

THE MESSAGE OF THE WEEK

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Fall Mountain voters reject Walpole and Langdon withdrawal from district

BY PAULA BENSON
The Message

WALPOLE, N.H. – The voters of Acworth, Alstead, Charlestown, Langdon, and Walpole overwhelmingly rejected the proposed withdrawal of Langdon and Walpole from the Fall Mountain Regional School District.

More than 75% of voters across the five towns denied the withdrawal request, and even voters in the towns of Walpole and Langdon disapproved the article.

Article 1, appropriating \$37,773,729 in funds to cover the district's operating budget, was rejected by a vote of 1,377 to 1,083. The article's defeat means the budget will default to last year's amount of \$37,218,637, with certain adjustments as required by law, or by previous action by the school district. Alternatively, the district may hold a special meeting to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Article 2, pertaining to the collective bargaining agreement reached between the school board and the Fall Mountain Educational Teacher Association, was similarly defeated. Propos-



Fall Mountain voters reject Walpole and Langdon withdrawal from district. PHOTO PROVIDED

and Walpole voters approved the appropriation of funds for capital improvement projects at the Vilas Middle School, the Charlestown Primary School, and the Walpole Elementary School, respectively.

Voters in all five towns approved repurposing funds from the existing health care insurance capital reserve fund to the Fall Mountain Regional High School Paving and Access Road Project fund, proposed by Article 8.

Contingent on the passage of Article 8, Article 9 approved raising and appropriating the sum of up to \$1,350,000 to pave the high school access road and parking lot, with \$750,000 to be withdrawn from the paving fund, and \$600,000 from the high school capital reserve fund.

Additionally, a majority of voters authorized the appropriation of \$100,700 to resurface the Fall Mountain Regional High School track.

ing increases in wages and benefits through 2029, the article was nixed by a vote of 1,305 to 1,187.

Voters approved limits on open enrollment by passing Article 12, which proposed adopting an interdistrict open enrollment school program.

Article 12 will allow the district to admit up to one nonresident student to Fall Mountain Regional High School, and to limit the number of resident pupils in preschool through grade 12 permitted to attend open enrollment schools located outside of the district to 0% of the district's total enrollment.

Alstead, Charlestown,

Claremont City Council looks at building repairs

BY ANNE DEMPSEY
The Message

CLAREMONT, N.H. – The Claremont City Council meeting of March 11 opened with Mayor Dale Gerard stating that the Claremont Savings Bank Community Center is working on its eighth annual scholarship golf tournament, which will take place on Wednesday, May 20. The tournament is looking for sponsorships as well as volunteers. More information is available on the Claremont Parks and Recreation Facebook page.

City Manager Nancy Bates reported on a number of topics. She explained that Celebrate Claremont activities are scheduled for July 3, from 1-5 p.m. This will lead up to the fireworks at Monadnock Park. There will be a small family event on Saturday morning, July 4, as well. The city is looking for volunteers and businesses to participate. More information will be posted in the city newsletter and on the city website.

Bates also reviewed the preliminary draft report from the engineers on the



City of Claremont. PHOTO PROVIDED

visitors center. There is no structural damage due to settling, but there is significant damage to the brickwork. They will be speaking to the council about these issues, although they gave reassurance that the building is safe.

The council voted to approve various appointments. Zachary Haines was appointed to Seat 4 on the Claremont Community Television board. Greg Adams was appointed to Seat 4 of the steering committee for the EPA multiple purpose grant. Annette Daines was appointed to Seat 4 of the Fiske Free Library board of directors. Gary Dicker-

son was appointed to Seat 3, Tina Bergeron to Seat 4 at large, Ken Burke to Seat 5, and Heather Irish to Seat 7 on the parks and recreation board.

David Derrig, a representative from infrastructure consulting firm AECOM, gave a presentation on a safety action plan for Claremont. AECOM has collected data about crash frequency and crash severity across the State of New Hampshire. Derrig reported that 37% of the total crashes in Sullivan County occurred in Claremont, as well as 28% of the total crashes involving injuries. The data

See **CITY** on Page 2

Julie's Icare named best optician in Claremont for 2026

CLAREMONT, N.H. – Julie's Icare was recently recognized as the Best of 2026 Claremont Award winner in the optician category, an honor based on verified data from Google reviews, as analyzed and certified by BusinessRate. This is the second year Julie's Icare has been named best optician in Claremont.

BusinessRate provides intelligent ranking solutions and comprehensive review management services to help local businesses thrive in competitive markets

through data-driven insights and proven strategies. This recognition is part of the BusinessRate Best of 2026 Awards, which identify local leaders in customer satisfaction, brand reputation, and service excellence.

Julie's Icare's BusinessRate score is a complete performance metric that combines all factors with a simple, easy-to-understand score. This comprehensive rating shows how Julie's Icare ranks against local competitors.

Julie Richardson, optician and owner of Julie's

Icare, earned her optician license in 1989, and opened her practice in 2014. Richardson is a specialized eye care professional, who fits and dispenses eyeglasses and contact lenses based on prescriptions from your ophthalmologist or optometrist. You can make an appointment with Julie's Icare by calling 603-543-3216.

Congratulations on this outstanding achievement, earned not by application or nomination, but by the authentic feedback of her local customers and clients.

Claremont School District approves budget, restricts open enrollment

BY PAULA BENSON
The Message

CLAREMONT, N.H. – Twenty-eight percent of registered voters in the Claremont School District (SAU6) cast their ballots on Tuesday, March 10, voting on eight articles.

Article 8 asked voters to consider a citizen-petitioned budget spending cap. Initiated as a measure to provide financial oversight, the article was not endorsed by the school board and was rejected by voters by a count of 1,345 to 560.

Voters strongly supported Article 2, the proposed main budget of \$42.9 million, which represented an "align model" that resulted in a reduction of \$200,000 over the current spending model.

Voters also gave the district an enthusiastic

thumbs-up to the sale of the Bluff Elementary and 40 Maple Avenue properties.

A restrictive open enrollment policy was adopted by a vote of 1,255 to 622, which will put a cap on how many students from outside the district may attend Claremont schools, while allowing 0% of students to leave the district, as an effort to manage costs and local control.

Article 7, referred to as a "defensive financial move" by the school district, stops the flow of Claremont tax dollars leaving the district, and limits the number of nonresident students enrolled to 10% of each school building's capacity.

Donald Lavalette and Brian Rapp were elected to the school board, and Noelle Kronberg was named school board clerk. The board's next meeting is scheduled for March 18, at

See **SCHOOL** on Page 2

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INDEX

- Arts & Entertainment 3
- Real Estate 4
- Obituaries & Opinion 5
- Legal Notices 5-7
- Calendar 6
- Classifieds 7
- Outdoor 8

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DEADLINES

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

EMAIL CALENDAR EVENTS
calendar@vermontjournal.com

EMAIL ADS AND CLASSIFIEDS
ads@vermontjournal.com

EMAIL PRESS RELEASES
editor@vermontjournal.com

Puzzle page winner

Congratulations to Mike Kohler, of Springfield, for winning our puzzle page contest drawing! Mike has selected the \$75 gift certificate to Leslie's Tavern. Look out for our next puzzle page contest in our April 8 paper for your next chance to win.

Weekly SUDOKU													King Crossword												
Answer													Answers												
8	2	9	3	4	5	6	7	1	DEW	FEATS	BOT	DEW	FEATS	BOT											
1	5	6	2	9	7	4	3	8	AAH	EMCEE	ADD	AAH	EMCEE	ADD											
3	7	4	6	8	1	2	5	9	BROAD	BAND	NON	BROAD	BAND	NON											
2	9	5	8	1	3	7	4	6	BOA	TAWDRY	BOA	TAWDRY													
7	4	8	5	6	9	1	2	3	AMBERS	SNOW	AMBERS	SNOW													
6	1	3	7	2	4	8	9	5	LOA	ASH	SKATE	LOA	ASH	SKATE											
5	3	1	4	7	8	9	6	2	URNS	YEW	EGAD	URNS	YEW	EGAD											
4	8	2	9	3	6	5	1	7	MEDIC	MIC	ORG	MEDIC	MIC	ORG											
9	6	7	1	5	2	3	8	4	WAR	SHANTY	WAR	SHANTY													
									BLITZ	YEUR	BLITZ	YEUR													
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									TNT	ENSUE	POI	TNT	ENSUE	POI											
									HEH	LAMPS	EDS	HEH	LAMPS	EDS											

Take charge of your debt, one step at a time –

REGION – If you're dealing with debt, you're far from alone. More than 80% of U.S. households carry some form of debt, according to a 2025 Federal Reserve report, and since 2019, total household debt for Americans has increased more than 31%, to \$18.59 trillion.

While debt can help you achieve important goals, such as buying a home or getting an education, it can also create strain on your life and finances. If you only make minimum payments, for example, you'll hold debt longer and pay more in interest.

Having a clear debt-reduction plan can help you take control, reduce anxiety, and even save money.

Know your debt

The first step is understanding what you owe. Make a comprehensive list of all your debts, including credit cards, mortgages, auto loans, student loans, and medical bills. For each one, note the total amount owed, the interest rate, and your minimum payment requirements.

