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THE MESSAGE

OF THE WEEK

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Claremont School Board discusses two articles

BY PAULA BENSON

The Message

CLAREMONT, N.H. – The Claremont-Unity School Board (SAU6) held a public hearing on Wednesday, Feb. 18, to present and discuss two articles that will be on the March 10 ballot. Warrant Article 7, regarding open enrollment, and Warrant Article 8, which proposes a budget cap, were discussed at the meeting.

The public hearing, which

was required by law, presented an opportunity for the board to explain the articles in further detail, and allowed citizens to make comments and ask questions.

Warrant Article 7 permits students living outside the school district to attend schools in the district, in an amount not to exceed 10% of each school's enrollment. Article 7 also limits the percentage of students residing in the district who may attend open enrollment

schools located outside the district to 0%.

Board member Candace Crawford clarified that if students want to attend other schools, they still can, but the financial burden remains with the family, as it is in the current policy. Crawford warned that if the board does not make its own policies, "the school district would be responsible for 80% of the costs of students going to another district, without any restrictions on how many

students that could be."

"Additionally," Crawford continued, "If we did not have this article in place, we could have an unknown number of students coming to our schools whether or not we had the capacity for them. There is no way to plan ahead for these costs."

"The point right now is we need this warrant article to limit Claremont's exposure for tax purposes...[and] our financial responsibility," Crawford concluded.

Complete details on the financial ramifications to the school district can be found at www.sau6.org.

State Rep. Hope Damon offered "updates and clarifications on the House and Senate bills. For those that want to look them up, it's House Bill 751 and Senate Bill 101." Damon explained that neither would be signed into law until late spring.

"The school board does not recommend this article," Board Chair Heather

Whitney stated. She read aloud the terms proposed by Article 8 to "implement a budget cap whereby the school board or budget committee shall not submit a recommended budget that is higher than the [2025-2026] fiscal year per-pupil cost times the average daily membership in residents of the school district as of Oct. 1 of the year immediately preceding," while

See **SCHOOL** on Page 2

Charlestown Fire Station Committee study

CHARLESTOWN, N.H. – The Charlestown Selectboard formed a committee in 2024 to study the building needs for the fire department. Since that time, the committee has been meeting and reviewing those needs. After careful review of the existing building and the requirements of the current standards for fire service, it was determined that the current station does not meet the safety requirements of a modern fire department

First, a little history about the current station. The town voted to appropriate \$80,000 in 1973 for site work and construction of the current station. Four thousand additional dollars were appropriated in 1974 for completion of the station. The fire department has worked out of the current building for the last 50 years. If you

annualized that \$84,000 investment over the 50 years of use the town has gotten from the current station, you can see that the town has not wasted any money on fire stations. The current station is a Butler-style, pre-engineered steel building. These buildings are not designed to be modified. The station sits in the very southwest corner of the lot. This does not allow for expansion of the building to the west or the south due to property boundaries. There is no room to the north either, due to the limited driveway space shared by the police department and the fire department. Theoretically, the building could be added on to the east; however, because of the design layout of the supporting superstructure of the building, it would take a major re-engineering, and

even then, would not provide adequate space to meet the current needs of the department, or provide room to expand to meet future needs.

The fire station committee completed a thorough review of the current station to see if it was possible to make modifications to bring it up to code and meet the current needs of the town. This was done with a combination of our committee members, the town's insurance provider Primex, and the architect hired by the town to help with this project.

In September of 2024, Primex did a risk assessment of the current station and found the following deficiencies.

(1) Slip, trip, and fall hazards both inside the building and outside. The roof redesign of the building does not

control the water coming off of it; in the winter this allows ice to build up and creates a number of hazards around the building.

(2) There is an overall lack of any facilities or space to perform adequate decontamination of both personnel and equipment. The risks of cancer in the fire service cannot be understated. It is imperative that there be appropriate facilities to get firefighters decontaminated and washed up before they go home to their families. The same goes for the gear that is used. There is no room inside the current station for the addition of shower facilities, or expansion for appropriate bathroom facilities, or isolated spaces to perform these essential decontamination tasks. Almost all equipment currently is stored in the only space available,

the apparatus bay, which is contaminated with diesel exhaust.

(3) The storage and washing/maintenance of the turnout gear the firefighters wear was also noted as being deficient. While this gear is meant to protect firefighters while engaged in high-risk activities, the gear itself is actually dangerous. Most of it is built with chemicals that are known to cause cancer, but because of lack of other suitable options to keep firefighters safe in the severe conditions they encounter, this is the best that can be done. Further, the gear becomes contaminated because of the numerous chemicals found in modern fires and other hazardous conditions to which firefighters are exposed. The gear should be cleaned after every use. The gear also

needs to be stored in an isolated space with separate ventilation, it needs to be protected from natural light, and should be kept away from the public.

(4) The apparatus bay itself is not large enough to store the apparatuses the town currently maintains. Some trucks are backed in so close they are nearly touching. The bays are not wide enough to allow doors to open all the way. Firetrucks are not getting any smaller. Replacements that are needed now will not fit in the current station. There needs to be adequate room in the apparatus bay to position the equipment safely to prevent damage to this valuable equipment, and to make it safe to maintain and work around.

See **STATION** on Page 2

Claremont Police aid in recovering children, extradite father to Vermont

CLAREMONT, N.H. – On Feb. 13, at 3:41 p.m., the Hartford Police Department obtained an emergency custody order for two children who were in the custody of J'Kem Woodson, 49, of Claremont, N.H.

Officers initially attempted to locate Woodson and

the children at a local hotel, but were unsuccessful. The Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF) contacted Woodson by phone to inform him of the court order and request a meeting. Woodson immediately disconnected the call and turned off his phone.

Based on Woodson's actions and information contained in the affidavit supporting the emergency custody order, including prior allegations that Woodson had displayed a handgun and threatened the children's mother, Hartford Police notified surrounding law

enforcement agencies and requested community assistance in locating Woodson.

Officers subsequently obtained a cell phone location ping indicating Woodson was in Claremont, N.H. Within minutes, the Claremont Police Department located Woodson's vehicle. An

extraditable arrest warrant for custodial interference was issued by a Vermont Superior Court judge.

Claremont Police made contact at the residence, confirmed Woodson was inside, and instructed him to exit. Woodson complied and was taken into custody

without incident. The children were located inside the residence, and were found safe and asleep.

The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth, and Families responded to the scene and transferred custody of the children to a Vermont DCF employee.

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DEADLINES

The deadline for all content is **Thursday at 4 p.m.** for the following Wednesday publication.

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SCHOOL

From Page 1

accounting for an annual increase to cover inflation as determined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Whitney presented the legal opinion of the district's attorney, James O'Shaughnessy, purporting that "the language does not follow the law. [That language] requires that the budget cap be set as a dollar amount. Changing a dollar amount to a fiscal year reference is not permitted under the statute."

