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McGinnis named new Rockingham fire chief

BY JOE MILLIKEN
The Vermont Journal

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Shaun McGinnis, who had been the Bellows Falls Village fire chief since 2017 and is acting as interim chief for the newly formed Rockingham Fire and Rescue Department since last October, has now officially been given the position of Rockingham fire chief. The new position was created after the recent merger of the Rockingham, Bellows Falls, and Saxtons River fire departments.

Hiring McGinnis as the new Rockingham fire chief is the culmination of

an extensive search conducted by a triboard that included the Rockingham Selectboard, the Bellows Falls Village Trustees, and the Saxtons River Village Trustees. Two other finalists for the new fire chief position reportedly came from Brattleboro, Vt., and Keene, N.H. McGinnis was officially appointed by Scott Pickup, who recently stepped down as the town manager, but had participated in the interview search process.

The Rockingham fire chief position will entail a variety of administrative, technical, and supervisory skills, in order to plan and

implement the fire department’s mission to protect life, property, and the environment. The new fire chief will also be working closely with the community, as well as communicating with various public safety agencies and staffs, municipal departments, and town and village boards.

He will be largely responsible for leading the newly consolidated operation, anticipating such needs of the department moving forward as dispersing and maintaining equipment, staffing and scheduling, and various administrative requirements.

Currently, there are just over 40 responders on the combined fire and rescue roster throughout the three locations, and every effort is being made to grow the volunteer staff. About one-quarter of the more than 40 responders are strictly EMS, while more than half of the staff are both EMS and firefighters, with the remainder being strictly firefighters.

McGinnis feels one of the biggest challenges moving forward will be keeping the current volunteer staff interested, engaged, and involved while the new process and procedures are implemented.



American Legion gives Christmas gifts to veterans

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield American Legion Post 18 delivered Christmas gift bags to the veterans at the Springfield Health and Rehabilitation Center on Chester Road, on Dec. 24. Pictured left is Commander James Harris, with Brandon, of the activities section, accepting the two carts full of Christmas items. Many thanks goes out to activities director Lynn Davison and the activities staff for their support of the veteran residents, especially during the holidays.

PHOTO PROVIDED

2025 year in review, part 2

JULY 16 – Remembering Ron Patch
CHESTER, Vt. – Ron Patch has joined his ancestors. Ron was a true Vermonter and Chester native, who dressed in casual attire, such as a flannel shirt and worn-in jeans, and in the more recent years, long hair. He preferred to be barefoot, and has been caught at festivals or mowing his lawn without shoes on. He spoke and wrote with Vermont phrases and idioms, which no one will quite be able to replace.

By Shawntae Webb
AUG. 12 – Rockingham residents report reckless riders
BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Resident John Horrocks said, “I’d like to know when the town is going to do something about these children running motorized vehicles through the town. Someone’s going to get hurt.” Horrocks pointed out that nonmotorized bicycle riders are required to know hand signals and follow the rules of the road, saying this situation should

be no different. Selectboard Chair Peter Golec concurred, adding that he’d seen some young people riding electric scooters and bikes at high speeds on downtown sidewalks.

By Paula Benson
SEPT. 13 – Honeyfest 2025 lands at the Proctorsville Village Green
PROCTORSVILLE, Vt. – The tradition of the honey festival in Proctorsville started more than 10 years ago, and 2024 marked the last year for the popular event held at the Golden Stage Inn. But, as September approached, a collective whisper of lingering interest began to circulate among town and village residents, and local businesses, who wanted to keep the cheerful little festival alive.

By Paula Benson
SEPT. 16 – Rockingham Selectboard adopts municipal fire department plan
BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Selectboard Chair Peter Golec presented the Municipal Fire Department

Implementation Plan for adoption, and reviewed the main portions of the packet, including the vote tally from Town Meeting approving the formation of a single department and transition team.

By Paula Benson
SEPT. 17 – Journal LLC comes to Claremont
CLAREMONT, N.H. – Journal LLC is expanding into the City of Claremont! We are happy to announce that our new, third paper – The Message of the Week – will serve Claremont and local New Hampshire towns. Charlestown residents will see a change from the Shopper Edition to The Message.

By Shawntae Webb
SEPT. 20 – “Drink some beer. Do some good.”
CLAREMONT, N.H. – On Saturday, Sept. 20, Mother Nature could not have conjured up a better autumn day to help celebrate the 11th annual Kiwanis Brewfest, held at the Visitor Center Green in downtown Claremont. A warm breeze, and an after-

noon of sunshine and blue skies gave the estimated crowd of about 1,500 people further reason to hang out and partake in some unique libations.

By Paula Benson
OCT. 6 – McNamara resigns as Ludlow Town Manager
LUDLOW, Vt. – McNamara spoke to the board regarding his submission to them of a letter of resignation, effective Dec. 5. By way of explanation, McNamara said, “[My resignation] has more to do with a self-reflection and career change, it has nothing to do with the town and village of Ludlow, which I do, and still do, care very deeply about.” This was met with a round of applause from those present.

By Nick Giberti
OCT. 6 – Springfield Selectboard okays Wall Street one-way
SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – A public hearing was held prior to the Oct. 6 regular meeting of the Springfield Selectboard, for the purpose of reviewing an

ordinance amendment regarding a one-way traffic proposal for Wall Street. Town manager Jeff Mobus reassured residents that the town was planning to place signs in a variety of locations to give fair warning of the traffic changes.

By Paula Benson
OCT. 13 – Rockingham votes to fund preservation project
BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – At the Oct. 13 special town meeting of the Rockingham Selectboard, the public was invited to discuss two bond measures to finance portions of the Rockingham Meeting House (RMH) preservation project, but voters had little to say, and no strong objections were made. The meeting preceded Tuesday’s bond vote by Australian ballot, which saw 171 total voters turn out, and both bond measures easily pass.

By Paula Benson
NOV. 4 – Springfield honors centenarian Shirley Young Cooper
SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Lifelong Springfield resident Shirley Young Cooper was recently honored by the town as she prepared to turn 100 years of age on Nov. 4. A formal resolution, introduced by the town manager and signed by the Springfield Selectboard on Oct. 27, recognized, “Shirley has lived a long and meaningful life marked by kindness, dedication, and service to her community and family.”