Next, add it all up to see

your total debt load. Then calculate your debt-to-income ratio by dividing your total monthly debt payments by your gross monthly income. A good rule of thumb is to keep this ratio below 35% if you have a mortgage, or 20% if you don't.

Manage what you owe

Now that you have the big picture, look for opportunities to reorganize your debt more effectively. Perhaps you can refinance existing loans at lower interest rates, consolidate multiple debts into a single payment, or transfer high-interest credit card balances to cards that offer lower or 0% introductory rates for up to 12 months.

These strategies won't reduce the total amount you owe, but they can make your debt more manageable and potentially save you money on interest. Just watch out for fees, and make sure you understand new terms before making changes.

Set your payment target

Start by identifying your required minimum payments across all debts.

Missing these can trigger fees and penalties, and damage your credit score, so treat them as non-negotiable expenses in your budget.

Next, look at your budget to identify any funds available after covering all essential expenses. Consider how much of this surplus to put toward paying down debt versus saving for other goals. Remember that building an emergency fund and saving for retirement are also important priorities that shouldn't be sidelined.

If you have no surplus, you may need to cut back on things like eating out, clothes shopping, online subscriptions, entertainment, or expensive vacations while you bring your debt in line. Consider an additional part-time job for extra income to pay off your debt sooner.

Prioritize your debt

Finally, decide which debts to tackle first with any extra payments. One approach is to focus on paying off the debt with the highest interest rate first, which minimizes the total interest you'll pay over time. Alternatively, you can target the smallest balance first, to help you build momentum and motivation.

Taking control of your debt doesn't happen overnight, but with a clear strategy, you can make steady progress toward your financial goals.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones financial advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC.

Fiske Free Library to host author of “Everyone’s Trash,” Duncan Watson –

CLAREMONT, N.H. – On Wednesday, March 25, at 6 p.m., the Fiske Free Library in Claremont, N.H., will welcome local author Duncan Watson, who will be discussing his book “Everyone’s Trash: One Man Against 1.6 Billion Pounds.”

Watson recently retired from running the City of Keene’s solid waste pro-

gram for 33 years. During that time, Keene has gone from hand-sorting its recyclables to becoming a nationally recognized facility. In the book, Watson shares both his knowledge of waste management and his experiences with people he has met at the “dump.” Watson’s debut book also tackles the fact that Americans discard about five pounds of waste every day – result-

ing in the 1.6 billion pounds referenced in the title. With a mix of stories from his work and statistics, the book works to show the importance of recycling.

In addition to working for the City of Keene, he was a child actor and the voice of Charlie Brown in the Peanuts movies from 1975-1977; he will share his memories of that time in his life.

SCHOOL

From Page 1

the Sugar River Valley Technical Center.

In another step toward greater accountability, the Claremont School District is seeking an executive director, as opposed to a superintendent, with a stated goal “to get our district back on solid ground, working closely with the board, schools, business office, and the broader community.”

“We need someone who can roll up their sleeves and focus on fixing our very real challenges – keeping our finances in order, strengthening day-to-day operations, and building a culture where everyone is held accountable.”

The SAU6 website further states, “By bringing in an executive director, we can have a leader fully dedicated to stabilizing operations and finances, all while a qualified and licensed educational administrator continues to focus on curriculum,

teaching, and learning. Both jobs get the full attention they deserve.”

The field of applicants will be narrowed down to two finalists to be interviewed by the full school board and a building-level principal. The final candidate will be chosen by majority vote, and the position will remain “at will,” meaning the board can make a change if the person is not meeting expectations.

“We learned from past experience, and we’re building in accountability from the start.”

CITY

From Page 1

was extracted from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. AECOM has created a safety action plan for Claremont that can be referred to or drawn on for future plans. Derrig also mentioned a number of grant opportunities to create a safer Claremont.

Alex Gleason, director of the department of public works, requested ap-

proval for the completion of the final application for the wastewater treatment facility study, which the council approved. Gleason also requested approval for acceptance of a \$100,000 grant from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Sciences to assist in the funding of the wastewater treatment facility study. The council approved.

The council authorized the department of public works to enter into a four-year lease agreement for a replacement vehicle lift for the highway garage.

Gary LaClair has had a license for growing corn on approximately 20 acres of a 71-acre city-owned parcel for the last 14 years. He requested to renew this license for another two years. This parcel is east of River Road on Tax Map 152, Lot 7. The council agreed to renew.

Justin Martin, the director of parks and recreation, expressed his interest in installing a concrete walkway in the entrance to the city’s dog park. His reasons included winter maintenance, accessibility, safety, and overall usability. Funds would be taken from the dog park trust fund to pay for this project. The council approved the transfer of funds from the trust fund to cover the costs.

Martin also introduced the idea of replacing 11 pieces of cardiovascular gym equipment at the community center, using funds from the center’s noncapital reserve for fitness equipment. The council members asked for more information and more community input before they could come to a decision about this.

Bates brought up a number of problems with the Claremont Opera House, not including the atrium or the police department. Repairs that are most urgent are those related to water infiltration. She stated, “We do have a fund balance that could be used to stop rot and water infiltration from further deteriorating the building.” The council agreed that having a watertight building was important, and asked that Bates write up a resolution for next month that they could sign.

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arts & entertainment

Dot-mandala workshop at Gallery at the Vault

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Back by popular demand, Gallery at the Vault is happy to offer a fun dot-mandala Workshop with Antje Ruppert on Saturday, March 28, from 2-4 p.m.

You will use special dotting tools to create your mandala. Ruppert will introduce the tools and their application, and will provide practice sheets and a series of patterns to try out for the perfect dot placement, namely a sort of half-round, almost bead-like dot, to create a 3D feel.

Once ready, you will be provided with an 8-inch by 8-inch sheet of heavy card stock in a variety of colors, on which the center is already marked for the placement of the first dot. You will be given a strip of six small paint pots, and can choose from a variety of acrylic paints. This is a very



Aniji dot mandalas.

PHOTO PROVIDED

meditative and calming creative experience, and absolutely beginner-friendly.

Take your paint pots home for your own creations. Ruppert will explain how tools can be fabricated from things you have at home, e.g., toothpicks, cotton swabs, dowels, pencils with erasers, etc.

The cost of the workshop is discounted for gallery members. Register by

Wednesday, March 25.

Gallery at the Vault is located at 68 Main Street in Springfield, and is open Wednesday-Saturday, from 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. For more information, come into the gallery, call 802-885-7111, email galleryvault@vermontel.net, or visit www.galleryvault.org or Facebook/Instagram. Gallery at the Vault is accessible.

Singer-songwriter showcase

PUTNEY, Vt. – Next Stage Arts and Twilight Music present a singer-songwriter showcase featuring Andrea von Kampen, Early Risers (Putnam Smith and Ashley Storrow), Jake Klar, and Lizzy Mandell at Next Stage, on Friday, March 20, at 7:30 p.m.

Von Kampen is a Nebraska-born singer-songwriter known for her introspective storytelling and captivating melodies. She has shared the stage with Watchhouse, Punch Brothers, The Wood Brothers, and Anaïs Mitchell's Bonny Light Horseman; released three studio albums; and performed at the Newport Folk Festival and Rocky Mountain Folks Festival. Headlining tours across North America and Europe, her music has reached a global audience with more than 55 million Spotify

streams. In 2022, von Kampen made her acting debut in the independent film "A Chance Encounter," distributed by Samuel Goldwyn, starring and contributing to its soundtrack. This fall, she will release a protest EP addressing the resurgence of hateful rhetoric in American politics.

Early Risers combine rootsy, lyric-driven songwriting with close vocal harmonies and multi-instrumental arrangements, including banjo, guitar, mandolin, piano, and shruti-box. After pursuing solo careers, Storrow and Smith joined forces in 2015, and have toured nationwide, from Maine, to California, and Vancouver, B.C. Their debut album, "Making Life Sweet," reached No. 1 on the Folk DJ Charts, with four songs in the top 10 most-played tracks.

Klar blends rhythm, groove, grit, and honesty into a fresh Americana sound that fuses folk sincerity with rock and pop sensibilities, crafting music that connects listeners to meaningful stories and emotions.

Mandell has released two albums: "Made for Flying" (2012), which won Times Argus/Rutland Herald Tammie Awards for Best Singer-Songwriter and Best Album, and "To the Moon" (2025), created in collaboration with Vermont multi-instrumentalist Colin McCaffrey.

Next Stage is located at 15 Kimball Hill in Putney, Vt. Tickets are discounted in advance at www.nextstagearts.org. For more information, call 802-387-0102.

Vermont Comedy All Stars

PUTNEY, Vt. – Get ready for an unforgettable night of laughter as Gordon Clark and the Vermont Comedy All Stars return to Next Stage Arts for a live stand-up comedy showcase on Friday, March 27. Doors open at 6:45 p.m., with the show starting at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available discounted in advance at www.nextstagearts.org. The evening features a lineup of Vermont's finest comedic talent.

Zoe Bernstein, a local comic and proud owner of a 2014 Toyota Corolla, has shared the stage with nationally touring comedians including Ryan Hamilton and Danny Jolles.