O'Shaughnessy argued that, due to the lack of reference to a dollar amount, "voters do not know what they are voting for or against. If it passes, I will likely advise the board that it is unenforceable."

Comptroller Matt Angell spoke to the implications the district would face should this proposed budget cap be approved. "Back in January...I calculated an operating budget of just under \$36 million, which represents a \$9.1 million dollar decrease as compared to what's being proposed."

Angell further detailed the "easy areas of elimination" that would be the first school programs to be terminated to meet the demand of cutting more than \$9 million from the projected budget.

Angell provided the board with a possible list of cuts that could include the elimination of all Sugar River Val-

ley Regional Technical Center programs, closing the Dow Building and relocating those operations elsewhere, complete termination of all athletics and extracurricular activities, and the potential of closing Maple Avenue and Disnard elementary schools.

Several residents took the opportunity to address the potential loss of extracurricular programs such as sports and music, including Stevens High School senior Kiren Adrian, who told the board he had "been heavily involved in the music program for all four years of my high school life and...plan to pursue composition at the collegiate level." Adrian pointed to studies related to extracurricular activities that prove participation in sports or music programs increases test scores, GPA levels, and graduation rates.

Angell reported on the current financial status of the district, stating that, although progress is slow, they are still moving forward with conducting audits for both Unity and Claremont.

The Claremont School Board meets on the first and third Wednesday of every month, at 6:30 p.m., in the John Goodrich Business & Community Room at the Sugar River Valley Technical Center.

STATION

From Page 1

(5) The exhaust from the vehicles located in the apparatus bay needs to be captured and ventilated outside of the building. This is a major source of contamination to the entire station. This vehicle exhaust is known to be harmful. The current station does not have any infrastructure to do this, nor does it have the physical room needed to be retrofitted to allow for this equipment.

These are all serious issues. They all contribute to added risk for the firefighters and visitors to the station. In light of these issues, the committee determined that constructing a new station is necessary, as there is no reasonable approach to make the current station meet current and future needs.

Next, the committee spent time studying and analyzing whether a modern, appropriately sized facility could be built on the current lot located on Main Street. Of course, the entire committee would have loved to keep the fire station on Main Street. It really serves as a community hub, and deserves a place in the center of town. However, we did not want to repeat the current situation in which the department finds itself - namely, too small of a building, located on a lot that does not allow for expansion.

The committee recognized that the fire department also needs more room around the building itself to function. During a fire, 20 or more members might be showing up within a matter of minutes to respond to an emergency; room to park, and room for the safe flow of traffic into and out of the station is essential. The department needs room to maintain gear. A length of large-supply hose is 100 feet long, and it would be great if there was room on the lot for that to be laid out for testing and practice. There are drills that need to be completed. We determined that a lot of at least 2.5 acres was really needed to meet the building and operational needs of the department.

The committee hired a soil engineer to look at the current back lot of the fire station. As many town members who have lived here for any time will know, that flat area has been created by dumping fill and other material back there for several decades. The lot drops off significantly at the edge of the parking. There is a stream and wetlands that would need to be dealt with if we were to expand that lot. Soil borings were done to obtain soil for analysis in a number of locations around the back lot. It was determined that a good portion of the back lot was not suitable for building upon without excavating down approximately 20 feet and back filling this with engineered soil. While not impossible, it would add a significant amount of site work and cost to the project. If the station was to be built closer to Main Street, we would find ourselves in the same situation we are in now, a building being built in the corner of a lot without room for future expansion, less than ideal space around the building, and the need to build a temporary fire station to store equipment and apparatuses during the period of time the old one was torn down and before the new one was ready for occu-

pancy. This would add substantial costs to the project.

Based on these findings, the committee determined that, if we could find a lot somewhere else in town that was flat, buildable, and offered at least 2.5 acres of land, we would be setting the project up for the most success. We did a full review of all town-owned property, of which there is very little. Unfortunately, there was nothing in the town inventory that would meet the needs. The committee met with CEDA, Whelen, and private property owners in search of a piece that would keep the station near the village, and would offer the space needed with a minimal amount of work to prepare the site. In the end, we found the property that is currently being presented on the warrant for purchase this year. It was the most cost-effective land available that met the criteria. For the purchase price negotiated, the seller will have the land prepared and ready for construction.

This piece of land is located about 3,000 feet away from the current station, keeping the station centrally located within town. The land is flat, has access to town water and sewer, and provides over three acres of land. Again, we wish it was located on the center of Main Street, but that is just not a reality. Building here allows the current station to remain in use during the construction phase, so no temporary building is needed. It also gives the town options on what to do with the current station after the new station goes into service.

The committee interviewed and reviewed proposals by three different architectural firms prior to starting this process. Ultimately, the committee recommended the town contract with Michael Petrovick Architects in Keene, N.H., to help us with the feasibility study for this project. This is a local architectural firm that has substantial experience working with communities the size of Charlestown on public safety buildings. They are currently working with the Walpole Fire Department on their expansion, and worked with Westmoreland on the construction of their fire station. Working with the architect, the committee has gone through a

programming process to help us define the needs of the community and the fire department, so that we can design and build a station that will fulfill those needs in the most cost-effective manner possible. We want to deliver a product that easily meets the needs of the community for the next 50 or more years, constructed in a way that gives us options for future expansion if needed.

The entire fire station committee is made up of taxpayers from Charlestown. They all realize the burden every property owner in Charlestown faces. We hope the town will recognize how critical it is that the current fire station be updated - that there are serious operational and safety issues that need to be addressed. The committee hopes the town will see just how little the current fire station has cost the town over the years, and how frugally the department operates year over year. The committee hopes the town realizes that the need to update this station is not going to go away, that the problems will only be compounded over time, and that delay only adds to the cost. The men and women that serve on this department put themselves at risk every day to protect this community, and should be afforded a safe station from which to work. The risk of cancer in the fire service is significant. We need to provide a facility that helps to combat this, to keep these responders safe. The Town of Charlestown is growing. The demands on the fire department are growing. Charlestown needs to be serious about improving its tax situation. It needs to continue to attract investment by business, industry, and future tax base growth. Having a modern and effective fire department is essential to that growth, and that starts with having a safe and efficient station.

The committee will continue working hard throughout the next year finalizing plans for the new station; identifying, applying for, and hopefully being awarded grant funding to help keep the financial impact of this project as minimal as possible for the community.

The committee looks forward to the approval of the town when they vote "yes" on Article 9.



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arts & events

“Drawing Hidden Systems” presentation

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – On Saturday, Feb. 28, please join the Rockingham Free Public Library for a presentation sponsored by Vermont Humanities, entitled “Drawing Hidden Systems.”

Have you ever wondered where electricity comes from, how the internet works, or how there’s (mostly) enough water for everyone all the time? Where did these systems come from, and how do they affect our challenges like inequality and climate change? Join Vermont author and artist Dan Nott for a look at these questions and more as he discusses his new nonfiction graphic novel, “Hidden Systems,” for this all-ages event. The talk will also include visual readings from “Hidden Systems” that focus on the electrical grid and energy uses, lessons from comics history,

and information for readers and aspiring cartoonists on how to get into reading and drawing comics.