By Paula Benson
NOV. 8 – Stevens girls soccer takes state championship
CLAREMONT, N.H. – The Stevens High School girls varsity soccer team closed out an undefeated 20-0 season with a 1-0

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Advantage Truck Group donates meals to Our Place —

WESTMINSTER, Vt. – On Dec. 23, employees from Advantage Truck Group (ATG) in Westminster delivered hundreds of non-perishable meals of canned chicken, ramen noodles, stuffing, canned peas, and cookies to Our Place Community Food Center, making its fourth-quarter donation of nonperishable meals to the Bellows Falls food pantry.

The donation was made through Haulin’ 4 Hunger, ATG’s year-round charitable initiative that helps fight food insecurity in its local communities. In 2025, ATG employees distributed more than 12,000 nonper-



Employees at ATG delivered hundreds of meals. PHOTO PROVIDED

ishable meals to six food pantry organizations near its dealerships in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. “The holidays are particularly challenging for those who are unsure where they will get their next meal. Continued support from our Haulin’ 4 Hunger dona-

tions makes a meaningful difference for our local food pantries and the people they support,” said ATG director of marketing Sarah Harrington.

Since its inception in 2012, ATG’s Haulin’ 4 Hunger program has provided more than 98,000 meals to help those in need. Together with its employees and business partners, including Global Partners, Dennis K. Burke, UniBank, Cummins, G. Lopes Construction, Railers HC, and SelecTrucks of New England, ATG aims to continue to provide more meals to people facing hunger in its local communities.

Bellows Falls Woman’s Club December meeting recap —

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The members of the Bellows Falls Woman’s Club will meet on Jan. 13, at the United Church, 8 School Street in Bellows Falls, beginning at 1:30 p.m. Karen Walter will demonstrate an exercise program. Information about Westminster Cares, which sponsors the exercise program, will also be

presented.

The club’s Dec. 9 meeting featured members donating gifts for and bringing holiday cheer to the residents of two local elder care facilities, Sterling House and Morning Glory Manor. Gifts were delivered just before the holiday. Members enjoyed a social time to round out the club meeting.

The club is a member

of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, an international women’s organization dedicated to community improvement and action through volunteerism. Area women are invited to join the club, enjoy its monthly meetings, and help with its projects. For more information, call Sally McGaffigan, membership chair, at 603-445-2527.

REVIEW

From Page 1

victory over Raymond to take the NHIAA Division III state championship on Saturday, Nov. 8, in Bedford, N.H.

NOV. 15 – Terriers capture unprecedented 13th state title

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The No. 2-seeded Bellows Falls Union High School football team traveled to South Burlington High School on Saturday, Nov. 15,

to compete for the Division III state championship against No. 1-seed Woodstock, and came home with another state championship trophy after a convincing 54-20 win over a talented Woodstock squad.

By Joe Milliken

NOV. 24 – Rockingham town manager to take same position in Springfield

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Current Rockingham/Bellows Falls town manager Scott Pickup is moving on from his position in Bellows Falls to become the town manager of Springfield, roughly 10 miles north. Pickup, who came to work for Rockingham in 2020, is currently in the second year of a three-year contract, and he will continue to work in his current position through the end of the calendar year.

By Joe Milliken

DEC. 3 – Residents come out to discuss Chester local options tax

CHESTER, Vt. – The Chester Selectboard meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 3, saw a number of residents come forth to give

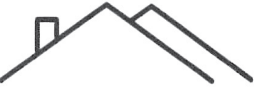
their opinions on the proposed 1% local options tax on rooms, meals, and on-premises alcohol sales which the board has been discussing now for several months.

By Nick Giberti

DEC. 18 – Eagle Times owner indicted on federal fraud charges

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 Manhattan, “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.”

By Nick Giberti



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Yoga at Rockingham Library

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – On Saturday, Jan. 10, please join the Rockingham Free Public Library at 11 a.m., for an hour-long yoga class led by Yoga on Main, of Saxtons River.

When it's cold outside, nothing will warm you up better than a yoga class. This yoga class will take place at the library, 65 Westminster Street, Bellows Falls, Vt.,

and is free and open to the public. No yoga experience is necessary, and newcomers to yoga are welcome and encouraged to attend. The Rockingham Free Public Library will provide all necessary equipment, but participants are welcome to bring their own yoga mats, if they would like. Attendees are invited to stay for snacks and hot beverages

afterwards.

This yoga class is part of Rockingham Free Public Library's Rockingham Gathers program, made possible by a 2025 AARP Vermont Winter Placemaking Grant. For more information about this and other programs, call 802-463-4270, visit www.rockinghamlibrary.org, or stop by the library.

SoVerA January meeting focuses on Mars

PERKINSVILLE, Vt. – Please join the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group (SoVerA) on Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 7 p.m., for "Mars: The Dustbowl of Dreams," with SoVerA member Kevin Paquet.

This will be a hybrid meeting, so please join us in person at the 1879 Perkinsville Schoolhouse,

1862 Vermont Route 106, Perkinsville, Vt., or by Zoom at www.zoom.us/j/94691230307.

Was there life on Mars? Is there life on Mars? Could we build a life on Mars? Humanity has a lot of hopes pinned on the red planet, but they don't always line up with what science says is there. Join Paquet for an

evening of exploration on the fourth rock from the sun.

Paquet is a 10-year member of SoVerA, and has previously given presentations on space probes, Venus, and Saturn. Paquet enjoys science fiction, and squinting at things that are far away.

First Baptist Church receives Widow's Mite Award

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The First Baptist Church of Bellows Falls has been honored with the prestigious Widow's Mite Award by the American Baptist Churches U.S.A. Presented by the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB), this award recognizes churches for exceptional generosity, measured not by the size of the congregation, but by the percentage of their budget dedicated to mission and ministry, and the consistency of that giving year after year.