Julia Colasanti, Midwest-born and nationally experienced, has performed at the Laugh Factory Chicago, and

opened for headliners such as Amy Miller, Jay Larson, and Yamaneika Saunders. She also produces a monthly themed comedy show at Lincoln's in Burlington.

Tracy Dolan, a Burlington-based comedian, draws humor from her romantic misadventures and parenting experiences. She has performed at the Boston Women in Comedy Festival, and NYC's She-Devil Comedy Festival, and has opened for Gary Gulman, Hari Kondabolu, and Cameron Esposito.

Mo Doukhi, originally from Lebanon and raised as a Palestinian refugee, brings a darkly humorous perspective paired with charm, having opened for national acts at the Vermont Comedy Club.

Eric Dreibratt, currently based in Brooklyn, combines his comedic and puzzling skills, having performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and hosted shows from Burlington to New Orleans.

The show is produced and hosted by Gordon Clark, director of the nonprofit Vermont Comedy All Stars, which has produced more than 100 shows across Vermont since 2020. Clark, Vermont's oldest regularly performing comedian, continues to bring laughter to audiences statewide.

Join the Vermont Comedy All-Stars for a night of wit, humor, and unforgettable stand-up at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, Putney, Vt.

Vermont poet laureate at Chester Town Hall

CHESTER, Vt. – On Saturday, March 21, at 1 p.m., Vermont Poet Laureate Bianca Stone returns to Chester Town Hall to present her "The State of Poetry" project, a traveling community-building initiative in which she will share poems written by past Vermont poet laureates that illuminate and speak to the world in which we live today. The event will underscore how poems and poets are vital to our state, connecting community members to the changing landscape, architecture, and wildlife, and to each other. At the

Chester event, Stone will focus on Vermont's first poet laureate, Robert Frost. Doors open at 12:30 p.m.

Says Stone, "I'm excited to really get deep into some of the poetry of my predecessors, and to bring really incredible poetry to people, in a room together, to really embody those poems, and speak to what happens when we do that. Every time I have a chance to read poems and talk about them with people in Vermont, something really exciting happens, and it's like an energy in the room."

Reading the poetry of the past poet laureates whom Stone's project will empha-

size, she says, "To engage with these poems does something really subtle and important to our consciousness and conscience. This is a time when we need to find voice to our complex and difficult feelings and realities. Poems are so important to our 'state,' right now, because we need to see one another, and we each need to feel seen. And we need most of all to see ourselves."

This program is offered free to the community. We ask for donations to allow Upstairs at Town Hall to continue to bring unique arts and cultural events to the beautifully restored Chester Town Hall theater.

Rising Tide performance space in Chester studio

CHESTER, Vt. – 2027 marks Barre Pinske's 20th year living and working in Chester, Vt. – and he's still finding new ways to surprise people.

Best known for his wooden bears, Pinske has built one of the more unlikely creative resumes in New England. His work has landed him on CNN Headline News three times, and in the pages of USA Today Weekend and The Boston Globe. A sculpture of his is placed in the entryway of Prince's Paisley Park Museum. During the Reagan administration, the Pentagon commissioned one of his "Bear in Eagle" pieces as a diplomatic gift to Russia during nuclear disarmament talks. All of the Aerosmith band members collect his work. In 2016, he finished in the top three out of a thousand entries in an A&E-sponsored reality competition, working with director Alex Strandling, of Fact8 in Bellows Falls. For 15 years, he produced the Big Buzz Chainsaw Carving Festival throughout the region.

His latest project is Pinske's Rising Tide, a dedicated performance space inside his 50 First Avenue studio, built around a passion for stand-up comedy, and a belief that rural Vermont deserves a real stage.

Open mics have been running since December, on alternating Saturday nights, at 8 p.m., and the response has been stronger than expected. Comics are traveling more than an hour to perform. Locals are showing up both to take the mic, and to enjoy the

show. Every performance is livestreamed and recorded to YouTube, and comics get a full 10 minutes – double what most open mics offer in larger markets, which Pinske says makes a real difference.

"Giving comics more time helps because they don't have to rush their jokes – there's actually room for people to laugh," he says. "The theater-style space and professional sound system put the focus where it belongs: on the performers."

Pinske points out that open mics have always been where comedy begins. Gilbert Gottfried's sister brought him to his

first one at 15. Dave Chapelle started as a teenager. Adam Sandler, who grew up in New Hampshire, was encouraged by his brother to try one, and the rest is history.

"The fact that we have a pro-level space in a rural area and can broadcast to the whole world is really cool," says Pinske. "Who knows – the next big talent might come right out of Chester, Vt."

All are welcome. Admission is free. Nonalcoholic drinks and snacks are served.

Upcoming dates are Saturday, March 20, and every Saturday starting in April, all at 8 p.m.

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BAKED HADDOCK DINNER

Bellows Falls American Legion, Post #37

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real estate

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2026 moving preparation checklist

REGION – If you're planning to buy a home this year, 2026 is already shaping up to be an exciting one. There's a lot to look forward to. At the same time, preparing for move-in can raise plenty of practical questions. To help make the transition smoother, here's a simple guide you can use as you get closer to closing day.

Update your address

Once you have a confirmed move-in date, it's a good time to start planning your address updates. Begin with a USPS change-of-address form timed for your move-in day, to ensure your mail follows you. From there, create a checklist of organizations to notify, including your employer, banks, credit cards, insurance providers, health care offices, loyalty programs, and any subscription services you rely on.

It's also smart to review your state's requirements for updating your driver's license and vehicle registration so you're ready to tackle

those shortly after settling in. Keeping a list in your phone makes it easier to track what's been updated, and what's still pending.

Make utility setup simple

Getting your utilities lined up before move-in will make your first few days much more comfortable. Most homes require electricity, water, gas, trash service, internet, and sometimes home security. Since providers vary depending on where you're buying, comparing options ahead of time helps avoid last-minute scrambling.

Secure the right insurance

Insurance is a key part of preparing for homeownership. Before closing, you'll choose a homeowners insurance policy that protects your property, belongings, and personal liability. Coverage varies by policy, so take time to understand what's included, and whether additional protections like flood or windstorm insurance might be appropriate for your area.

As you get closer to closing, you'll see an insurance option through Covered, a digital insurance marketplace that helps you explore and manage your coverage, built right into your loan tasks. It's there simply to save you some time if you want to compare a few choices without hunting around. You can use it, or you can go with your own agent, whatever feels easiest for you.

First-day and first-week checklist

When you walk into your new home for the first time, a few early tasks can help you feel grounded and confident: (1) change or reprogram exterior locks; (2) test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors; (3) locate the main water shut-off valve and breaker box; (4) replace HVAC filters and review the system's maintenance schedule; (5) do a quick, thorough clean before unpacking; (6) Set up essential rooms first like the kitchen, bedrooms, and bathrooms; (7) confirm local trash and recycling pickup details; (8) make a

note of any items you want to repair, update, or keep an eye on.

Once you've handled the essentials, a few simple habits can help you get off to a strong start. Setting reminders for routine home maintenance, creating or bookmarking your online mortgage account, and taking "before" photos of each room are all small but im-

portant steps. They'll help you stay organized as you make your new place feel like home.

If you're moving into a new neighborhood, introducing yourself to neighbors can also make your transition smoother and help you feel connected right away.

Looking ahead to a great year

Focus on the steps that

matter most, and let the rest unfold naturally as you settle into your new space.

If you have questions as you prepare for homeownership or need help navigating any of these steps, I'm always here to support you along the way.

Submitted by Victoria Blodgett, Prime Lending, Ludlow, Vt.

Governor's Institutes of Vermont summer programs

REGION – Vermont high school students currently in grades 9-11 are invited to apply for immersive, career-focused summer learning experiences held on Vermont college campuses. Applications are due by March 31 for the Governor's Institutes of Vermont (GIV) summer 2026 residential programs.

GIV institutes run for one to two weeks, and allow students to explore

a topic of interest through hands-on projects, expert instruction, and peer collaboration. Institute areas include arts, engineering, entrepreneurship, global issues and youth action, health and medicine, mathematical sciences, technology and design, and weather and climate science.

New in 2026, GIV is partnering with UVM to bring the health and medicine institute to Burlington, to work with their expert professors and health care professionals. Alongside learning about careers from nursing to respiratory therapy, biomedical research to dentistry, and surgery to psychology, students will have the opportunity to earn a Vermont Emergency First Responder (VEFR) certifi-

cation, which allows them to work on local ambulance crews.

Programs are designed to be accessible to all Vermont families, with sliding scale tuition allowing students to attend for low costs.

Learn more and apply at www.giv.org. The application deadline is March 31.

The Governor's Institutes of Vermont is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For 42 years, GIV has served more than 14,000 Vermont students, and each year more than 75% of them require financial assistance. Community support helps ensure that all interested Vermont students can participate, regardless of family income. To learn more about supporting GIV, visit www.giv.org/support.



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Spectacular Flowers in Watercolor w/Rob O'Brien 4/11 9:30-4
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OPINION/LEGALS

obituaries

Stanton L. Bessey, 1943-2026

JUPITER, Fla. – Stanton Lee Bessey, affectionately known to friends and family as “Skip,” passed away peacefully on Feb. 16, 2026, in Jupiter, Fla. Born on Sept. 4, 1943, in Springfield, Vt., Skip was a selfless and generous father, who will be missed dearly.