Nott is a cartoonist, illustrator, and educator living in Vermont. His nonfiction work uses comics to explore and untangle complex topics and create a basis for understanding current events. His debut nonfiction graphic novel “Hidden Systems” was selected as an Indies Next and Indies Introduce pick by the American Booksellers Association. He has released two comic books with the Center for Cartoon Studies, “This is What Democracy Looks Like: A Graphic Guide to Governance,” and “Freedom and Unity: A Graphic Guide to Civics and Democracy in Vermont.” He teaches at The Center for Cartoon Studies in White River Junction, Vt.

This free program is open to the public, and will take place at the Rockingham Free Public Library on Saturday, Feb. 28, from 1-2:30 p.m. It is made possible by the Vermont Humanities Speakers Bureau program.

For more information about this and other programs, call 802-463-4270, visit www.rockinghamlibrary.org, or stop by the library at 65 Westminster Street, Bellows Falls, Vt.

Enslaved soldiers in the Revolutionary War

CAVENDISH, Vt. – Estimates are that between 5,000-8,000 African Americans fought against the British, including Peter Tumbo and Prince Robinson, who settled in Cavendish following the war. However, far more (estimates of 20,000) were Loyalists. These numbers do not reflect the number of enslaved women and children who fled to British encampments in the hopes of freedom, nor those who used the cha-

otic time to escape to maroon communities, such as the Great Dismal Swamp on the border of Virginia and North Carolina.

On Saturday, Feb. 28, at 1 p.m., the Cavendish Historical Society (CHS), in conjunction with the Cavendish Fletcher Community Library, 573 Main Street, will hold a talk about the role of enslaved people during the Revolutionary War period. This will include showing portions of Ken Burns’ “The American Revolution” se-

ries, as well as discussing Cavendish’s patriots, Tumbo and Robinson.

The talk will be held at the Cavendish Library in Proctorsville. This event is free and open to the public, and is recommended for those 12 years old and older. In the event of inclement weather, a notice will be posted to the Cavendish Facebook page, www.facebook.com/cavendishvt. For more information, call 802-226-7807 or email margocaulfield@icloud.com.

Next Stage upcoming events

PUTNEY, Vt. – on Friday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m., Next Stage Arts presents an intimate cinema verite portrait of one of music’s greatest icons, “Johnny Cash! The Man, His World, His Music.” Doors open at 6:15 p.m.

Produced in 1968, this film captures Johnny Cash both on stage and behind the scenes. Following Cash on the road and in concert with the Carter Family, the Statler Brothers, and Carl Perkins, the film also includes rare footage of Cash recording with Bob Dylan at Columbia Studios.

Audiences will also see Cash at home with June Carter, visit his parents and children in California, and return to his

childhood town in Arkansas. The documentary features moving sequences at the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota and the site of the Wounded Knee Massacre, offering a deep look into Cash’s life, family, and social conscience.

Local filmmaker Alan Dater, who served as the film’s sound recordist, will be present to introduce the screening and participate in a discussion after the film. A short video interview with director Bob Elfstrom will also precede the screening.

On Saturday, Feb. 28, Next Stage Arts presents a rare evening of acoustic blues with Corey Harris and Sunny Lowdown. Doors open at 6:45 p.m., with the show beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Harris, guitarist, vocalist, songwriter, and band leader, has carved a singular place in contemporary blues. Beginning as a street singer in New Orleans, Harris has toured across North America, Europe, Brazil, the Caribbean, West Africa, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. A year living in Cameroon deeply shaped his musical voice, blending blues tradition with reggae, soul, rock, and West African influences.

Sharing the stage, Sunny Lowdown is a master of slide guitar known for deep grooves, slow-burning blues, and a raw, hypnotic sound. Beginning his professional career at 16

backing John Lee Hooker, Lowdown has collaborated with legends including Hubert Sumlin, Pinetop Perkins, Otis Rush, R.L. Burnside, and Cedell Davis.

This performance is co-sponsored by the Vermont Blues Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to preserving and promoting blues music through concerts, workshops, and educational programs. For more information, visit www.vermontbluessociety.org, or follow them on Facebook.

Next Stage Arts is located at 15 Kimball Hill, Putney, Vt. Tickets for both events are available at www.nextstagearts.org.

Growing edible berries discussion

S. LONDONDERRY, Vt. – The Green Mountain Gardeners invite the public to attend an open discussion on raising fruits and berries in the home landscape on Monday, March 2, at 4 p.m., at the Rugg Valley Greenhouse, 968 Haven Hill Road in South Londonderry. The program will be led by Mark Wright, owner of Rugg Valley Landscaping. Attendees are asked to bring their own folding chairs. All are welcome.

Wright will speak from his experience, and give some practical tips on growing fruit trees and berries, and how to best use them to enhance the home grounds.

In high school, Wright was in charge of the school greenhouse as part of the school’s work program. It was his first experience working in a controlled growing environment, and it was an eye opener.

He attended Cornell University, where he majored in landscape architecture and horticulture. Thanks to some

influential and enthusiastic professors, his interest in plants and landscape design flourished. However, one of the most important lessons he learned was that he didn’t want to spend his life in an office. When he graduated in 1974, he and his wife Sunny joined the back-to-the land movement, built their cabin in the woods, and started Rugg Valley Landscaping.

Mark has spent his life observing and learning. Like everything, the more you learn, the more you realize how much more there is to learn; growing edible fruits is no exception. Come learn about the beauty and practicality of growing fruits at your own home.

To attend this event, please RSVP to Cynthia Gubb at chgubb2020@gmail.com, or call her at 802-236-6526. For more information about Green Mountain Gardeners, visit www.greenmountain-gardeners.net.

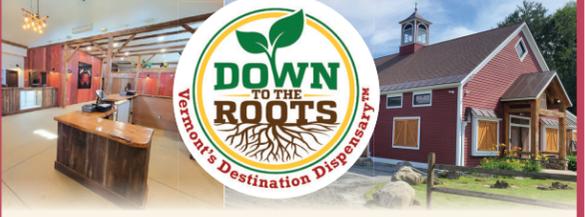


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opinion

Dear Springfield Residents,

I am running for a position on the Springfield School Board. I have lived in Springfield for close to two years. Prior to that, I grew up in Lyndonville, Vt. I have a bachelor's degree in biology from Rutgers University. My work experience ranges from managing a 100-veterinarian laboratory to a position at IDEXX, at which I supported veterinarians, staff, and

the business with technical and educational products, services, and continuing education.

My son currently attends the Elm Hill School preschool program. I have seen so much growth and excitement regarding his early education experience. I'm consistently impressed with all the teachers, administration, and support staff I have met and interacted

with at our schools.

As a board member, I hope to engage the community in supporting the education of our students, and I want to support our teachers and staff in their positions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Brenda Boynton
Springfield, Vt.

