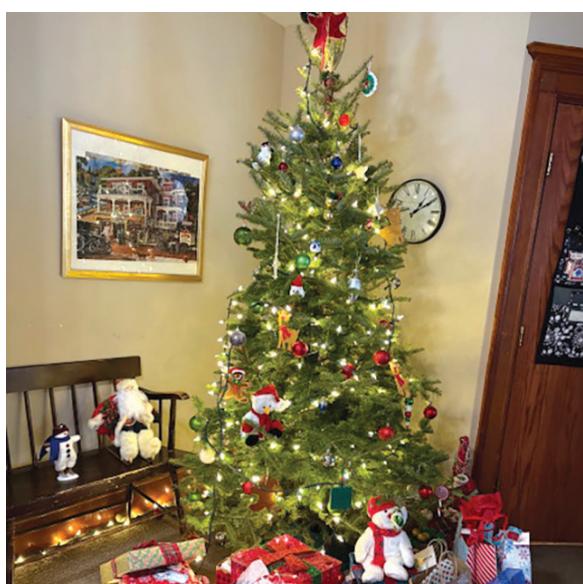
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# holiday & events



## BFWC spreads holiday cheer

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. — Bellows Falls Woman's Club (BFWC) members brought holiday cheer to the residents of Sterling House and Morning Glory Manor, elder care facilities in the community, by presenting individualized gifts.

PHOTO PROVIDED

## Adam Strauss returns to Next Stage

PUTNEY, Vt. — Next Stage Arts is thrilled to welcome back award-winning comedian and storyteller Adam Strauss for a special two-night engagement, featuring two of his acclaimed solo shows: "The Mushroom Cure" on Friday, Jan. 9; and "Before I Forget" on Saturday, Jan. 10.

Tickets and details are available at [www.nextstagearts.org](http://www.nextstagearts.org).

"The Mushroom Cure" is a hilarious and moving true story of psychedelics, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and finding hope. "The Mushroom Cure" follows Strauss' real-life attempt to treat his debilitating OCD with psychedelics. The New York Times praised it for "mining a great deal of laughter

from disabling pain." The Chicago Tribune called it "arrestingly honest and howlingly funny." Bestselling author Michael Pollan described it as "brilliant, hilarious, and moving." Time Out New York named it a Critics' Pick, hailing it as "a true-life tour de force."

In "Before I Forget," Strauss takes audiences on a wildly inventive odyssey through memory, mortality, and meaning, tackling everything from ancient Greece to artificial intelligence, Alzheimer's to open relationships. It's a ferociously funny meditation on what it means to remember, what it means to forget, and the impossibility of getting life right. Warning: May contain mushrooms, existential



Adam Strauss on stage.

PHOTO PROVIDED

dread, and trace amounts of hope.

Strauss is an award-winning comedian and storyteller whose work has been praised for its honesty, humor, and originality. He won the New York Fringe Festival's Overall Excellence Award for Solo Performance, the Eddy Award for Best Solo Show in San Francisco, and the Leffe Beer Craft Your Character Storytelling Competition. Strauss performs regularly at many of New York City's top comedy clubs.



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## "Story Songs of the 70s" at BFOH

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. — Tom DiMenna leads "Story Songs of the 70s," a night of unforgettable storytelling, and a thoughtful tribute to Gordon Lightfoot, Harry Chapin, and Cat Stevens, channeling the spirit of the 1970s one song at a time,

on Saturday, Jan. 17, at the Bellows Falls Opera House. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the show begins at 7:30 p.m. Backed by his talented accompanists, he moves easily between the haunting pull of "Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald," the quiet ache

in "Father and Son," and the soft glow of "Moonshadow."

"Story Songs of the 70s" is a seasonal concert series by Maine-based singer-songwriter DiMenna, and features songs by three legendary songwriters of the vinyl era: Gordon Lightfoot, Cat Stevens, and Harry Chapin.

This folk-rock act blends lush vocals, intricate guitar playing, and iconic story songs into a sound that's both intimate and powerful. While rooted in the folk tradition, the rotating set list has toe-tapping rhythms, sing-along choruses, and

a fully amplified presence that has charmed audiences all over New England. It's a carefully crafted presentation of the timeless songs that shaped a generation performed with heart, humor, and resonance.