Skip enjoyed a rewarding career at Northrop Grumman, from which he retired after many years of dedicated service. In his leisure time, he found joy in restoring motorcycles, a hobby that allowed him to combine his love for mechanics with his appreciation for craftsmanship. He had a deep affection for the Southwest, its landscapes and culture holding a special place in his heart. Additionally, he was an avid fan of old Westerns, often sharing his enthusiasm for these classic films with those around him by watching them at full volume.

Skip was preceded in death by his beloved wife Janice Lee Bessey. He is survived by his loving daughter Jill Ellen Prince, her husband Jack Prince, and his devoted son Jason Matthew Bessey.



Stanton Bessey, 1943-2026. PHOTO PROVIDED

He leaves behind two cherished grandsons Jake Stanton Bessey and Luke Clai-bourn Bessey, a dear niece Noelle Renee Gariety, along with numerous friends and acquaintances who had the privilege of knowing him.

In keeping with Skip's wishes, his family will gather privately to celebrate his life. While he may no longer be with us, the memories of Skip's warmth, humor, and passion for life will remain in the hearts of those who loved him.

Skip's journey has come to an end, but his legacy lives on through the stories, laughter, and love he shared with his family and friends.

Raymond G. Thibeault Jr., 1962-2026

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Raymond George Thibeault Jr., 63, died Feb. 24, 2026, at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. He was born Sept. 21, 1962, at Alice Peck Day Hospital in Lebanon, N.H., the son of Louise Hattie (Healy) Thibeault.

Ray had a passion for painting houses, and started his own painting business in his early 20s, Ray's Painting. Ray had his business for 43 years, and traveled all over New England painting houses and churches. On Aug. 20, 1983, he married Denise White, of Springfield, Vt., and they were together for 44 years.

Ray is survived by his wife Denise White, of Springfield, Vt.; their three sons Raymond C. Thibeault, of Springfield, Vt.; Joshua D. Thibeault, of Springfield, Vt.; and Matthew J. Thibeault and his wife Melissa, of Virginia; stepson Nathan and his wife Elizabeth White, of Springfield, Vt.; two grandchildren Cayden and Andon White, of Springfield, Vt.; sisters Laura (Thibeault) Bebee



Raymond Thibeault, 1962-2026. PHOTO PROVIDED

and her husband Bob, Julie (Fadden) Day and her husband Steve, and Lottie Fadden, of Unity, N.H.; and many nieces and nephews.

Ray was the president of the Westview Tennant association in Springfield in the 90s. Ray also loved putting on the Halloween haunted house and haunted hayride for the kids in Springfield. Ray loved hunting, but really enjoyed fishing and camping at Lake Champlain. Ray was predeceased by his mother Louise (Healy) Thibeault, and a daughter who passed at birth in 1983. There will be no calling or services, as these were Ray's wishes.

Letter to the Editor: Ludlow town and village merger

Dear Editor,

I wish to thank those in Ludlow who attended our annual Town Meeting on March 2, and those who voted on March 3. Your support of fiscal year 2027 budget items is very much appreciated! Tuesday, March 24, is another big day in Ludlow, when residents can vote for the town and village “merger.”

We currently have two sets of government – village and town – which creates redundancy and inefficiencies (two budgets, two systems of payroll, two systems of payment to vendors). Merging the town and village will create a single government structure. When it

comes to utilities (i.e., water, wastewater, and electricity), only those who pay for such utilities now will continue to pay for them, even with a merger. “Yes” for the merger is government consolidation. “Yes” for the merger will create operational efficiencies with a focus on improving program delivery and enhancing services across all of Ludlow's municipal departments. I urge everyone to vote “yes” to the Ludlow Plan of Merger on March 24.

Sincerely,
Penny Wu
Ludlow Municipal Manager

Shirley Freeman, 1934-2026

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Shirley Freeman, 91, died Saturday, March 7, 2026, at the Gill Odd Fellows Home in Ludlow, Vt. She was born on Aug. 31, 1934, in Rutland, Vt., the daughter of Solan and Lottie (Whitney) Todriff.

She married Lawrence Freeman; he predeceased her in 2018.

Shirley worked as a housekeeper in private homes in the area for many years.

She enjoyed arts and crafts with her daughters, scrapbooking, quilting, sewing, knitting, and drawing. She also enjoyed playing cards

with her family.

She is survived by two sons Ricky Freeman, of Claremont, N.H., and James Freeman, of Brookfield, Vt.; son-in-law Theodore Foster, of Springfield, Vt.; six grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her husband, two daughters Betsy Foster and Marlene Freeman, and two grandchildren Danny Foster and Mandy Foster.

A graveside service will be held at a later date.

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

Robert Merriam, 1935-2026

LUDLOW, Vt. – Robert “Bob” Merriam, 90, passed away peacefully at home on March 8, 2026, after a brief fight against cancer. He was born on July 12, 1935, the son of Harold and Earline Merriam, of Bridgewater, Vt.

Following high school in Woodstock, Vt., Bob attended Wentworth Institute of Technology, and graduated in 1955 with an engineering degree. He resided in Ludlow, Vt., for more than four decades, enjoying hunting, fly fishing, hiking (completing the Long Trail end to end), gardening, and playing Double King Pead with family and friends at the family deer camp in Plymouth. He spent his working life primarily at Jones & Lamson in Springfield, Vt., as a machine tools engineer during the industry's heyday. He also had military service, being drafted into the Army Reserve in 1957, where he qualified as expert rifleman with a perfect score.

Bob married his high school sweetheart Shirley Perkins in 1956, and together had four children: Michael, Stephen, Deborah, and James. She preceded him in death in 1989.

Bob remarried in 1990 to JoAnn Thomas, and shortly thereafter they retired to

Florida for the next 15 years, where they basked in the warm weather and enjoyed the excellent fishing, and a vast expanse of friends and neighbors. Only Hurricane Ian in 2022 could change their retirement plans; they rode out being in the eye of the storm track with visiting daughter Deborah, and it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Shortly thereafter, they moved to Cavendish, Vt.

Bob is survived by sons Michael, Stephen, and James, of Maine, Montana, and Vermont respectively; daughter Deborah, of Alaska; stepdaughter Jill Thomas, of Henderson, Nev.; adopted daughter Kathleen Ehlers, of Ludlow, Vt.; nine grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. In remembering Bob, we know we “hit the lottery” to have him as a father and husband, and learned the right way to live our lives through the standards of character, decency, and humility he personified.

Bob wished for no service, and, in lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Bridgewater Congregational Church, P.O. Box 4, Bridgewater, VT 05034. A Celebration of Life will take place at a future date.

Letter to the Editor: VFW Post 771 2026 annual appeal

Dear Friends of VFW Post 771,

On behalf of VFW Post 771, we are reaching out during a critical time for our post. As a proud chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, our mission has always been clear: to serve those who have served and to strengthen our local veteran community.

Today, Post 771 is facing significant challenges. Rising operating costs, decreased event revenue, decreased membership, and building expenses have placed a serious strain on our ability to remain open and operational. Without immediate support, our ability to continue serving local veterans is at risk. Your financial support will directly support (1) emergency assistance for veterans and families, (2) outreach and support programs for disabled and elderly veterans, (3) com-

munity events honoring military service, and (4) ongoing maintenance and operating expenses for Post 771.

Post 771 is more than a building. It is a place of fellowship, camaraderie, advocacy, and assistance for those who answered our nation's call. For many veterans, it is a lifeline.

We respectfully ask you to consider making an annual donation to help sustain our mission. Every dollar makes a measurable difference, and ensures we continue supporting veterans. Thank you for your continued support of those who sacrificed so much. Feel free to contact me at 802-885-6008 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Ronald Farrar
Post 771 Commander and Vietnam veteran

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.

Richard A. Jacobs, 1952-2026

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Richard Allan “Jake” Jacobs, 74, of Springfield, Vt., passed away March 8, 2026. Born Jan. 2, 1952, in Midland, Mich., he graduated from South Burlington High School in 1970 and later served in the United States Army, receiving an honorable discharge in 1978.

Jake owned and operated Jake's South Street Market in Springfield for more than 45 years. Under his leadership, the small convenience store grew into a popular local market known for its deli items, meats, and takeout meals. Known for his strong work ethic and personable nature, Jake built lasting relationships with customers and community members.

An avid outdoorsman, he enjoyed hunting, traveling, gardening, and spending time at his land and hunting camp in Williamstown, Vt. He was also active in the Springfield Moose Lodge 679, where he served in leadership roles, including president, and received Moose International's prestigious Pilgrim Degree.



Richard Jacobs, 1952-2026. PHOTO PROVIDED

He was predeceased by his mother Wilma Benson Jacobs Martin, and his brother Michael Jacobs.

He is survived by his stepfather Roy Martin, of South Burlington; his brother David Jacobs, of Venice, Fla.; his sisters Suzanne Martin Couillard (David), of North Hero, Vt., and Kathy Martin, of Georgia, Vt., and her fiancé Francis Whitney Jr., of Richford, Vt.; his partner Janet Makela, of Springfield, Vt.; and several nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life will be held May 16, at 1 p.m., at the Springfield Moose Lodge 679.