The Widow's Mite Award is rooted in the Gospel story from Luke 21:1-4, in which a widow offers "two very small copper coins," giving all that she had. The award also commemorates an inspiring act of sacrificial generosity in 1981, when a Vietnamese woman worshipping with the First Chinese Baptist Church of Fresno, Calif., unaware of

the purpose of the offering, placed her wristwatch, her only possession of value, into the offering envelope. Presented annually, the award includes national recognition by ABCUSA, and the presentation of an engraved engrossment to the recipient church.

This honor is especially significant for the First Baptist Church of Bellows Falls, a small congregation that consistently gives more than 30% of its annual budget to serve others both locally and abroad. Through monthly mission offerings, support of American Baptist Churches ministries, and partnerships with local and foreign missions, the church demonstrates a vibrant commitment to living out its faith through generosity.

In addition to its strong commitment to mission, the First Baptist Church of Bellows Falls is known as a warm, welcoming, and in-

clusive congregation, open to all who seek community, worship, and service. The church also hosts First Friday Supper fundraisers, welcoming the community for shared meals and fellowship. Proceeds from these dinners are donated to local agencies and outreach efforts, including the Springfield Humane Society, scholarship funds, Our Place, Window Dressers, and other organizations that address vital needs within the region.

This ministry is one of several mission-focused efforts supported by the First Baptist Church of Bel-

HCRS announces new CFO Sarah Truckle

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS), southeastern Vermont's nonprofit community mental health agency, appointed Sarah Truckle as chief financial officer, overseeing the organization's financial operations following a planned leadership transition.

Truckle joined HCRS in September 2025, allowing for a thoughtful and informed transition. She is responsible for leading all financial functions across the agency, including budgeting, forecasting, accounting, billing, and facilities operations. Her role supports long-term sustainability, regulatory compliance, and strategic growth as HCRS continues to expand services across southeastern Vermont.

With nearly 15 years of financial leadership experience, Truckle brings ex-

pertise across government, higher education, and nonprofit human services. Prior to joining HCRS, she held key financial and operational roles within Vermont's Agency of Human Services, and later supported the Vermont State Colleges System, where she contributed to strengthening public higher education through sound financial management.

"Sarah brings a thoughtful, steady approach to financial leadership, and a deep understanding of complex systems," said George Karabakakis, chief executive officer of HCRS. "Her experience and perspective position HCRS well as we continue to grow and respond to evolving funding systems and community needs."

This leadership transition follows the retirement of Hal Moore, who concluded more than 20 years of service to HCRS on Dec. 19. Moore joined the organization in 2004 as controller and was

promoted to chief financial officer in 2006. During his tenure, HCRS grew from an annual budget of approximately \$23 million to more than \$68 million, expanding programs, staff, and infrastructure across the region.

As CFO, Moore played a key role in strengthening the organization's financial stability. His career reflects a broad background in accounting and finance, including service in both nonprofit and for-profit sectors.

"Hal's leadership has been foundational to HCRS' long-term stability," Karabakakis added. "We are deeply grateful for his years of service, guidance, and commitment to fiscal responsibility."

HCRS thanks Moore for his decades of dedication and leadership, and looks ahead with confidence as Truckle continues to guide the organization's financial operations.



First Baptist Church of Bellows Falls members with the Widow's Mite Award.

PHOTO PROVIDED

lows Falls. Guided by faith, stewardship, and compassion, the congregation continues to embody the spirit of the widow's mite, giving sacrificially, consistently, and joyfully to make a meaningful impact locally and around the world.

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real estate

OPINION

2026 housing market predictions —

REGION – The housing market was a tough go for many buyers and sellers this past year, but 2026 should usher in a healthier, more balanced market with improved affordability, more choices, and price relief for renters saving for down payments, according to Zillow economists’ predictions.

Modest rise in home prices

After a year of mostly flat growth, home values are predicted to rise a modest 1.2% in 2026. Of course, local markets have their own dynamics, and some markets will lose value while others see larger price growth. The economists predict 12 major markets will see price declines this year, half the number that experienced price drops in 2025. Prices in the South are expected to see the biggest bounce-back.

For buyers, the modest price growth could make saving for a down payment easier, and improve affordability, especially if wage growth continues to outpace the rise in prices. For sellers, the price trend could mean more stable pricing strategies, and more

consistent buyer demand for well-priced and well-marketed homes.

As affordability improves for buyers, and more sellers list their homes for sale in 2026, economists expect competition to pick up.

Relatively steady mortgage rates

Forecasting mortgage rates is notoriously hard, even for the experts. But economists can look at some guideposts like inflation to see where things might end up. To that end, Zillow economists have a good track record of predicting inflation related to housing, which makes up 40% of the consumer price index. Given that track record, Zillow economists predict that mortgage rates will likely stay above 6% in 2026. Lower rates in 2025 helped push affordability to a three-year high, and further rate moderation should help more buyers as they look for homes in 2026.

Tiny rise in apartment rents

Thanks to a boom in multifamily construction, apartment rents should stay essentially flat in most of the country, with miniscule

growth of 0.3% predicted for 2026. One exception is New York City, which has sky-high home prices and a chronic shortage of rental housing that keeps rents high. Buying in the city isn’t expected to get any cheaper, which means that rental demand will remain high, and rents are expected to accelerate next year.

People renting single-family homes aren’t expected to fare as well as apartment dwellers. Rents nationally for single family homes are projected to climb by 2.3% as potential buyers continue to rent longer.

More incentives for buyers

With a large pipeline of new homes already built or under construction, builders have limited incentives to continue building at the same clip in 2026. With high construction costs, both in financing and materials, and a stagnant labor market that has curbed the main reason people move, i.e., jobs, fewer new homes are expected to hit the market. The upside for buyers is that builder incentives, such as interest rate buy-downs, could become more common, especially in areas where affordability remains challenging.

Kid-friendly rentals

The growing share of families with children who rent their homes will mean more buildings will be vying to attract them with family-friendly amenities such as “imagination centers” or “homework pods,” economists predict. Renters with kids under 18 account for 37% of renters,

a 4% increase from the 33% who rented a year ago, according to the Zillow Consumer Housing Trends Report.