In addition, DiMenna is now officially endorsed by Gibson Guitars and John Pearse Strings, legendary names in acoustic tone.

For more information on DiMenna, visit [www.tomdimennamusic.com](http://www.tomdimennamusic.com). To purchase tickets, visit [www.bellowsfallsoperahouse.com/special-events](http://www.bellowsfallsoperahouse.com/special-events).

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# holiday & events

## Rotary brings Christmas spirit to Kurn Hattin —

WESTMINSTER, Vt. — Members of the Rotary Club of Springfield, Vt., and the Bellows Falls Rotary Club helped bring the spirit of Christmas to the children of Kurn Hattin Homes for Children in Westminster, Vt., on Dec. 17.

Founded in 1894, Kurn Hattin is a year-round charitable residential and day program serving children ages 5-15 from across the Northeast. For more than two decades, local Rotary Clubs have continued a cherished tradition of collecting donations and purchasing individual gifts for each child — often the only Christmas



Springfield Rotary members deliver presents to students at Kurn Hattin.

PHOTO PROVIDED

presents they receive.

Following the gift distribution, Rotary members joined children and staff

for pizza in each cottage, sharing an evening of warmth, celebration, and community.

## Tap ensemble Subject:Matter

PUTNEY, Vt. — Next Stage Arts is thrilled to welcome acclaimed Boston-based tap dance ensemble Subject:Matter as artists-in-residence this January, featuring two exciting public events that invite the community to engage with the company's creative process through participation and performance.

On Tuesday, Jan. 6, at 7 p.m., Subject:Matter hosts a community tap jam at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill in Putney, Vt. This free, open-level event invites dancers and musicians of all backgrounds to step into the rhythm and explore tap dance in a relaxed, class-style jam with live music. Whether you're new to tap, or looking to sharpen your skills, all are welcome to learn, play, and move at their own pace. Musicians are encouraged to bring their instruments and join the improvisation. RSVP at [www.nextstagearts.org](http://www.nextstagearts.org).

The residency culminates in a performance on Sunday, Jan. 11, at 2 p.m. (doors open at 1:15 p.m.), as Subject:Matter shares a dynamic concert showcasing the work developed during their time at Next Stage. The program blends brand-new material with selections from the company's first two celebrated albums, "With Far Hand" and "Songbook," offering audiences an inventive, high-energy fusion of live music and tap dance. Tickets are discounted for students, and available at [www.nextstagearts.org](http://www.nextstagearts.org).

Together, these events offer a rare opportunity to experience Subject:Matter's collaborative, rhythm-driven artistry — from an open, community-centered jam, to a polished performance that bridges the company's past, present, and emerging work.

This residency is supported by South Arts' Jazz



Subject:Matter performing.

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## Yosemite Firehouse gets its wreath —

CHESTER, Vt. — The last town-owned public building in Chester to be decorated for the Christmas holiday season this year is the historic Fire District No. 2, known as the Yosemite Firehouse, on Depot Street. For years, Chester Townscape has decorated the town's public buildings and central locations with a variety of greens, berries, and cheery red bows to welcome in the holiday season. At last, the Yosemite Firehouse now sports a beautiful big wreath between its south-facing windows, as well as a greens-filled barrel beside its sliding doors, to testify to the importance of the building.

These decorations continue Chester Townscape's efforts to beautify the town for residents, businesses, and visitors. They also signify the ongoing efforts of the town to care for its resources, and the efforts of the town and Friends of the Yosemite Firehouse Museum to rehabilitate the historic building into a future fire museum to honor Chester's history.



Assistant Chester Fire Chief Mark Verespy hangs the wreath high above the sliding doors of the Yosemite Firehouse Museum.

PHOTO PROVIDED

its firefighters, and their place in Chester's thriving community.

For information on Chester Townscape's volunteer efforts, please contact Lynn Russell at 802-875-2707 or [chesterlandscape@gmail.com](mailto:chesterlandscape@gmail.com). For information on Friends of Yosemite Firehouse Museum, please contact Lillian Willis at 802-

875-1340 or [lbwillisct@comcast.net](mailto:lbwillisct@comcast.net).

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