Trevor F. Watkins, 1969-2026

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Trevor Forrest Watkins, 56, passed away unexpectedly at home on March 8, 2026. He was born in Springfield, Vt., on Aug. 12, 1969, to Glenn and Ellen (Lambert) Watkins.

Trevor graduated from Springfield High School and began his career trucking. He drove cross-country for BDR, and for Stowmills more locally. He also worked for the City of Keene as a heavy equipment operator, and helped establish Two Neanderthals Smokin' BBQ. Trevor was a hardworking man, always providing for his family.

Trevor loved music; ATX, Alice in Chains, and Tool were his favorites. He loved sitting by the fire, the smell of the ocean, and pointing out awesome Peterbils. But, most importantly, he loved his children and grandchildren. He loved telling stories of his years trucking, and all the things he'd seen over the road. He always said Montana was the most beautiful place he'd ever been. It was so great that we all took an epic family vacation to Wyoming and Montana, where many beautiful memories were made.



Trevor Watkins, 1969-2026. PHOTO PROVIDED

Trevor was predeceased by his son Nathaniel Watkins. Trevor is survived by his wife Melinda; his daughter Jessika Nadeau and son-in-law Matthew; his daughter Annalise Watkins and her significant other Daniel Weiser; his son Layne Watkins and his girlfriend Marlo Goodrich; his son Collin Watkins; his grandchildren Nora and Calvin Nadeau; his parents Glenn and Ellen; his sister Carrie and her husband Frank Fuller; many nieces and nephews; and his honorary son-in-law Ryan Bean.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the National MS society or Donate Life, as Trevor was the recipient of a lifesaving liver transplant in 2019.

BELLOWS FALLS VILLAGE CORPORATION

PUBLIC NOTICE

WATER MAIN FLUSHING

THE BELLOWS FALLS VILLAGE CORPORATION WATER SYSTEM WILL BE FLUSHED WEEKDAYS FROM 9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M. BEGINNING WEDNESDAY, April 1, 2026, AND CONTINUING THROUGH Thursday 30, 2026.

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OBITUARIES:

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

CHURCH SERVICES:

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

calendar

LEGAL NOTICES

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 20 – SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Join us online or in person at the Springfield Town Library, 43 Main Street, every third Friday, at 10 a.m., for a 60-minute chair yoga practice. Learn accessible movements that you can do right from your seat, leaving you feeling mobile, grounded, and focused. This month's balancing postures will take inspiration from the vernal equinox. Walk into the library and join in person for free; there's no need to preregister. For online access, which includes all recordings, visit studio.jobregnard.com/product/88980.

MARCH 21 – CLAREMONT, N.H. – The Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, will serve the last turkey dinner of the season on Saturday, March 21. The menu will be turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, squash, cranberry sauce, a dinner roll, and assorted pie. There is a cost per meal. Please call 603-678-0433 before 3:30 p.m., and specify takeout or dine-in. Dine-in will begin at 4:30 p.m., and takeout meals can be picked up beginning at 5 p.m.

MARCH 24 – MOUNT HOLLY, Vt. – The Mount Holly Conservation Trust will hold a public

information and comment session about the proposed Vermont Conservation Plan (Act 59) on Tuesday, March 24, from 5-8 p.m., at the Mount Holly Community Center, 26 Maple Hill Road. The meeting is open to the public, and will begin with free pizza at 5 p.m., followed by an information and public comment session. Everyone is invited to participate.

MARCH 27 – LUDLOW, Vt. – The annual ham and kielbasa raffle hosted by the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion will be held on Friday, March 27, starting at 5:30 p.m., at the Ludlow American Legion Post 36, 133 Main Street. All proceeds benefit veterans and youth programs. There will be 10 rounds, with numerous additional prizes per round. This event is open to the public, and all are welcome.

MARCH 28 – CHESTER, Vt. – On Saturday, March 28, a third No Kings Day, a nationwide day of protest, will be held in Chester. Residents of Chester and neighboring towns will gather in solidarity on the Chester Village Green, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., to reject authoritarianism and show the world what democracy really looks like. For more information and to register for this event visit www.mobilize.us/s/taGwYu,

or contact Steve Dock at styeve35@gmail.com.

LUDLOW, Vt. – The Black River Academy Museum proudly presents "Love Letters" by A.R. Gurney, performed by George and Linda Thomson, on Saturday, March 28, at 7 p.m., at the Heald Auditorium in the Ludlow Town Hall, 37 Depot Street. This is a fundraiser for the museum. Tickets can be purchased the night of the event, or prior to the event at local businesses.

ROCKINGHAM, Vt. – Jamelot will be held on March 28, from 5:30-8:30 p.m., at Vermont Vines Vineyard, featuring wine tastings and live music. Our tasting room opens at 12 p.m., so feel free to come early, sip some of our finest wines, and get ready for an unforgettable evening. Come for the wine, stay for the tunes. We can't wait to see you there. There is a small cover charge; thank you for supporting local farms/music.

CHARLESTOWN, N.H. – There will be a No Kings rally on Saturday, March 28, from 1-3 p.m., on Main Street in Charlestown. Please join the Charlestown Democrats and friends to peacefully protest against the actions of the Trump administration. Bring your own posters. For more information, email democratscharlestownnh@gmail.com.

APRIL 7 – SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Tai Chi Vermont-certified teacher Jo Bregnard will teach a new tai chi form, bafa wubu, online and in person, on Tuesday, April 7, at the Springfield Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse, 21 Fairground Road. Recordings are available. Sponsored by Senior Solutions. All are welcome. Head to the meetinghouse, or, for access to the

livestream or recording, visit studio.jobregnard.com/product/92447 to sign up. For more information, email jo@jobregnard.com.

RECURRING EVENTS

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

MONDAYS – CLAREMONT, N.H. – The Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, holds line dancing every Monday night, at 7 p.m., with Dorianne Lescord. Free for members, small entry fee for nonmembers. For more information, call 603-543-5998.

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

CLAREMONT, N.H. – Women's pool games are played every Monday, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., at the Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights. Come be a part of this fun activity with likeminded women. For more information, call 603-543-5998.

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

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Head to the Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse in Springfield, Vt., 21 Fairground Road, on Tuesdays, at 10 a.m., through March 24, to learn from and practice with Tai Chi Vermont-certified teacher Jo Bregnard. Classes are 60 minutes, and will also be livestreamed via Zoom, as well as recorded for those who can't make it to the meetinghouse. To learn more or register, visit studio.jobregnard.com/product/90038.

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

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

CHESTER, Vt. – Knit Knite at Six Loose Ladies on the Chester Common Thursdays, from 5-8 p.m., and via Zoom, from 7-8 p.m.

WALPOLE, N.H. – Alcoholics Anonymous women's meeting, a

12-step recovery program for women who have a desire to stop drinking, is happening every Thursday at 6 p.m. at the St. John's Episcopal Church at the corner of Westminster and Elm streets in Walpole, N.H. For more information, call Viva at 802-732-8330.

FRIDAYS – SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Join us online or in person at the Springfield Town Library, 43 Main Street, at 10 a.m. every third Friday through September 2026, for a 60-minute chair yoga practice. You'll learn accessible movements that you can do right from your seat, leaving you feeling mobile, grounded, and focused. Walk into the library and join live in person for free; there is no need to preregister. For online access, which includes all recordings, visit studio.jobregnard.com/product/88980 to choose from among a variety of registration options.

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

CLAREMONT, N.H. – On Fridays, between Feb. 6 and April 10, AARP volunteers will be preparing taxes for seniors, for free, at the Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights. You must call Audrey at 802-345-5415 to schedule an appointment (please do not call the senior center directly).

SATURDAYS – SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield VFW Post 771, 191 River Street, will host burger nights on the first and third Saturdays of every month, from 5-7 p.m., downstairs in the canteen. These events are open to the public.

Town of Chester Housing Commission Opening

Looking for an opportunity to serve your community? The Town of Chester has an open position for appointment to the Housing Commission. Interested parties should submit a letter of interest to julie.hance@chestervt.gov or Town of Chester, P.O. Box 370, Chester, VT 05143 by March 27, 2026.

GREEN MOUNTAIN PRESCHOOL Enrolling for the '26-'27 school year

If your child will be 3 or 4 years old by August, 31, 2026, we would love to have you join us!

Please call 802-875-7758 for more information and to register.

Cavendish Town Elementary School
573 Main Street, Proctorsville, VT

TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD ANIMAL LICENSE NOTICE

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

Londonderry Planning Commission Hearing Monday 4/13/26 at 6:00 PM

The Londonderry Planning Commission will meet on Monday April 13, 2026, at the Londonderry Town Offices to solicit comments from the public on a proposed zoning bylaw amendment and a new zoning map. This amendment will change the zoning regulations for the entire town of Londonderry. It is designed to:

- align the town's zoning regulations with the planning goals in the Town Plan,
- addresses inconsistencies resulting from the many changes that have been made to state statutes since the zoning bylaws were last updated,
- fix shortcomings of the current regulations that had resulted in confusion or difficulties for applicants, the Administrative Officer, and the Development Review Board over the years,

The full text of the proposed amendment and the new zoning map are posted on the Planning Commission page of the Londonderry Web site, and paper copies are available for twenty dollars from the town clerk.