Money-saving home features

The rising costs of running a home will continue to influence home trends in 2026. Think energy-efficient features like whole-home battery storage, electric vehicle charging stations, and so-called “zero-energy” homes that produce as much renewable energy as they consume, resulting in lower energy bills.

More homes also will be outfitted with things like cold zones for bulk storage and refrigerated drawers to help families capitalize on money-saving strategies and cut waste by keeping food fresh longer.

Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) is expected to remove more of the friction in housing transactions, morphing from advisor to manager in 2026. For example, instead of recommending actions, AI will help connect buyers and sellers with the right real estate agents, schedule tours, and facilitate negotiations and closing preparations. By automating routine actions and streamlining, the economists predict that AI will help bring more predictability and sharper decision-making to real estate transactions.

Written by Susan Kelleher. Provided by Zillow Group.

Dear Editor,

As we enter the upcoming legislative session, Vermonters are sending us a clear message: Affordability must be front and center. Families, seniors, farmers, and small businesses are all feeling the strain of rising costs, and they expect their elected leaders to respond with practical, responsible solutions. That is both our challenge and our obligation.

Education will rightly dominate much of the conversation. Vermont’s commitment to high-quality public education is non-negotiable, but so is the need to rein in property taxes that are pushing many residents to the brink. Educational transformation must be done thoughtfully and reasonably. Lowering property taxes cannot come at the expense of educational standards – in fact, our goal should be to strengthen outcomes for students.

Achieving that balance will require honest discussions about reform. That includes examining how we deliver special education services, and whether targeted consolidation can reduce administrative costs while preserving strong local schools. These are not easy conversations, but they are necessary if we are serious about affordability and excellence.

Health care is another major driver of costs in Vermont, and it intersects directly with education and the broader economy. School budgets are increasingly burdened by health care expenses, and families are struggling with premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket costs. Vermont currently has the highest health care costs in the nation, while just across the river New Hampshire has the lowest. That disparity is untenable. We must take a hard look at what is driving costs here, and pursue reforms that deliver quality care without breaking household budgets.

Housing will also be a central focus this session. Vermont simply does not have enough housing at any

level. We need more inventory across the spectrum, from workforce housing, to starter homes, to options for seniors. Without bold but sensible action, housing shortages will continue to undermine affordability, workforce recruitment, and economic growth in every region of the state.

As vice chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I have seen firsthand the immense pressure Vermont farmers are under. Climate change, workforce shortages – particularly related to immigration – and shrinking profit margins are threatening the viability of family farms. Supporting agriculture is not just about preserving a way of life; it is an economic imperative.

Farming maintains the working landscape that draws roughly 15.8 million visitors to Vermont each year, fueling a \$4 billion tourism industry. Agriculture is also foundational to our manufacturing sector. Food manufacturing is Vermont’s second-largest manufacturing subsector, and the dairy industry alone generates more than \$2.2 billion in total economic activity when processing and distribution are included. When farmers struggle, the ripple effects are felt statewide.

There is a lot to do this session, and no single policy will solve all of Vermont’s challenges. But Vermonters have entrusted us with a clear mission: Make their lives more affordable, more stable, and more hopeful. We do not have the luxury of delay or division. We must confront tough issues honestly, work collaboratively, and focus relentlessly on results.

Affordability must be our north star. The choices we make this session will shape Vermont’s future for years to come – and we have no choice but to get it right.

Sincerely,
Sen. Joe Major
Windsor District



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obituaries

Elaine A. Davis, 1945-2025

ATHENS, Vt. – With deep sadness, we announce that Elaine Anne (Fletcher) Davis, lovingly known as “Meme,” “Mom,” and “Lainey,” 80, of Athens, Vt., passed away on Dec. 23, 2025, surrounded by her family. She faced her battle with cancer with extraordinary strength, resilience, and grace – never once losing her quiet courage or her unwavering faith.

Elaine was born on Nov. 11, 1945, to Robert and Cora (Perry) Fletcher. She grew up in Athens, Vt., where she learned early the values she carried throughout her life: family first, work hard, love deeply, and believe in God. She attended local schools, and later graduated from Bellows Falls High School, Class of 1963.

Elaine married Elmer Davis Jr. on July 11, 1998, after meeting at the Putney Paper Mill, where they worked together. They shared a devoted and joyful life for 28 years, filled with love, laughter, and family.

She is survived by her husband Elmer; her brother Joseph Fletcher; and her children Ervin (Carrie) Snide Jr., Duane (Sheila) Snide, and Joanne (Jon) Parker. She also leaves behind 10 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, and many extended family members and friends who loved her dearly. She was predeceased by her parents and her daughter Jacqueline Snide.

Elaine’s greatest devotion in life was to her family. She was a woman of deep generosity and endless compassion. She always put others before herself, and gave freely of her time, her love, and her presence. She loved simple joys: a good yard sale, an afternoon of shopping, country music, going to the fair, and spending time with the people she loved most. Elaine had a gift for bringing warmth and kindness wherever she went. She remembered every birthday, every milestone, and made every card personal. To know her was to feel seen, cared for, and welcomed. Her legacy of love will live on in every life she touched.

Her faith carried her through every season of life,



Elaine A. Davis, 1945-2025. PHOTO PROVIDED

and was a steadfast source of strength. She found peace in knowing she would be healed and at home in heaven, reunited with loved ones, and held in God’s embrace. That faith now brings us comfort as we picture her whole, joyful, and surrounded by light.

The family wishes to extend their heartfelt gratitude to the Jack Byrne Center for Palliative & Hospice Care at Dartmouth Hitchcock. Their compassion, tenderness, and unwavering support held our entire family in ways we will never forget. We are forever grateful for the way they cared for Elaine with dignity and love during such a difficult time.

A memorial service will be held on Jan. 10, at 1 p.m., at the Community Christian Church in Athens, Vt., followed by a Celebration of Life, where stories, laughter, and memories will be shared, just as Elaine would have wanted.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Jack Byrne Center for Palliative & Hospice Care at Dartmouth Hitchcock, in honor of the comfort and compassion shown to Elaine and her family.