To the Voters of Springfield,

On behalf of the North School Preservation Society, I am asking you to please vote "yes" on Article 9. A "yes" vote would renew our tax-exempt status, and make it possible for our nonprofit organization to continue our

mission of preserving North School and its surrounding property. The property is open to the public for year-round recreation, and includes a playground and dog park which are enjoyed by many. Please show your

support with a "yes" vote on Town Meeting Day.

Thank you,
Virginia Ricker, Treasurer
North School Preservation Society

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

POLITICAL LETTERS

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

Springfield Area Adult Day Services

"Springfield Area Adult Day Services has truly changed my life. I look forward to every day because I know I'll be doing things I enjoy—crafts, bingo, and lunch with friends.

A typical day here makes me feel wanted and useful, and I've noticed I have more energy. I had been feeling down, but now I feel connected and part of something again.

Attending Adult Day helps me stay independent, happy, and fulfilled. I'm so grateful for this place and everything it brings to my life."

Interested?

Visit www.springfieldhospital.org/adultday to sign up or call 802-885-9881 to learn more.



 **Springfield Hospital**
Where People Come First

Dear Editor,

My name is Amethyst Bonneau, I am the communications and marketing manager for Springfield Area Public Access Television (SAPA TV). As a proud nonprofit organization, SAPA TV has been deeply rooted in the Springfield area for many years, serving not just Springfield, but also the neighboring communities of Chester, Weathersfield, and Reading. At our core, we believe in the power of storytelling, transparency, and connection. SAPA TV provides comprehensive local coverage, from town meetings and school events, to cultural festivals and public forums. We create opportunities for individuals and organizations to share their voices, stories, and ideas freely. We are also passionate about education, offering public access to professional-grade video equipment, hands-on media training, and op-

portunities for residents to develop their own content and technical skills. Our mission is simple but vital: to be an educational, creative, and archival resource for our region. We work hard to preserve the moments that shape our towns, while providing a platform where creativity, civic engagement, and local culture can thrive.

Today, we find ourselves at a crossroads. As technology and viewing habits evolve, so too must our funding strategies. We can no longer rely solely on traditional cable revenues or limited federal support to sustain the work we do. That is why we are reaching out to you, our community members, local businesses, and supporters, to ask for your help.

Public access media exists because of people like you. Your donation, no matter the size, helps us provide training, equipment, and a platform for community voices. Every dollar ensures

our community continues to have free, open access to local media. All contributions are tax-deductible and deeply appreciated.

Every gift truly matters. Your donations make it possible for us to continue delivering vital services: broadcasting local government meetings, providing youth with media education, supporting grassroots initiatives, and offering a creative outlet for artists, activists, and everyday citizens. With your support, we can ensure that this essential resource not only survives, but continues to grow and serve the needs of our vibrant, diverse community. We deeply appreciate your consideration and generosity. Together, we can keep public access alive and accessible for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Amethyst Bonneau
SAPA TV Communications and Marketing Manager

Dear Editor,

Gallery at the VAULT will be on Springfield's Town Meeting ballot this year, asking for town support of your local community arts center. Please consider supporting us with your vote.

VAULT brings tourists and locals to downtown Springfield to shop for handmade goods and fine art from more than 125 Vermont artists. We host four open wall shows per year for community members to display their artwork. We hold workshops, teach animation in Springfield's elementary schools, collaborate with the Springfield Town Library, provide learning opportunities for Springfield High School students, and hold artist demonstrations during Vermont Open Stu-

dio weekends. We host artist receptions, such as for the current Bradley Jackson show, and events, such as the recent Chocolate Hearts and Student Arts, which highlighted artwork of students from the Springfield schools.

Although we have been awarded the distinction of being a Vermont State Craft Center, we receive no money from the state. With the help of part-time staff and many volunteers, we operate on revenue from sales, memberships, donations, fundraisers, grants, and workshop income. The revenue from these sources varies each year; having town support would help us to maintain a more consistent funding stream, and even allow us to consider new opportunities.

We believe that Gallery at the VAULT is a strong contributor to Springfield's downtown, and helps to put Springfield on the map. Try Googling, "What is Springfield, Vt., known for?" and you will see that VAULT is recognized as a town attraction. Read our Google reviews, and you will see five-star reviews from far and wide.

Please vote "yes" if you wish to support the arts on Springfield's Main Street.

Sincerely,
Gallery at the VAULT Board Members
Joanna Bombadil, Chair
Melissa Post, Secretary
Cynthia Porter, Treasurer
Pat Belknap
Bridget Stone
Melody Reed
Vanessa Rebertisch

Dear Editor,

I am extremely disappointed in the two Windsor County senators, Becca White and Alison Clarkson, who sit on the Government Operations Committee. After admitting they received "a lot" of emails from constituents asking them to add a voter ID requirement to an elections bill, S.298, both flatly rejected their constituents' requests, and refused to even consider the policy.

White snarkily said, "I'm

not doin' that," despite a Pew poll that showed 83% of Americans support requiring voters to show a photo ID when voting, and another Gallup poll showing 84% support the policy, both polls showing landslide majorities across party lines. As a CNN reporter commented when reporting these numbers, "It's not controversial." It's just common sense.

White and Clarkson wouldn't discuss voter ID,

but they were willing to consider allowing out-of-state criminals, like the drug dealers coming into Vermont from Massachusetts, New York, and other places, who are caught, convicted, and imprisoned in Vermont to vote in Vermont, just like we allow out-of-state college students to vote here if they so choose.

I can't imagine two more out-of-touch people who are not listening to their constituents, and clearly not representing the best interests of their communities.

Sincerely,
Stu Lindberg
Cavendish, Vt.



@VermontJournal

obituaries

Martha Damone, 1935-2026

LUDLOW, Vt. – Martha Damone, of Ludlow, passed away peacefully on Feb. 16, 2026, at the age of 90, with her family by her side. She was born on Feb. 21, 1935, in Oyster Bay, N.Y., the daughter of John and Antoinette Clegg.

At just 18 years old, Martha married the love of her life, James “Jim” Damone, on Oct. 11, 1953. Together they built a life centered on family, hard work, and adventure. For most of their marriage, they worked in the food service industry across New York, California, Florida, New Hampshire, and Vermont, ultimately settling in Ludlow, in the early 1970s, while raising their seven children.

Martha and Jim thrived on new challenges and enjoyed many successful and fulfilling ventures. Beyond their restaurants, they became involved in real estate and home restoration, with Martha proudly leading the construction projects and crew. They also supported their longtime business partner and good friend Richard Gagnard in his boxing endeavors.

Martha’s adventurous spirit extended to every part of life – she even embraced Jim’s dream of owning a racehorse. While Jim was widely known as “Diamond Jim,” those who knew them agreed that Martha was the true sparkle, admired for her unforgettable style, beauty, warmth, and even the couple’s legendary ability to “cut a rug.”