The table of contents of this proposed zoning bylaw includes: General Standards, Exemptions and Limitations, Prior Applications, Approvals and Uses, Nonconformities, Zoning Districts, General Zoning Rules, Site Design and Performance Standards For Commercial and Multi-Unit Housing Developments, Specific Use Standards, Subdivision Standards, Planned Unit Development (PUD) Standards, Administration and Enforcement, Fees and Filing Requirements, Zoning Permits, Commercial and Multifamily Home Development, Appeals, Notice Requirements, Hearings and Decisions, Violations and Penalties, and Definitions.

ROAD FOREMAN – TOWN OF WESTON, VT

The Town of Weston is seeking a full-time Road Foreman to oversee maintenance of town roads and supervise the road crew. Position includes equipment operation, project coordination, and emergency response including winter storm operations. CDL required or ability to obtain. Competitive salary and benefits.

Send resume and cover letter to: Town of Weston, PO Box 98, Weston VT 05161 or email selectboard@westonvt.org Full job description available at: www.westonvt.org Position open until filled. EOE.

NOTICE OF TAX SALE

The resident and non-resident owners, lien holders, and mortgagees of property in the Town of Andover, in the County of Windsor and State of Vermont, are hereby notified that the taxes assessed by such Town for the 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 tax years remain, either in whole or in part, unpaid on the following described property in such Town, to wit:

It being all and the same lands and premises conveyed to Christopher T. Meyer and Kathleen R. Meyer by Quit Claim Deed of Bruce P. Meyer and Sylvia A. Meyer dated January 30, 2006 and recorded on February 3, 2006 in Book 48 at Page 451 of the Andover Land Records. Reference is made to the stipulation between Bruce Meyer and Sylvia Meyer and The Town of Andover, et al, dated January 24, 2006 and recorded on May 10, 2006 in Book 49 at Page 257 of the Andover Land Records. [E-911: 108 Gates Rd., Parcel #011000058.400]

And pursuant to 32 V.S.A. §5254, so much of such property will be sold at public auction at the Town of Andover Office, a public place located at 953 Weston-Andover Road, in Andover, Vermont, on the 10th day of April, 2026, at 11:00 a.m., as shall be requisite to discharge such taxes with costs, unless previously paid. Dated at Andover, Vermont this 4th day of March, 2026.

Jeanette Hazeltine, Collector of Delinquent Taxes

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF GREENVILLE

IN THE FAMILY COURT

Matthew N. Saunders, Plaintiff,
-vs-
Alyssa Rivera, Defendant.

AMENDED SUMMONS
C.A. No.: 2024-DR-23-3992

TO THE DEFENDANT ABOVE NAMED: Alyssa Rivera YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the Amended Complaint in this action, a copy of which is herewith served upon you, and to serve a copy of your Answer to said Amended Complaint on the subscribers at their office, 310 Mills Avenue, Post Office Box 9754, Greenville, South Carolina 29604, within thirty days after the service hereof; exclusive of the day of such service; and if you fail to answer the Amended Complaint within the time aforesaid, the Plaintiff(s) will apply to the Court for the relief demanded in said Amended Complaint.

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 63-9-730(e), Notice given pursuant to this section must include notice of the following:

(1) within thirty days of receiving notice the person or agency shall respond in writing by filing with the court in which the adoption is pending notice and reasons to contest, intervene, or otherwise respond;

(2) the court must be informed of the person's or agency's current address and of any changes in address during the adoption proceedings; and

(3) failure to file a response within thirty days of receiving notice constitutes consent to adoption of the child and forfeiture of all rights and obligations of the person or agency with respect to the child.

IN THE EVENT THAT YOU ARE AN INFANT OVER FOURTEEN YEARS OF AGE OR AN IMPRISONED PERSON, you are further summoned and notified to apply for the appointment of a Guardian ad Litem to represent you in this action within thirty (30) days after the service of this Summons and Notice upon you. If you fail to do so, application for such appointment will be made by the Plaintiff(s) herein.

IN THE EVENT THAT YOU ARE AN INFANT UNDER THE AGE OF FOURTEEN YEARS OR ARE INCOMPETENT OR INSANE, you are further summoned and notified to apply for the appointment of a Guardian ad Litem to represent said infant(s) under the age of fourteen years of age, or said incompetent or insane person, within thirty (30) days after the service of this Summons and Notice upon you. If you fail to do so, application for such appointment will be made by the Plaintiff(s) herein.

HOWARD LAW FIRM, P.A.
MILFORD O. HOWARD, III
Attorney for Plaintiff
P.O. Box 9754, Greenville, South Carolina 29604
Phone: (864) 233.5672 Fax: (864) 642-6822

Dated: August 28, 2025

LEGAL NOTICES

classifieds

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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EZ-Dump Enterprises has a 15-yard dump trailer available. We're also here for heating equipment, appliance removal, home/storage unit clean outs, stump grinding, and refinishing/

repairing gravel driveways. Serving Springfield, Vt. area. Call/text 802-376-1168 or email ezdump.bl@gmail.com.

ELECTRICIAN

LEVI ELECTRIC - 917-417-7880 levelectricvt.com - Trusted residential electrician with 10+ years experience. Upgrades, lighting, EV chargers, panels, service calls. Proctorsville-based. Quality work, fair pricing, free estimates.

FOR SALE

GRAFTON, Vt. - 2005 GMC Ser-

ria, SLE 2500HD DSL, 4dr/4wd, \$8500. 2020 GMC Sierra SLT 2500HD DSL, 4dr/4wd, Fisher V-pow, 5th wheel set up, side tool boxes, \$36,000. 2020 GMC Sierra SLT 2500HD DSL, 4dr /4wd, w/2025 Fisher V-pow and 2025 Fisher Sander, 5th wheel set up, \$46,000. Call 802-732-8494.

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

A public hearing before the Ludlow Development Review Board will be held on Monday April 13, 2026 at 6:00 P.M., in the Francis J. Heald Auditorium at the Ludlow Town Hall, 37 Depot Street, and via Zoom, to hear the following applications:

- Revival Ventures, LLC application SUB-26-002 subdivide a 23.64 Acre lot into two (2) lots of +/- 19.33 Acres and +/- 3.19 Acres.
- Mark and Nicole DeFeo application #128-98-PUD, Amendment #73, to construct a "Boot Room" on an existing deck at Okemo Trailside Condominiums.

The meeting Agenda will be available on Ludlow's Web page, www.ludlow.vt.us with the Zoom ID and the URL link.

Additional information about this application is available in the Planning and Zoning office at the Town Hall.

Erin Ladd, Director of Planning & Zoning

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WARNING

TOWN OF LUDLOW, VERMONT Town and Village Plan of Merger Vote March 24th, 2026

The legal voters of the Town of Ludlow, County of Windsor, State of Vermont, are hereby notified and warned of a special meeting to vote by Australian ballot on the following article, to be held at the Heald Auditorium in the Ludlow Town Hall at 37 Depot Street, Ludlow, Vermont on Tuesday, the 24th Day of March, 2026, between the hours of Ten o'clock AM, (10:00 AM) in the forenoon and seven o'clock, PM, (7:00 PM) in the afternoon.

Shall the Town of Ludlow approve the proposed "PLAN OF MERGER" of the Village of Ludlow into the Town of Ludlow, as approved by both the Town of Ludlow Selectboard and Village of Ludlow Trustees?

An official copy of the proposed Plan of Merger is on file and available for public inspection at the Town Clerk's Office at 37 Depot Street, Ludlow, VT 05149. Copies will be made available upon request. The Clerk's Office is open Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

A copy of the proposed Plan of Merger can be found online here: <https://www.ludlow.vt.us>

The legal voters of the Town of Ludlow are further notified that voter qualifications, registration and absentee voting relative to said Town Meeting shall be as provided in Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated. You must be registered to vote in the Town of Ludlow in order to vote at the aforementioned special meeting. Voters are encouraged to request an Early/Absentee Ballot from the Town Clerk's Office by calling (802) 228-2828 or (802) 228-3232 or email to ucook@ludlow.vt.us or ptodi@ludlow.vt.us

Dated at Ludlow, Vermont this 9th day of February, 2026.

TOWN OF LUDLOW SELECTBOARD:

ATTEST: Ulla Cook, Town Clerk

WARNING

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Dated at Ludlow, Vermont this 10th day of February, 2026.

VILLAGE OF LUDLOW TRUSTEES:

ATTEST: Ulla Cook, Town/Village Clerk

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT
Windsor Unit

PROBATE DIVISION
Docket No.: 25-PR-05180

In re ESTATE of:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Suzanne Rostan Decedent

late of Springfield, Vermont 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: 3/9/2026 Signature of Fiduciary

Executor/Administrator		Mailing Address	
Barry J. Polidor, Esq.		P.O. Box 279	
Phone Number	Email	City, State, Zip	
(802) 885-4530	polidorlaw@gmail.com	Springfield, VT 05156	

Name of Publication: Vermont Journal

Publication Date: March 18, 2026

Name of Probate Court: Windsor Probate Court
Address of Probate Court: 12 The Green
Woodstock, VT 05091

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Green Mountain Power Corporation

Project No. 2489-049

NOTICE OF APPLICATION READY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND SOLICITING COMMENTS, RECOMMENDATIONS, TERMS AND CONDITIONS, AND PRESCRIPTIONS

(March 10, 2026)

Take notice that the following hydroelectric application has been filed with the Commission and is available for public inspection.