Our hearts ache with her absence, yet they overflow with gratitude for the love she gave. We will miss her voice, her warmth, and her presence, but she lives on in all of us – in every hug, every act of kindness, and every moment of grace.

Until we meet again, Meme. We love you endlessly.

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

Heather J. LaComb, 1982-2025

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Heather Jewel (Dunn) LaComb, 43, passed away suddenly on Dec. 21, 2025, the day of the winter solstice, due to a brain aneurysm. Heather’s passing came far too soon, and has left an immeasurable void in the hearts of all who knew and loved her.

Heather was born on Dec. 7, 1982. She was preceded in death by her parents Paula A. Dunn and Gary Dunn, both of Bellows Falls, Vt.

She is survived by her beloved children Spencer LaComb and Makenzie LaComb, of Springfield, Vt., who were the center of her world, and her greatest source of pride. Heather was a devoted and loving mother, whose life revolved around providing, supporting, and encouraging her children to become the best versions of themselves.

Heather is also survived by her sister Sara A. Dunn and Sara’s husband Keith Thayer, of Perkinsville, Vt.; her longtime partner Shawn Rice, of Westminster, Vt.; and many extended family members, friends, and coworkers who were touched by her kindness and quiet strength.

Heather was a longtime and dedicated employee of Shaw’s in Walpole, N.H., where she was known as a dependable, hardworking, and caring colleague. In ad-

dition to her work, Heather was actively pursuing a degree in business management, demonstrating her determination to better her future, and provide stability and opportunity for her family. Those who knew Heather knew her as gentle, thoughtful, and deeply devoted to the people she loved. She carried herself with humility, resilience, and a steady compassion that did not seek attention, but left a lasting impact.

Heather’s passing on the winter solstice holds special meaning. The solstice marks the longest night of the year, but also the turning point, when light slowly begins to return. In this way, Heather’s life and legacy remain a reminder that even in the deepest darkness, love, hope, and light endure.

Heather will be forever remembered for her devotion to her children, her unwavering work ethic, and the love she gave so freely to those closest to her. Her memory will live on through Spencer and Makenzie, and in the hearts of all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Service details will be shared at a later date.

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

Bernadette J. Luxton, 1947-2025

PORT ORCHARD, Wash. – Bernadette J. (Nooks) Luxton was born July 1, 1947, in Bellows Falls, Vt., to Anthony Nooks and Eula (McQueen) Nooks. She graduated from Bellows Falls High School. She served in the U.S. Army on active duty from 1965-1968, and was stationed in Germany. After the Army, she had a career in the United States Postal Service, and retired as a postmaster. She married John D. Luxton at St. Peter Church in North Walpole, N.H., and had two sons, David D. Luxton and Matthew A. Luxton. They moved many times in New Hampshire and Maine, and most recently resided in Washington state.

She was predeceased by her parents, brother Joseph Nooks, and sister Joyce Nooks. She leaves her husband and sons; sister Jeanette Richardson; cousin



Bernadette Luxton, 1947-2025. PHOTO PROVIDED

Carol McQueen; grandson Ethan D. Luxton; niece and nephews Lisa LaCoss, John Richardson, and Greg Richardson; great-nieces and great-nephews Mylinda, Toni, Phillip, Brittney, and Emma; and great-great-nieces and great-great-nephews Logan, Lincoln, Lena, Lucas, Landon, Atlas, Eleonora, and Maebly.

She passed away peacefully at the Veteran’s Home in Port Orchard, Wash. Per her request, there will be no funeral.

Mary B. Williams, 2025

ANDOVER, Vt. – Mary B. Williams, daughter of the late Henry and Estelle Bentley, passed away peacefully on Dec. 27, 2025. Mary resided in Andover for most of her life, where she raised her four children and built a life rooted in family, faith, and community. She found great joy in baking, sewing, crafts, and gardening, and she especially cherished the time spent helping her husband create beautiful woodworking projects that were lovingly shared with family members.

She was an active and devoted member of the Andover Community Church, where her faith and service touched many lives.

Mary was predeceased by her beloved husband Albert Williams, her son Gary Williams, and her great-grandson Joshua Cole.

She is survived by her daughters Teri (Frank) and Sherry (Loren), and her son Barry (Geraldine), along with numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and one great-great-granddaughter. Her legacy of love, creativity, and devotion to family will be fondly remembered by all who knew her.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the Joshua Cole Memorial Fund, via the Mount Holly Town



Mary Williams, 2025. PHOTO PROVIDED

Office in Mount Holly, Vt.; and the Andover Community Church.

A Celebration of Life will be held at on Saturday, Jan. 17, at the Andover Community Church.

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Family of Gene Adams thanks supporters

The family of Eugene “Gene” Adams wishes to express their sincere gratitude and thanks to all who have supported the family during this difficult time of his passing.

Sincerely,
Richard Adams and family, Joy Fletcher and family, Barbara Slaton and family, Beverly Lauren and family, and Bette Matulonis and family.

OBITUARIES: A 200-word obituary is \$100, and \$0.60 per word thereafter. A black and white photo is an additional \$20. Email to editor@vermontjournal.com by Monday at 12 p.m.

CHURCH SERVICES: Subject to space. All services are posted online at www.VermontJournal.com.

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calendar

LEGAL NOTICES

JAN. 8 –
LUDLOW, Vt. – A book discussion about the Fletcher Memorial Library’s many fabulous cookbooks will be held on Thursday, Jan. 8, at 12 p.m., at the Fletcher Memorial Library, 88 Main Street. Find a new recipe, or make one of your favorites to share at the book discussion. Coffee and tea will be provided to ward off winter’s chill.

JAN. 9 –
PERKINSVILLE, Vt. – The Weathersfield Center Community Contra Dance & Social will be held on Friday, Jan. 9, from 6-10 p.m., at the Weathersfield Center Meeting House, 2579 Weathersfield Center Road. Caller Steve Zakon-Anderson will teach and guide everyone through the dances. Open band led by

Naomi Morse (fiddle), Amy Englesburg (piano), and Emmet McGowan (drums), with special guest Owen Morrison on guitar. No special clothing, footwear, or experience required. You’re welcome to dance, listen, sit, or chat, and enjoy that cold beverage you brought along. All are welcome; all dances will be taught.