After Jim’s passing in 1999, Martha remained active and joyful, filling her days with work, golf, a glass of white wine, and cherished time with family and friends. She was known af-



Martha Damone, 1935-2026.
PHOTO PROVIDED

fectionately as “The Hostess with the Mostess,” a title she embodied throughout her life. Following a stroke in 2014, she remained positive and resilient, lovingly cared for by her family – especially her daughter Patty, with whom she lived until her recent hospitalization and final stay at the Gill Home.

Martha is survived by her brother John Clegg and his wife Elnora; her sister Leona Houghton; her brother-in-law Pete Damone and his wife Dot; and her seven children Tina Danyew, Susan Balch, Patty Damone, Gina Bailey, Jamie Josselyn, James Damone, and Phil Damone, along with their spouses. She also leaves behind 15 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren, and many beloved nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life will be held at DJ’s Restaurant, on March 1, from 12-3 p.m. Friends and family are warmly invited to gather and share stories, laughter, and memories, to celebrate a woman whose love, strength, and spirit touched so many lives.

To view Martha’s online tribute, send a message of condolences to the family, or for more information, visit www.phaneuf.net.

Laurie J. Jackson, 1975-2026

CHESTER, Vt. – On Saturday, Jan. 31, 2026, Laurie Jean Jackson passed away, at the age of 50. Laurie was born on June 19, 1975, in Chester, Vt., to Frank and Carol (Brooks) Balch.

Laurie had a variety of different skill sets and jobs where she left an impact on those around her, from driving a bus and being a cashier, to being a member services representative at One Credit Union’s Chester branch. Laurie was a beloved and avid member of her community, bringing light and her energetic personality to those with whom she worked, and who had the pleasure of knowing her. Along with Laurie’s dedication to helping those in her community through both her work and volunteering, she was a devoted mother, partner, and friend.

Laurie was predeceased by her husband Ronald Jackson in 2020, with whom she had two daughters. Lau-

rie is survived and will be remembered by her father Frank, mother Carol, her two daughters Rose and Pearl Jackson, and the many friends and community members who got to know her.

There will be a Celebration of Life held at the Ludlow American Legion on Saturday, March 7, from 1-4 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Springfield Humane Society or your local animal shelter.

Ernest C. Lamphere, 1936-2026



SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Ernest C. “Puggy” Lamphere, 89, died on Sunday, Feb. 15, 2026. He was born on Aug. 25, 1936, in Springfield, Vt., the son of Hyland R. and Bernice I. (Olney) Lamphere. He attended the North Springfield School, and graduated from Springfield High School, Class of 1954. In 1953, he joined the Army Reserve, serving a total of 26 years.

On June 8, 1975, He married Hallie L. Robbins.

In 1969, he was appointed as a full-time firefighter for the Town of Springfield, the beginning of a 40-plus-year career that spanned the positions of lieutenant, deputy chief, and chief, retiring in 2006.

Puggy was a certified football, softball, and basketball official, and served as an official in the Shrine Game. He also served as justice of the peace, and officiated more than 600 weddings.

He was a longtime member and elder of the Spring-



Ernest Lamphere, 1936-2026.
PHOTO PROVIDED

field Church of Christ.

He is survived by his wife Hallie; two sons Phillip Lamphere (Rosalyn) and Tracy Lamphere (Donna); half siblings Bradley Morgan and Denise Smith; seven grandchildren; and several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He was predeceased by his parents; sister Marjorie Bartley; brothers Ervin, Francis, and Dean; and daughter Shari Lamphere.

A funeral service will be held on Saturday, Feb. 28, at 2 p.m., at the Springfield Church of Christ.

Wendy L. Moss, 2026

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Wendy L. (Norton) Moss, a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and friend, passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family, at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, N.H., on Friday, Feb. 6, 2026.

She is survived by her loving husband of 30 years Bernie, of Bellows Falls, Vt.; her son Joe LeClair (Becky Barrett), of East Alstead, N.H.; stepdaughter Alison Kemp (Wade), of North Walpole, N.H.; mother Jeannette Whelan, of Westminster, Vt.; brothers Jaime and Justin Norton; the mother of her grandsons Megan Zehr, of Keene, N.H.; and Taylor Franklin, of Guilford, Vt., who she thought of as a bonus daughter.

She was predeceased by her father Lenny Norton, her grandparents Winnie “Bah” and Pearl Allbee, and her stepfather John Whelan.

One of the biggest joys of her life was becoming a grandmother, and her grandchildren held a special place in her heart. Her grandchildren include Bentley, Peyton, Charlotte, Noah, Gracie, Maeve, Forrest,



Wendy Moss, 2026.
PHOTO PROVIDED

Ezra, Jackson, and Lillie.

Wendy enjoyed writing, spending time on the Maine seashore (Wells in particular), eating seafood (especially lobster), and sitting watching the waves. Wendy was an extremely compassionate person, and was always putting others first. She was a cat person, and loved her cats Molly, Gray, and Ash.

Wendy was a proud employee of Cota & Cota, and had just celebrated her 20th anniversary with the company this past summer.

Calling hours were held Saturday, Feb. 21, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., at Fenton and Hennessey Funeral Home, 55 Westminster Street, Bellows Falls, Vt. A graveside service will be held in Townsend, Vt., in the spring.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Fenton and Hennessey Funeral Home.

Judith Benway Mills, 1951-2026

CHESTER, Vt. – Judith Benway Mills, 74, a resident of Ninety Six, S.C., and devoted wife of Norman Mills, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026, at her home.

Born on Sept. 5, 1951, in Springfield, Vt., she was the oldest daughter of Bertha Wheatley Benway and the late Ernest Benway, of Chester, Vt. Judi was a 1969 graduate of Chester High School, and later received her associate’s degree in early childhood education. She began her career in banking at Vermont National Bank in Brattleboro, Vt., and eventually retired from Brattleboro Savings and Loan as a mortgage originator. She was a beloved member of the Brattleboro community, making many friends and connections through her banking career and her active participation at Saint Michael’s Catholic Church, especially as a member of the folk group. After meeting the love of her life, Judi and her husband relocated to Keene, N.H., where she was an active member of the choir at Saint Bernard Catholic Church. After retirement, Judi and her husband relocated to Greenwood, S.C., and enjoyed meeting many friendly neighbors and building their dream home with a beautiful view of Lake Greenwood.

Judi was devoted to helping others, serving as a hospice volunteer in New Hampshire, and later working at the hospice of the Piedmont Resale Store. She was a voracious reader, and enjoyed keeping her brain sharp with puzzles and games. She was also a talented singer and pianist, and loved sharing those gifts with her family.

Judi was known for her generous spirit, and delighted in being a caretaker. She always said that being a mother and grandmother was her greatest joy in life. As the oldest of the four Benway siblings, Judi was the glue of the family, tak-



Judith Mills, 1951-2026.
PHOTO PROVIDED

ing the lead in lovingly caring for their parents as they aged. She was the touchstone for friends and family who needed advice or a listening ear. Her family will forever miss her unique ability to bring comfort with just a few words.