- Type of Application: Subsequent Minor License
- Project No.: 2489-049
- Date filed: October 31, 2022
- Applicant: Green Mountain Power Corporation
- Name of Project: Cavendish Hydroelectric Project
- Location: On the Black River, in the town of Cavendish, in Windsor County, Vermont.
- Filed Pursuant to: Federal Power Act, 16 U.S.C. §§ 791(a) - 825(r).
- Applicant Contact: John Tedesco, Green Mountain Power Corporation, 2152 Post Road, Rutland, VT 05701; Phone at (802) 655-8753, or email at John.Tedesco@greenmountainpower.com.
- FERC Contact: Samantha Pollak at (202) 502-6419, or samantha.pollak@ferc.gov.
- Deadline for filing comments, recommendations, terms and conditions, and prescriptions: on or before 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 11, 2026; reply comments are due on or before 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on June 23, 2026.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. Please file comments, recommendations, terms and conditions, and prescriptions using the Commission's eFiling system at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/FERCONline.aspx>. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 10,000 characters, without prior registration, using the eComment system at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/QuickComment.aspx>. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659 (TTY). In lieu of electronic filing, please send a paper copy via U. S. Postal Service to: Debbie Anne A. Reese, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Submissions sent via any other carrier must be addressed to: Debbie Anne A. Reese, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20852. All filings must clearly identify the project name and docket number on the first page: Cavendish Hydroelectric Project (P-2489-049). The Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure require all interveners filing documents with the Commission to serve a copy of that document on each person on the official service list for the project. Further, if an intervener files comments or documents with the Commission relating to the merits of an issue that may affect the responsibilities of a particular resource agency, they must also serve a copy of the document on that resource agency.

k. This application has been accepted and is ready for environmental analysis at this time.

l. The Cavendish Project consists of: (1) a 111-foot-long concrete gravity dam with: (a) a 90-foot-long by 25-foot-high north spillway section topped with a 6-foot-high inflatable flashboard system and (b) a 21-foot-long by 6-foot-high south spillway section topped with 2.5-foot-high steel flashboards; (2) a 17.06-acre impoundment with a gross storage capacity of 18.4 acre feet at a normal water surface elevation of 884.13 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 (NGVD 29) that extends approximately 3,000 feet upstream; (3) a 90-foot-long dike structure with an earthen crest of approximately 12 feet wide and composed of sheet pile and rock along the impoundment; (4) a 3-foot-wide downstream fish passage chute located on the north side of the spillway; (5) a concrete intake structure equipped with a mechanically operated headgate, and a trash rack with 2-inch clear bar spacing; (6) a 178-foot-long power tunnel that carries flow from the intake to a penstock; (7) a 6-foot-diameter, 1,090-foot-long penstock; (8) a 64-foot-long by 34-foot-wide powerhouse containing three turbine-generator units with a combined capacity of 1.44 megawatts; (9) a 100-foot-long, 12.5-kilovolt generator lead that runs from the powerhouse to a substation, which is the point of interconnection with the electrical grid; and (10) appurtenant facilities.

Green Mountain Power proposes to continue operating the project in a run-of-river mode with a continuous minimum flow release of 10 cubic feet per second into the bypassed reach. The project generates about 4,864 megawatt-hours annually.

m. A copy of the application can be viewed on the Commission's website at (<http://www.ferc.gov>), using the "eLibrary" link. Enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits in the docket number field, to access the document (P-9028). For assistance, contact FERC Online Support (see item j above).

All filings must (1) bear in all capital letters the title "COMMENTS," "REPLY COMMENTS," "RECOMMENDATIONS," "TERMS AND CONDITIONS," or "PRESCRIPTIONS;" (2) set forth in the heading the name of the applicant and the project number of the application to which the filing responds; and (3) otherwise comply with the requirements of 18 C.F.R. §§ 385.2001 through 385.2005. All comments, recommendations, terms and conditions or prescriptions must set forth their evidentiary basis and otherwise comply with the requirements of 18 C.F.R. § 4.34(b). Agencies may obtain copies of the application directly from the applicant. Each filing must be accompanied by proof of service on all persons listed on the service list prepared by the Commission in this proceeding in accordance with 18 C.F.R. §§ 4.34(b) and 385.2010.

You may also register online at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support.

n. For public inquiries and assistance with making filings such as interventions, comments, or requests for rehearing, contact the Office of Public Participation at (202) 502-6595 or OPP@ferc.gov.

o. The license applicant must file the following on or before 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 11, 2026: (1) a copy of the water quality certification; (2) a copy of the request for certification, including proof of the date on which the certifying agency received the request; or (3) evidence of waiver of water quality certification.

p. Final amendments to the application must be filed with the Commission on or before 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on April 9, 2026.

(Authority: 18 CFR 2.1)

Debbie-Anne A. Reese, Secretary.

health & wellness

Black River Good Neighbor Services strength training and community meals

LUDLOW, Vt. – Strength and balance training class combines exercise and information to help you build bone strength and aid in fall prevention. The class is a blend of current strategies for seniors seeking improved balance and strength. A low-impact routine, the class is intend-

ed to strengthen the body and improve functional fitness. Functional fitness means training your body for everyday activities, and to make daily motion easier and safer.

Participants are introduced to an exercise routine intended to strengthen bones and improve bal-

ance through repetition and weight lifting with arms and legs. Offered free of charge by Black River Good Neighbor Services, classes are held at the Ludlow Community Center twice weekly. The class is free, open to all, and requires no special equipment or attire. Handheld weights and

ankle cuffs are available for participant use.

Community meals are offered on the first and third Thursdays of each month, at the Ludlow Community Center cafeteria. A full-course meal is provided, free of charge. Everyone is welcome to attend.

While the event is all

about food, socialization plays a vital role for many who attend. Friends, neighbors, and folks from the local area and beyond come to meet, share stories, and eat good, nourishing food. A wonderful benefit, the meal also offers an abundance of laughter and friendly faces. Follow-

ing meals, once a month, free bingo takes place with prizes, together with entertaining and educational programs. The event is offered by Black River Good Neighbor Services.

Article submitted by Black River Good Neighbor Services.

See what CSBCC has to offer

CLAREMONT, N.H. – At Claremont Savings Bank Community Center (CSBCC), we believe fitness should feel welcoming, supportive, and achievable for everyone. Whether you're just getting started, or have been active for years, our goal is simple: help you move better, feel stronger, and live healthier.

Located in Claremont,

N.H., CSBCC offers a friendly, community-focused environment where members of all ages and abilities can thrive. From our fully equipped fitness center to our indoor walking track, group exercise classes, and aquatic pools, there is truly something for everyone. We pride ourselves on creating a space where you feel comfortable walking through the doors

and confident working toward your goals.

Looking for motivation? Our certified personal trainers are here to help with customized workout plans, accountability, and encouragement every step of the way. Prefer the energy of a group? Join one of our many fitness classes designed to build strength, improve endurance, and keep you moving in a fun,

supportive setting. We also offer youth programs, senior fitness options, and seasonal specialty classes to keep things fresh and engaging.

Health and wellness go beyond exercise. At CSBCC, we are building a stronger community by providing opportunities for connection, recreation, and overall wellbeing. Whether you're walking the track

with a friend, participating in a challenge event, or simply carving out time for yourself, you're investing in a healthier future.

Our facility is more than a gym – it's a place where neighbors become friends, and goals become accomplishments. No intimidation. No pressure. Just progress at your pace.

If you've been thinking about taking the next step

in your wellness journey, now is the perfect time. Stop in, tour the facility, and see why so many in our community choose CSBCC as their home for fitness.

Stronger bodies. Healthier lives. A better community, together.

Article submitted by Claremont Savings Bank Community Center.

Westminster Fit Body Boot Camp, building stronger bodies and a stronger community

WESTMINSTER, Vt. – In the heart of Westminster, Vt., Westminster Fit Body Boot Camp is more than a gym. It is a community built on resilience, purpose, and family.

Originally founded in 2009, the business carries forward a legacy rooted in service and heart. After the passing of her mother in

2021, owner Sarah Dumont stepped fully into leadership with a renewed commitment to the mission that started it all: helping people live stronger, longer, more capable lives.

Westminster Fit Body Boot Camp specializes in 30-minute, coach-led, small-group strength and metabolic training sessions

designed for busy adults who want meaningful results without spending hours in the gym. Programs range from high-energy Boot Camp sessions to Fit Body Forever, a 60-and-older functional strength program focused on preserving muscle mass, protecting bone density, and supporting healthy aging.

What truly sets Fit Body apart is its culture. Members are greeted by name.

Milestones are celebrated. Birthdays are acknowledged. Every workout ends with "Family on three," because here that word is not just a phrase, it is a lived experience.