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. 12 –
LUDLOW, Vt. – The American Red Cross will hold a blood drive on Monday, Jan. 12, from 12-5 p.m., at the Ludlow Community Center gym, 37 Main Street. To make an appointment, please call 800-RED-CROSS, or visit www.redcrossblood.org and enter “Ludlow.” If you are an eligible type O, B-, or A- donor, consider making a Power Red donation; red blood cells are the most commonly transfused blood component. Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting www.redcrossblood.org/rapidpass to complete your predonation reading and health history questions

on the day of your appointment.

CLAREMONT, N.H. –The next senior men’s breakfast at the Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, will be held on Monday, Jan. 12, at 8 a.m. There is a nominal fee, discounted for members. This is a great time to see and make new friends. For more information, call 603-543-5998.

JAN. 13 –
SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Liz from Senior Solutions will be at the Springfield Senior Center, 139 Main Street, on Tuesday, Jan. 13, from 9-11 a.m. For more information, contact executive director Lori Johnson at 802-885-3933 or lorijohnsonssc@gmail.com.

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

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.

CLAREMONT, N.H. – The Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, holds computer clinics on the third Thursday of every month, from 1-3 p.m. Bring your computer or laptop in if you need help with it. This is for seniors only. Emily and Luke will help you troubleshoot any problems you are having, or help you to better understand your computer. You are responsible if any parts need to be purchased, but that is not usually the case. They can also help you with your cell phone, especially if it is an Android. For more information, call 603-543-5998.

STATE OF VERMONT
WINDHAM COUNTY, SS.

NOTICE OF SALE

The resident and nonresident owners, lien holders and mortgagees of lands in the Town of Rockingham and Village of Bellows Falls, in the County of Windham are hereby notified that the taxes and/or water and sewer taxes assessed by such Town and Village for the years indicated are, either in whole or in part, unpaid on the following described lands in such Town, to wit:

- **14 Riverfront Drive**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Juanita M. Ordinetz to John J. Banholzer and Juanita C. Banholzer by deed dated January 31, 1997 and recorded in Book 238, Page 465 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
- **212 Rockingham Street**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being a 2002 Skyline Mobile Home, Serial No. B7-160582-P located at 212 Rockingham Street.
- **35 Front Street**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Bank of New York Mellon, fka The Bank of New York, as Trustee to Scott Kirkpatrick by deed dated October 27, 2017 and recorded in Book 377, Page 283 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
- **36 Front Street**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Stephen L. Moore to Scott Kirkpatrick by deed dated August 29, 2019 and recorded in Book 393, Page 183 of the Rockingham Town Land Records. Subject to an easement conveyed by Scott Kirkpatrick to Stephen L. Moore by Easement Deed dated August 29, 2019 and recorded in Book 393, Page 190 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
- **55 Village Square**
For the years 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Phillip Donovan, Jr. and Mary Ann Donovan to Alexander Lawrence by Bill of Sale dated December 5, 2013 and recorded in Book 343, Page 411 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
- **528 Missing Link Road**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Edmund R. Mack, Jr. and Kimberly Mack to Alexander Lawrence by deed dated February 5, 2021 and recorded in Book 406, Page 260 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
- **6 Henry Street**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to Jahangir Mozaffari by Special Warranty Deed dated March 21, 2019 and recorded in Book 389, Page 320 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
- **57 Atkinson Street**
For the years 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Peter S. Higgins and Shannon R. Higgins to Leah Quinn by deed dated March 19, 2018 and recorded in Book 381, Page 31 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
- **10 Green Street**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Homeland Properties to Robert

- Remy-Powers and Donna R. Remy-Powers by deed dated February 1, 1990 and recorded in Book 212, Page 375 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
- **27 Upper Bartonsville Road**
For the years 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Melvin W. Hakey and Prudence I. Hakey to Orman M. Richards, Jr. by deed dated June 9, 1978 and recorded in Book ____, Page 498 of the Rockingham Town Land Records. Blanche M. Richards is now deceased. Reference is made to the Contingent Remainder Deed from Orman M. Richards, Jr. to Robert M. Richards dated July 11, 2019 and recorded in Book 392, Page 267 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
 - **Saxtons River Inn, 27 Main Street**
For the years 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Saxtons River Inn, Inc. (f/k/a Bob, Averill & Bob, Inc.) to Susan Saunders by deed dated September 6, 2022 and recorded in Book 422, Page 286 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
 - **9 Lincoln Street**
For the years 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Thomas R. Miller, Robert C. Miller and Marilyn Frost to Donald C. Tretler, Jr. by deed dated June 16, 2015 and recorded in Book 355, Page 18 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
 - **1 Center Street**
For the years 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by U.S. Bank, National Association, as Trustee of the Citigroup Mortgage Loan Trust Inc. Asset-Backed Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2006-FX1 to Lindsay Van Schoick and Courtney Van Schoick by deed dated April 26, 2017 and recorded in Book 372, Page 17 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
 - **23 Laurel Avenue**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Roberta Streeter to Courtney Van Schoick by deed dated June 23, 2022 and recorded in Book 420, Page 289 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
 - **24 Laurel Avenue**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Honorata Waryas to Walter J. Waryas and Marjorie F. Waryas (now deceased) by deed dated June 23, 1972 and recorded in Book 169, Page 347 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
 - **54 Williams Street Ext.**
For the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Seldon H. Newcomb to Agnes R. Zielinski and Edward S. Zielinski (now deceased) by deed dated September 1, 1942 and recorded in Book 100, Page 164 of the Rockingham Town Land Records. Contingent remainder granted to Walda S. Richmond (also known as Sue Richmond) of Hanover, New Hampshire by Limited Warranty Deed dated February 17, 2009 and recorded in Book 317 at Page 401 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.
 - **154 Rockingham Street**
For the years 2024-2025. Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed by Applegreen of New England, Inc. (f/k/a Petrogas Group New England, Inc.) to Zig Vermont, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company by deed dated May 10, 2024 and recorded in Book 438, Page 21 of the Rockingham Town Land Records.