Surviving, in addition to her husband of 33 years, are two daughters Amber Taylor, of Greenwood, S.C., and Bethany Schneider (Eddie), of Apex, N.C.; a sister Cindy Kehoe (Bob), of Windham, Vt.; two brothers Jeff Benway, of Goffstown, N.H., and Stuart Benway, of Chester, Vt.; four grandchildren Olivia Schaffer (Andrew), of Greenwood, S.C., Charlotte Taylor, of Denver, Colo., and Harrison and Bennett Schneider, both of Apex, N.C.; one great-grandson Callen Schaffer; and her aunt-in-law and friend Joy Stevenson, of Greenwood, S.C.; along with several beloved nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Memorials may be made to Care of the Piedmont Hospice & Palliative.

Blyth Funeral Home & Cremation Services is assisting the family with her cremation, according to her wishes.

Her family will hold a casual open house celebrating Judi’s life on Saturday, Feb. 21, from 2-4 p.m., at the Mills Residence, 126 Mitchum Drive, Ninety Six, S.C.

Judi’s ashes will be laid to rest this spring at the Benway family plot in Chester, Vt. Further details will follow at a later date.

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Claremont, NH

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Londonderry, VT

obituaries/calendar LEGALS

Douglas E. Lund, 1959-2026

WESTMINSTER, Vt. – Douglas Edward Lund, 66, of Westminister, Vt., passed away on Feb. 11, 2026, surrounded by loved ones.

Born on March 27, 1959, Douglas was the son of Bela and Isabel Lund. He often joked, "I was born so big, I drove my mom home from the hospital," a line that perfectly captured his humor and larger-than-life personality.

Douglas lived a life full of laughter, connection, and love for those closest to him.

He truly cherished his family and friends. His presence was something you always felt – often before you even saw him. When Douglas was around, you were sure to hear him first, usually sharing a story or bringing a smile to everyone nearby. His booming voice, storytelling spirit, sense of humor, and warm heart made him unforgettable. He'll also be remembered for being a talented carpenter and mason.

He worked as a mason with his good friend Jim

Saunders, and their work can be seen in various locations around the Vermont area.

Douglas is survived by his wife Sherri, his son Israel, his daughter-in-law Olivia, and his one and only grandson Renzo, of New York City.

He is also survived by his brother Mark Lund and wife Janice; his sister Beverly De-Camp and husband David, all of Westminister, Vt.; and his brother Bradley Lund and wife Lorrie, of Hermiton, Ore.

Douglas was preceded in death by his parents Bela and Isabel Lund, and his sisters Anne Marie and Mary Beth.

Douglas will be remembered for his big heart, lively spirit, fantastic stories, joking nature, and the genuine way he connected with people.



Douglas Lund, 1959-2026.
PHOTO PROVIDED

He leaves behind countless memories filled with laughter, love, and stories that will be shared for years to come.

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

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

FEB. 28 –
GRAFTON, Vt. – The Grafton Historical Society will host a Sugar on Snow Supper on Saturday, Feb. 28, at the Grafton Chapel, 4 Main Street, Grafton, Vt. Seatings will be at both 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Tickets for children ages 6-12 are discounted, and 5 and under are free. Please make reservations by calling 802-843-2584. The menu will be ham, baked beans, scalloped potatoes, coleslaw, homemade rolls with sugar on snow, and doughnuts and pickles for dessert.

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield United Methodist Church, 10 Valley Street, is having a soup and bake sale during the farmers market on Saturday, Feb. 28, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

MARCH 1 –
PERKINSVILLE, Vt. – Pat Daddona will be playing a live concert on Sunday, March 1, from 4-5 p.m., at the Perkinsville Community Church, 35 Church Street. If you would like to be on the email list for these events, please email churchperkinsville@gmail.com.

MARCH 7 –
LUDLOW, Vt. – Join The Boot Pro on Saturday, March 7, from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., at Solitude on Okemo, for our next free on-snow ski demonstration of the season. Test the latest men's and women's skis from top brands, meet manufacturer representatives, and find your perfect match before models and sizes sell out. The event begins at Village Run Trail, on the skier's right when approaching Solitude Day Lodge. Registration and a credit card deposit are required. Preregister at www.bit.ly/3Ziu1za. Sponsored by The Boot Pro and Mary W. Davis Realtor & Associates.

MARCH 10 –
N. SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Join the Springfield Area Parent Child Center (SAPCC) on Monday, March 16, from 5:30-8:30 p.m., at the SAPCC Workforce Development & Training Center, 51 Jack and Jill Lane, for a comprehensive CPR training session designed to empower you

with the knowledge and hands-on skills to respond effectively in life-threatening situations. Register before March 9 at www.tinyurl.com/SAPCCPR. An email from Sales Force at American Red Cross will be received by March 10 with the online portion of the class. The online portion must be completed prior to the in-person class. For more information, contact arielr@sapcc-vt.org or 802-886-5242.

MARCH 18 –
BElLOWS FALLS, Vt. – On March 18, Springfield Area Parent Child Center's (SAPCC) Tienna's Closet, a free community clothing closet, will be serving the Bellows Falls community at Parks Place Community Resource Center, 44 School Street Extension, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Tienna's Closet will offer a selection of clothing in various sizes, including jackets and shoes, available free of charge. We will also have a small selection of hygiene products, diapers, formula, and children's books, also free. Come see SAPCC in the Bellows Falls community and learn about the concrete support they offer. For more information, contact krista.wilson@sapcc-vt.org or 802-886-5242.

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Songsters will perform a concert at the Springfield Senior Center, 139 Main Street, at 1 p.m. For more information, please contact executive director Lori Johnson at 802-885-3933 or lorijohnsonssc@gmail.com.

SUNDAYS –
PERKINSVILLE, Vt. – The Perkinsville Community Church, 35 Church Street in Perkinsville, Vt., will be hosting live music every first Sunday, from 4-5:30 p.m. This is a free event, but donations will be accepted each month to go towards local charities. Please keep an eye out for upcoming shows, they will be posted each month on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/PerkinsvilleChurch. Any questions, or to be added to our mailing list, please send an email to churchperkinsville@gmail.com.

ACT 250 NOTICE APPLICATION 2W1391 AND HEARING 10 V.S.A. §§ 6000 - 6111

Application 2W1391 from Haran Lane Properties (Attn: June Lupiani 1624 Townshend Rd, Grafton, VT; Attn: Todd Haran 7289 Woolston Road, Bloomfield, NY; and Attn: Paul Haran 13 Potter Land, Port Henry, NY) was received on January 22, 2025, and deemed complete on December 5, 2025. The project is generally described as the construction of eight (8) campsites and related infrastructure (septic system, 2 stall bathroom, 2 stall shower facility, and communal "kitchen" area). More specifically, the project is proposed in two phases. Phase 1 consists of establishing eight (8) tent campsites, and Phase 2 consists of replacing three (3) of the tent campsites with cottages. This application considers the following work associated with the project as "after-the-fact," as it has already been completed/constructed: removal of trees, undergrowth vegetation, and structures; construction of four (4) wood platform decks; installation of portable shower/bathroom infrastructure; construction of septic system and leach field; and installation of underground electrical lines. The project is located at 221 Dug Road in Grafton, Vermont.