Beyond the gym floor, Westminster Fit Body Boot Camp is deeply committed to community outreach. From annual food drives supporting the Chester Andover Family Center, to diaper drives, holiday giving

programs, and local workshops centered on wellness and personal growth, the mission extends far beyond physical fitness. The team believes in strengthening not just bodies, but the broader community as well.

Under Dumont's leadership, the business has also expanded its investment in professional development and mentorship. Through internships, continuing education, and leadership training, Fit Body is creating meaningful career pathways in health and fitness right here in Vermont.

At its core, Westminster Fit Body Boot Camp stands for something simple but

powerful. Strength is about more than muscle. It is about resilience. It is about connection. It is about building a place where people feel seen, supported, and capable of more than they once believed.

For those looking for more than just a workout, Westminster Fit Body Boot Camp continues to demonstrate that small-town businesses can create lasting impact, one session, one relationship, and one stronger community at a time.

Article submitted by Sarah Dumont, owner, Westminster Fit Body Boot Camp.



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Black River Grief Support Group
A safe space for individuals to share their experiences, find comfort and learn coping strategies after a loss.
Meeting Monthly:
The second Monday of each month
Where:
Fletcher Memorial Library
88 Main Street, Ludlow
When:
1 PM - 2 PM
For Information call: 802-228-3663
Offered by:
Black River Good Neighbor Services

UKULELE CLASSES
Learn to play the Ukulele!
Have you always been interested but don't know where to begin? This is a beginner class for learning to play the ukulele. No experience necessary! Come, join in, and have fun!
When:
March 11, March 25, April 8, April 22, May 13, May 27
11 AM - Noon
Where:
Ludlow Community Center
Free of charge
Provided by:
Black River Good Neighbor Services
Info: 802-228-3663



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Claremont, NH 03743
603-542-7667



health & wellness

Why conversations in restaurants can become harder to follow

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Many adults first notice hearing changes in places like restaurants, family gatherings, or other busy social settings. You may hear that people are talking, but following the conversation becomes more difficult. Voices blend together, background noise seems louder than it used to, and conversations require more effort than they once did.

This experience is very common, and often appears before someone would consider themselves

to have hearing loss. Speech understanding relies heavily on certain high-frequency sounds. Consonants such as S, F, TH, SH, and CH help make words clear and understandable. These sounds are softer than vowels, and are often the first to become harder to hear when hearing changes begin. When this happens, speech may sound less crisp, especially in environments with background noise.

Age-related hearing changes can start earlier than many people expect.

Everyday noise exposure from work, travel, social settings, and daily life can gradually affect the tiny hair cells in the inner ear that help detect sound. These changes typically impact clarity rather than volume at first. That is why many people say, “I can hear people talking, but I can’t understand what they’re saying.”

Restaurants and crowded places make listening even more challenging. Music, dishes, ventilation systems, and multiple conversations happening at the same time

create competing sounds. The brain must work harder to separate the voice you want to hear from all the surrounding noise.

Over time, this increased effort can lead to what many people describe as listening fatigue. Social situations that were once enjoyable may begin to feel exhausting, and some individuals may find themselves withdrawing from conversations or avoiding noisy environments altogether.

A hearing screening can help determine whether

these changes are affecting your hearing. Early screenings measure how well you hear softer sounds and how clearly you understand speech. Identifying hearing changes early allows you to better understand your hearing health, and explore solutions that can help improve communication and confidence in everyday situations.

At AudioNova Springfield, our experienced hearing experts are here to help you better understand your hearing and answer any questions you may have.

If conversations in restaurants or social settings have become more difficult, it may be time for a hearing check. Schedule a free hearing screening today. Visit us at 100 Springfield Plaza Road in Springfield, or call 802-213-5398 to speak with our team and learn more about your hearing health.

Taking the first step toward better hearing can make everyday conversations easier and more enjoyable again.

Article submitted by AudioNova.

Vernal equinox chair yoga at Springfield Library

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – March’s monthly chair yoga class at the Springfield Town Library, on Friday, March 20, at 10 a.m., will celebrate the vernal equinox with energizing balancing postures. Join in person at 43 Main Street or online to learn accessible movements you can do right from your seat.

Chair yoga meets the third Friday of every month for 60 minutes. With attention to brain boosting and nervous system nourishment, each month’s practice will leave you feeling mobile yet grounded – relaxed, with energy to skip into your weekend.

Classes are led by Jo Bregnard, a 500-hour certified yoga teacher with additional certifications in tai chi, acupressure, meditation, and more. She leads group and private sessions through her virtual studio, where she enjoys weaving lessons learned from the natural world into practice time, giving folks the support they need so they can continue doing the things



Jo Bregnard leading a chair yoga class at Springfield Town Library. PHOTO PROVIDED

Springfield Town Library cardholders can contact the library at 802-885-3108 or stlib@vermontel.net to receive a coupon code for free online access. Those without a library card can visit studio.jobregnard.com/product/88980 for complete details on additional pricing options, and to sign up for online access. Either way, you’ll get access to six chair-yoga videos recorded at the Springfield Town Library as soon as you register.

For more information, email jo@jobregnard.com.

that bring joy and connection.

Simply walk into the library and join in person for free; there’s no need to pre-register for this option.

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Chair massage coming to Neighborhood Connections

LONDONDERRY, Vt. – Neighborhood Connections is now offering a chair massage program on a quarterly basis. It starts on March 24, then continues on June 2, Sept. 22, and Dec. 1, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Space is limited, so you must call us at 802-824-4343 to sign up for each session.

Sara Martin is a myofascial and neuromuscular

release (MFR). Unlike traditional deep tissue, which often relies on grinding pressure, her approach focuses on the body’s connective tissue (fascia). MFR is a sophisticated, sustained-pressure technique designed to unwind chronic restrictions at the root. While you will feel the profound depth of this work, it is a therapeutic “melt” rather than a forceful push. This is a restorative, neuromuscular

experience perfect for those seeking long-term mobility and a quieted nervous system.

If you are looking for a technical, results-driven treatment that respects the body’s natural rhythm, Martin offers a truly unique alternative to the standard resort massage.

Contact Neighborhood Connections at 802-824-4343 for more information, and to secure your place.

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PROS TO KNOW

MAPLE OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND, MARCH 21-22

Governor celebrates Maple Month with first tapping

CANAAN, Vt. – Vermont Gov. Phil Scott tapped a maple tree at April's Maple in Canaan today, to recognize the beginning of this year's maple season. With the winter weather still chilly but the sun growing

stronger by the day, today the governor joined April Lemay, her family, and Vermont Secretary of Agriculture Anson Tebbetts to tap a maple tree and join in the tradition of Vermont's maple season while cel-

brating the importance of this industry to the state's economy and culture.

"The annual tree-tapping event recognizes Vermont's maple industry and the hard working Vermonters who produce the best maple in the world," said Scott. "Their hard work and dedication year-round are why we continue to lead the nation in maple production and excellence."

Scott also signed a proclamation declaring the month of March as Maple Month in Vermont, saying, "Maple syrup is one of the most recognizable symbols in Vermont, and will continue to symbolize the hard work, craftsmanship, innovation, and creativity that

make Vermont the great state it is." Find the full proclamation at www.governor.vermont.gov/sites/scott/files/documents/Maple%20Month%20%28Proclamation%2026-11%29.pdf

April's Maple is located deep in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, on 800 acres that has been in Lemay's family since 1937. Three generations of the Jackson family have tended to this land, and when the idea for April's Maple first surfaced, it was important to Lemay that the land continue to honor her grandparents Audrey and Elmont Jackson and their way of life by honoring what was important to them: family, appreciation for nature, and respect for our environment.

"Sugaring isn't easy work; Mother Nature likes to keep us on our toes, but the last 13 years have been so rewarding. Working with my family and an amazing team, we offer our visitors a memorable experience centered on Vermont maple syrup – from the production process to a maple-inspired cafe menu," said Lemay. "To us at April's Maple, maple syrup isn't just something great on your pancakes; it is our way of life that brings us together to laugh and share stories with longtime and



Gov. Scott tapping a maple tree at April's Maple in Canaan. PHOTO PROVIDED

new friends."

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets (VAAF) continues to work to support our producers with marketing programs, labeling and product quality inspections, and collaborations with the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association.

"Vermont is the nation's leading producer of maple syrup because of the hundreds of maple producers across our state," said Tebbetts. "Last season, Vermont producers once again outpaced the rest of the country, while creating some of the best-tasting maple syrup you can find. Their work has made maple syrup Vermont's second-largest agricultural product, behind milk, highlighting the industry's importance to our state."

The Green Mountain State has led the U.S. in

the number of maple taps every year since 1916, and was only out-produced in 1926 and 1918. In 2003, Vermont had 2.12 million taps, and has steadily increased that number to 8.4 million in 2024. Annual production prior to 1935 was typically between 1 million and 1.4 million gallons. This dropped to around 200,000 to 300,000 gallons in the 1970s. Since 2003, Vermont's maple syrup production has increased from around 500,000 gallons to 3.108 million gallons in 2024.

The 2025 maple season continued this tradition of maple dominance, with a total production of 3.06 million gallons, 8.35 million taps, 0.367 gallons yielded per tap, a total revenue of \$95 million, and an average retail price of \$58.30 per gallon, up \$1.10 since 2023.

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