- **961 Pleasant Valley Road**
For the years 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 being all the same lands and premises conveyed by H.M. Savage & Sons, Inc. to Roy Batchelder and Carol Batchelder by deed dated June 14, 2011, and recorded in Book 330, Page 67 of the Rockingham Town Land Records being Parcel Number 060020961. Also including a Mobile Home, Make: Marlett, Year: 1966, Serial Number 1230029, Size: 12 x 65

and so much of said lands will be sold at public auction at Rockingham Town Office, a public place in such Town, on the 5th day of February, 2026 at Ten O'clock in the forenoon, as shall be requisite to discharge such taxes with costs, unless previously paid.
You have the right to request in writing, at least 24 hours prior to the tax sale date set forth above, that only a portion of the property be sold to satisfy the delinquent tax bill. Should you wish to proceed with this request, you must follow the procedure set forth in 32 V.S.A. § 5254; clearly identify the portion of the property to be sold, and include a certification from the Act 250 district coordinator and the town zoning administrator that the portion identified may be legally subdivided.
If you qualify under 24 V.S.A. § 1535, you may be able to receive an abatement of the property taxes, interest and collection fees you owe to the town. Abatement means that your taxes could be reduced or eliminated. You have the right to appear before the Board of Abatement and explain why you think your taxes should be abated. To apply for an abatement, you must contact Kathleen Neathawk, Town Clerk, by phone at (802) 463-4336, ext. 1102, via email at clerk@rockbe.org, or via mail at 7 Square, 2nd Floor, Bellows Falls, VT 05101. Warning: There are unpaid property taxes at your property in Rockingham, Vermont which you may own, have a legal interest, or may be contiguous to your property. The property will be sold at public auction on February 5, 2026 unless the overdue taxes, fees and interest is paid. To make payment or receive further information, contact the Rockingham Tax Collector, immediately at the Town of Rockingham, 7 Square, 2nd Floor, Bellows Falls, Vermont 05151, telephone number (802) 463-3964.

If this property is your primary residence, you may be able to get help with delinquent property tax and utility payments through the Vermont Homeowner Assistance Program (VHAP). VHAP can help you avoid tax sale and transfer of your property by paying delinquent property taxes, water and sewer charges, interest and penalties. You can apply for VHAP online at vermonthap.vhfa.org. For advice about the program and help completing the application, call Vermont Legal Aid at 1-800-889-2047. If you apply for VHAP, you must notify your town in writing, and your property will not be sold or transferred wile your application is pending.
Dated at Bellows Falls, Town of Rockingham, County of Windham and State of Vermont, this 30th day of December, 2025.

_____/s/ Scott Pickup
Scott Pickup, Collector of Town, Village, Town School District Taxes, Water and Sewer Taxes

LEGAL NOTICES

classifieds

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GRAFTON, Vt. – 2020 GMC Sierra SLT 2500HD DSL. Loaded. 4dr/4wd, Fisher V-plow, 5th wheel set up, side tool boxes, \$38,000. Call 802-732-8494.

GRAFTON, Vt. – 2020 GMC Sierra SLT 2500HD DSL, Loaded. 4dr /4wd, 2025 Fisher V-plow w/2025 Fisher Sander, 5th wheel set up, \$48,000. Call 802-732-8494.

★★★★★★

SNOW PLOWING

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

Girls on the Run Vermont coach registration open

REGION – Coach registration is officially open for Girls on the Run Vermont's (GOTRVT) spring 2026 season. The programs are specifically designed for third grade through eighth grade girls and gender-expansive youth. Prior running experience is not necessary for coaches or participants.

Volunteer coaches lead teams through lessons twice a week, covering topics that help participants learn more about themselves, become independent and critical thinkers, develop skills to make healthy choices, find inner strength through physical activity, and learn ways to be active in their community. Girls on the Run Vermont provides coaches with comprehensive training, a curriculum that maps out each lesson, and supplies and support for an enriching season. Coaches facilitate 20 impactful lessons spanning the ten-week season, with two lessons a week. Lesson days are determined by each coaching team.

Coach registration is open now at www.gotrvt.org/coach. Statewide participant registration opens on Wednesday, Feb. 18, and the season begins the week of March 16. A participant interest form can be completed now at www.tinyurl.com/

gotrvt2026interest.

GOTRVT's spring 2026 5K Celebrations will be held on Saturday, May 30, at the Champlain Valley Expo in Essex Junction, and on Saturday, June 6, at Manchester Parks & Recreation in Manchester Center. The noncompetitive event brings together participants, families, and supporters to recognize and celebrate each girl's growth.

TOWN OF LONDONDERRY VERMONT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Londonderry Development Review Board will meet at 100 Old School St at 5:30 PM on Wednesday January 21, 2026, to hold a public hearing for:

An application from D.J. Kenney and M.W. Kenney for a two-lot subdivision of land owned by M. & C. Bataille on Thompsonburg Rd

And an application from Caucis Trust & Evandro Santini for a five-lot subdivision off of Rt 11 near Little Pond Rd

Those interested in seeing the applications, submitting written comments, or attending the hearings remotely should contact the town's Zoning Administrator at zoningadmin@londonderryvt.org.



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, February 2, 2026** to consider the following:

Application # 26-17

Application #26-17 James Eckley and Danny Lecour (Owners) property located at 1426 and 1338 Davidson Hill Rd. The Applicant is requesting a Boundry Line Adjustment. This Application will be reviewed under **Section 311 Site Plan Review, Section 447 Rural Residential District Zone and Section 215 Zoning Permit Procedures** of the 2017 Zoning Bylaws.

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

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

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT
WINDHAM UNIT

PROBATE DIVISION
DKT NO. 25-PR-07150

In re ESTATE of: CORY WALKER

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Cory Walker, late of WINDHAM COUNTY, VERMONT:

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the descendant, or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the date 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 as described above within the four (4) month period.