The District 2 Environmental Commission will hold a site visit on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 9:00 AM and a public hearing on the application following the site visit on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 10:30 AM. This hearing will be conducted both in-person and via Microsoft Teams video conferencing software (Teams). To access the Teams meeting, click on the following link, or enter the meeting ID and passcode by clicking on the button in the upper right corner of your Teams calendar window that says "# Join with an ID."

- Teams Meeting Link: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/21351764075043?p=klcv6lswkC3ZPrFICN>
- Meeting ID: 213 517 640 750 43
- Passcode: HD6vt9pN

The public hearing will be held at 117 Main Street, Grafton, Vermont (Grafton Town Hall).

If you are unable to participate in person or by using Teams, you may still call in to the hearing:

- Dial: 802-828-7667
- Enter Conference ID: 734 525 689#
- To raise hand: Press *5
- To mute and un-mute: Press *6

The application may be viewed on the Land Use Review Board's website (<https://act250.vermont.gov>) by clicking "Act 250 Database" and entering the project number "2W1391." To request party status, fill out the Party Status Petition Form on the Board's website: <https://act250.vermont.gov/documents/party-status-petition-form>, and email it to the District 2 Office at: Quin.Mann@vermont.gov and Act250.Springfield@vermont.gov.

If you have a disability for which you need accommodation in order to participate in this process (including participating in the public hearing), please notify us as soon as possible, in order to allow us as much time as possible to accommodate your needs. For more information, contact Quin Mann, District Coordinator before the hearing date at the email address or telephone number below.

Dated February 18, 2026

By: 
Quin Mann
District Coordinator
100 Mineral Street, Suite # 305
Springfield, VT 05156-3168
802-661-8041
Quin.Mann@vermont.gov

TOWN OF LONDONDERRY

The Town of Londonderry seeks a self-motivated, detail-oriented person for the position of Parks Maintenance employee for seasonal maintenance of Londonderry's various parks between the months of April and October, weather permitting.

Work involves significant physical labor, use and maintenance of tools, and maintaining a valid driver's license.

Maintenance tasks include but are not limited to: Lawn mowing, weed whacking, landscaping, trash pick-up and removal, picnic table upkeep, dog park facility maintenance, water testing at Memorial Park, checking on porta potty conditions, park trail maintenance, playground repair, woodchip raking, sports facility repairs, maintenance of park signage, tree trimming, picnic pavilion clean up, spring clean-up, fall clean-up, garden maintenance and assisting the MT Rec director as requested.

Salary: \$20-\$30/hour depending on experience.

To apply, please visit the Employment page on the Town of Londonderry's website: <https://www.londonderryvt.gov/> employment and fill out an employment application. The application can be email to Aileen Tulloch at townadmin@londonderryvt.org or mailed to

Aileen Tulloch
Town Administrator
100 Old School Street
South Londonderry, VT 05155

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION
WINDSOR UNIT DOCKET NO. 26-PR-00336

IN RE THE ESTATE OF: DARLENE M. SANDERS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
TO THE CREDITORS OF: DARLENE M. SANDERS, late
of, NORTH SPRINGFIELD, VERMONT.

I have been appointed to Administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within 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 within the four (4) month period.

Dated: 02/19/2022

Signed: /s/ Ellie Gebarowski-Shafer, Administrator

Address: Gfeller Laurie, LLP
110 Merchants Row, Ste 3
Rutland, VT 05701
eshafer@gllawgroup.com

Name of Publication: Vermont Journal
Publication Date: February 25, 2026

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

Andover, VT

Request for Bids (RFB) 12' x 8' Precast Box Culvert

The Town of Andover is accepting bids from contractors to replace a culvert on Davis Road with a precast box culvert. The Request for Bids (RFB) and plans may be obtained from Everett Hammond (engineer) at (802)-376-0042 or hammondeng@gmail.com. A non-mandatory pre-bid meeting will be held at the Andover Town Hall at 10:00 am on March 2, 2026. Bids are due to the Andover town office by 2:00 pm on March 19, 2026.

LEGAL NOTICES

classifieds

LMHUUSD School Board Has an Immediate Opening

The Ludlow-Mount Holly Unified Union School District (LMHUUSD) seeks one Ludlow and one Mount Holly Town resident interested in serving as a member of our local school board. The term of this position will be until Town Meeting Election Day held on Tuesday, March 2nd, 2027. The Board meets regularly, the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. and others as necessary. Members may fulfill additional responsibilities such as serving on board committees.

Please submit a letter of interest to:
LMHUUSD Board
c/o Layne Millington
609 VT Route 103 South
Ludlow, Vermont 05149
layne.millington@trsu.org

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.

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email ezdump.bl@gmail.com.

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GRAFTON, Vt. - Log-length

cordwood wanted, 3 cords total, delivered/dropped at my property in Grafton. Please call/text 802-289-4121 with price and availability.

TOWN OF CHESTER WARNING NOTICE OF TOWN MEETING

The Legal Voters of the TOWN OF CHESTER are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Chester Town Hall, Second Floor in said Town of Chester on Monday, March 2, 2026, at 6:00 pm., to act on the following Articles. Voting on Article 1, 2, and 3 will be by Australian ballot on March 3, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Chester Town Hall Second Floor.

ARTICLE 1: To elect Town Officials for the ensuing year as provided by the Public Laws of Vermont. Voting by Australian Ballot.

ARTICLE 2: Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Chester in an amount not to exceed Four Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$430,000), subject to reduction from the receipt of available state and federal grants-in-aid, be issued for the purpose of financing the construction of upgrades to the existing sidewalks at an estimated cost of \$1,800,000. These funds will provide the required 20% match for an awarded Bicycle & Pedestrian Grant. Voting by Australian Ballot.

ARTICLE 3: Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Chester in an amount not to exceed Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000), subject to reduction from the receipt of available state and federal grants-in-aid, be issued for the purpose of paving Flamstead Road, River Street, Library parking lot and patching Depot Street at an estimated cost of \$300,000?

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town of Chester will vote to approve borrowing for the purchase of a police cruiser for the Police Department in an amount not to exceed \$70,000. This equipment is replacing existing equipment at the end of useful life and is not an addition to the town inventory.

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town of Chester will vote to approve borrowing One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to fund the town's grant match for Route 35 construction and the town's match on Thompson Road easement purchase and preliminary design.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise \$4,461,054.94 to be paid to the Chester Town Treasurer on September 15, 2026, to pay current expenses and any part of the Town's indebtedness.