Dated: 12/30/2025

/s/ Christian Walker
Administrator
c/o Moore Law Offices, LLC
P.O. Box 50
Bellows Falls, VT 05101
(802) 463-4327
assistant2@moorelawvt.com

Name of Publication: The Vermont Journal & The Shopper

Publication Date: January 7, 2026

Address of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court
Probate Division – Windham County
30 Putney Road, 2nd Floor, Brattleboro, VT 05301

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.

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(01/14/26 - TFN - 13)

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(03/18/26 - 13)

arts/events/outdoor

All-star lineup at Bellows Falls Opera House

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Four of the brightest lights in contemporary singer/songwriter music – John Gorka, Patty Larkin, Cliff Eberhardt, and Lucy Kaplansky – join together for an extraordinary evening of music, “On a Winter’s Night,” on Thursday, Jan. 8, at the Bellows Falls Opera House.

It was in 1994 that folk-music den-mother Christine Lavin first gathered a group together for a song-writing and performing retreat under that moniker. From that, a best-selling Rounder Records disc appeared, then a tour, then another. 30 years later, “On a Winter’s Night” is one of the most anticipated annual events on the folk-music calendar.

“It’s like a mini folk festival all-star lineup on stage,”

says Charlie Hunter, one of the presenters of the event, “except without the mosquitoes and tick bites, and you’re in a comfortable seat, and you don’t have to use a porta-potty.”

“Seriously, though,” he continues, “this is just a really great lineup of writers and performers whose work has stood the test of time.”

The Jan. 8 date marks the first of the 2026 Ray Massucco Concert Series, named after the late beloved Bellows Falls booster, attorney, part-time concert promoter, and full-time music lover. After Massucco’s death in 2022, a group of Vermont friends who had worked with Massucco on the 22-year trajectory of the Roots on the River music festival quickly coalesced around the idea of a concert

series. “Ray loved music,” says Ezra Veitch, production manager of Ray’s the Roof, presenter of the series. “And Ray loved Bellows Falls. I think he’d be thrilled to see how successful the series has been and continues to be.”

The 2026 series kicks off with “On a Winter’s Night”; continues on April 17 with the return of Garrison Keillor, this time accompanied by longtime Prairie Home Companion pianist Richard Dworsky; revs into high gear with the return of Fred Eaglesmith on Oct. 17; and concludes with Dar Williams, on Dec. 4.

The Bellows Falls Opera House is located at 7 Village Square, Bellows Falls, Vt. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., and show-time is 7:30 p.m. Tickets and more information can be found at www.bellowsfallsoperahouse.com/special-events.

Diver Annette Spaulding at BF Historical Society

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The Bellows Fall Historical Society welcomes Annette Spaulding, master diver and underwater explorer, on Saturday, Jan. 10, at 2 p.m., at their 46 Canal Street Museum. Spaulding will give a talk titled “Underwater Discoveries in the Connecticut River from the Adams Grist Mill to the Walpole-Westminster Bridge.”

Reservations are needed, as we have set a 35-person limit for attendees. Reservations can be made at www.tinyurl.com/annette-spaulding-discoveries, or by emailing bfhs.archives@gmail.com for a Zoom link for the event.

Spaulding is an expert in underwater archaeology and history, with more than 35 years of experience and over 3,400 dives in numerous countries and throughout New England. Her work includes major historic discoveries in rivers and lakes, featured in PBS and National Geographic documentaries. She played a significant role in improving the Connecticut River, now an

American Heritage River with more than 20 feet of visibility. The Connecticut River is one of her favorite places to dive, and she has made many historical and archaeological discoveries there. She is a dedicated member of numerous non-profit conservation and research organizations, including as a trustee for the Connecticut River Conservancy, and a board member and volunteer for the Bellows Falls Historical Society, managing the Riverfront Park and volunteering as a docent in the 46 Canal Street museum.

Fiber arts workshops at the Townshend Country Store

WEST TOWNSHEND, Vt. – Multitalented Shiloh returns to lead two fiber arts workshops at the West Townshend Country Store, 6573 Vermont Route 30 in West Townshend. She’ll present a needle-felting workshop on Sunday, Jan. 11, and Sunday, Jan. 25, from 4-7 p.m. On Sunday, Feb. 15, from 4-7 p.m., she’ll teach spinning.

The fee for needle felt-



A felted squirrel.

PHOTO PROVIDED

ing includes all materials, as well as a kit to take home. The fee for spinning will include a home drop spindle and some wool roving to bring home.

These workshops are a great opportunity to learn something new, and to meet your neighbors. Seats are limited, so stop by the store to sign up soon.



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BF Historical Society installs new signage

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The Bellows Falls Historical Society & Museum has recently added signage to their 46 Canal Street property. The signage was created and painted by local artist Frank Hawkins.

The Bellows Falls Historical Society has a presentation and meeting space available for 40 people. Ar-



Newly installed signage at the BF Historical Society.

PHOTO PROVIDED

rangements can be made for booking by emailing bfhs.archives@gmail.com.

The historical society moved to its new location last winter, and opened its doors in June 2025. The museum features displays of local Bellows Falls and Rockingham items, along with local history told through pictures.

The society currently has three special exhibits on display: (1) the Gordon Crandall Native American cultural exhibit, an ongoing feature; (2) the fire department exhibit, including items and pictures honoring Larry Clark, a Bellows Falls firefighter for more than 50 years who recently passed away. The exhibit features a showcase of fire department trucks made by Bill Lockwood and his nephew David

Levesque. The display was put together by Bill’s wife Jeanie Levesque and his nephew David Levesque; and (3) the “Two Friends” art exhibit, featuring the work of local artists Virginia Clark and Antoinette “Nan” Durling.

We also have additional displays focusing on Bellows Falls history, including Hetty Green, trains, and the military.

We invite you to visit the Bellows Falls Historical Society and Museum during our open hours: Wednesday and Friday, from 1-3 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.; and the first and third Sundays of the month, from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Visits can also be arranged by appointment by emailing BFHistoricalSociety@gmail.com.

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