ARTICLE 7: Shall the voters establish a 1% Local Options Tax on the sale of Rooms, Meals and Consumed Alcohol for a period of 10 years. Revenue from the Local Options Tax will be used to fund the Housing Reserve Fund which is used to support the production of housing and increase opportunities for families and individuals to access affordable homes in Chester.

ARTICLE 8: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of THIRTEEN THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND SEVEN DOLLARS (\$13,807) to help support the home health, maternal and child health, and hospice care provided in patients' homes and in community settings by the Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice of VT and NH, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 9: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of THREE THOUSAND AND FORTY FOUR DOLLARS (\$3,044) to help support outpatient, mental health and substance abuse services by the staff of Health Care and Rehabilitation Services, Inc, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 10: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of THREE THOUSAND FORTY DOLLARS (\$3,040) to Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) to assist Chester in responding to the emergency needs of the community and providing all available and applicable services to families and individuals in need, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 11: Shall the Town of Chester appropriate the sum of NINE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$900) to the Women's Freedom Center for general budget support to provide services to women and their children who are experiencing emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse and are residents of the Town, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 12: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of \$2,400 to Senior Solutions, the nonprofit Area Agency on Aging serving southeastern Vermont, to serve older Vermonters and younger disabled Vermonters with nutrition and wellness programs, application assistance for state and federal benefit programs, Medicare enrollment guidance, long term care Medicaid program care coordination, Volunteer Visitor programs, and more, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 13: Shall the Town of Chester appropriate the sum of \$2,250 (two thousand two hundred fifty dollars) for the support of the MOOver Rockingham to provide transit services to the residents of the Town of Chester, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 14: Shall the Town of Chester appropriate the sum of \$800 (eight hundred dollars) to support Windsor County Mentors, for youth mentoring services provided to children in Windsor County, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 15: Shall the Town of Chester appropriate the sum of \$400 (four hundred dollars) to Green Mountain RSVP & Volunteer Center of Windsor County to develop opportunities for people age 55 and older to positively impact the quality of life in the community of Chester through volunteer service, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 16: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$1,800.00) toward the support of the Community Cares Network of Chester and Andover, Inc. a non-profit organization which provides services to senior citizens, helping them to stay in their homes longer safely, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 17: Shall the Town of Chester appropriate the sum of \$4,000 (four thousand dollars) to Meals on Wheels of Greater Springfield, Inc. for continued support and services to the citizens of the Town of Chester in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 2691?

ARTICLE 18: Shall the Town appropriate the sum of FIVE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED SEVENTY DOLLARS (\$5,570) to Neighborhood Connections, Inc. and Mountain Town Connector to cover the cost of providing services in Chester in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691?

ARTICLE 19: Shall the town appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to the Black River Area Community Coalition for continuing to work within the Chester community preventing youth substance/alcohol misuse in accordance with 24 V.S.A. 2691?

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town of Chester will appropriate the sum of THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$3,000) to assist in the services of the Chester-Andover Family Center for individuals and families in need, in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §2691.

Dated at Chester, Vermont on this 21st day of January 2026.

/s/ Lee Gustafson, Chairman
/s/ Arne Jonynas
/s/ Tim Roper
/s/ Peter Hudkins
/s/ Arianna Knapp

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT

Unit

PROBATE DIVISION

Docket No.:

In re ESTATE of:

B. Laura Caravatt

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of:

B. Laura Caravatt

late of

Ludlow, VT

Decedent
Decedent's Town of Residence

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

Dated:

2/18/26

Signature of Fiduciary

Cynthia Holden

Executor/Administrator		Mailing Address	
Cynthia Holden		577 Dawson Hill Rd	
Phone Number	Email	City, State, Zip	
203-266-9507	Cyndie Holden@gmail.com	E. Wallingford, VT 05742	

Name of Publication:

Vermont Journal

Publication Date:

February 25, 2026

Name of Probate Court:

Windsor

Address of Probate Court:

12 The Green
Woodstock, VT 05291

Town and Village of Ludlow Public Hearing #2 Notice

Proposed Plan of Merger of the Town and Village of Ludlow, Vermont
Thursday February 26th, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. (Town of Ludlow)
Tuesday March 3rd, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. (Village of Ludlow)
Hybrid Meetings - Heald Auditorium/Zoom (February 26th, 2026)
Howard Barton Jr. Conference Room (March 3rd, 2026)

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §1484, notice is hereby given of a public hearing by the Town of Ludlow's Board of Selectman and Village Trustees to hear comments regarding a proposed plan of merger of the Town and Village of Ludlow, Vermont. Approval of the plan will result in charter changes in both the Town and Village.

The public hearings will take place on Thursday, February 26th for the Town of Ludlow and Tuesday, March 3rd for the Village of Ludlow. Meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. You may attend the Public Hearings in-person at the following location/address:

Ludlow Town Hall
37 Depot Street
Ludlow, VT 05149

Or virtually on Zoom using the following links or Meeting IDs/Passcode:

[Select Board Public Hearing #2 - Proposed Merger Plan](#)
Meeting ID# 996 3488 0881 Passcode: 167183

[Village Trustees Public Hearing #2 - Proposed Merger Plan](#)
Meeting ID# 995 7692 3564 Passcode: 538920

Purpose of the Hearings: The purpose of each hearing is to take public comments regarding the proposed Plan of Merger of the Town and Village of Ludlow. Written comments may also be submitted, via email, to Ludlow's Town/Village Manager, Penny K. Wu. Her email address is: pwu@ludlow.vt.us

Summary of the Plan of Merger for the Town and Village of Ludlow and Charter Changes: The Plan of Merger ("Plan") proposes that the Village of Ludlow merge into the Town of Ludlow, with the Town of Ludlow as the sole surviving municipal corporation. It establishes the name of the Town (Ludlow) and declares that all the former Village property, including that associated with the Electric Light Department and Sewer Plant, are transferred to the Town. The Town will assume all the former Village's debts and will perform all the former Village's duties and obligations owed to third parties. The Plan repeals the charters of both the Town and the Village and replaces them with the substance of the Plan as the charter for the Town. The Plan names the officers of the Town and their manner of election or appointment, the form of governance, the powers of the Selectboard, the establishment and organization of the Water and Sewer Board, the governance and operation of the Electric Department and authority of its Board, transitional provisions, and other matters related to the proposed merger and legal operation of the Town thereafter.

Materials Available: The proposed plan of merger and resulting charter changes, and supporting documentation are available on our online website, <https://www.ludlow.vt.us>. An official copy of the plan of merger and charter changes is on file for public inspection in the Town Clerk's office in the Ludlow Town Hall located at 37 Depot Street, Ludlow, VT 05149. Copies thereof will be made available to members of the public upon request.

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Beginner Pysanky with Shannon Wallis 3/14 1-4:30
Watercolor Skills with Kim Eng Yeo 3/21 & 28 10-12
Dot Mandala Workshop with Antje Ruppert 3/28 2-4 p.m.
Turkish Map Fold Book with Deborah Stuart 4/18 11:30-1:30
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