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THE VERMONT Journal

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New Rockingham municipal manager begins tenure

BY JOE MILLIKEN
The Vermont Journal

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – After an extensive search conducted recently by the Rockingham Selectboard and Bellows Falls Village Trustees, town officials hired Aaron Patt as the new municipal manager for the Town of Rockingham, Village of Bellows Falls, and Village of Saxtons River.

The town and village conducted a nearly five-month search, in collaboration with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT), as well as a Montpelier-

based town-executive recruitment service. After accepting the position and signing a three-year contract, Patt officially began his tenure during the last week of May, as he took over the reins from interim Municipal Manager Alex Torpey.

“I discovered the job in Rockingham through VLCT, and they did an excellent job with the placement process,” Patt said in a recent interview. “I was drawn to the position due to the complexity of the job, and I am also very interested in the history of the

area and the [Rockingham] Meeting House.”

Patt’s previous experience includes 15 years as the town administrator for Greenfield, N.H., a town 40 miles east of Keene, with a population of just over 1,700. Pratt had thrived at the position since 2011, after previously leading an industrial pollution cleanup group in Troy, N.H. Patt was also a selectboard member in Troy, and then a commissioner for Cheshire County.

“We are very happy for Aaron, and sad to see him go,” Greenfield Selectboard Chair Tom Bascom told the

Monadnock Ledger Transcript after the announcement. “Patt brought a level of structure and professionalism to town offices that has really been a positive thing for the town.”

“I grew up in Bernardston [Massachusetts], and am originally from the tristate area,” Patt added. “I moved to New Hampshire, where I lived for 27 years, near Mount Monadnock.

“About five years ago, my wife and I started looking for retirement property, and while I still have many years to go before I retire, we decided to move ‘back home’

to Vermont and now have an old farmhouse in Wardsboro.”

During his tenure in Greenfield, Patt oversaw many impressive projects, including the renovation of a new community center, the securing of federal grant money for the \$1 million renovation of the town’s historic meeting house, and the completion of a new town police station. Patt also led Greenfield through the uncertainty of Covid emergency protocols.

Patt oversaw and maintained all municipal finances and left his post with the

town in a strong financial position. “After completing the major renovation of the Greenfield Meeting House, I am especially looking forward to working on the Rockingham Meeting House,” Patt said.

USPS CUSTOMER

Edgar May announces Cardboard Yacht Race

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Edgar May Health and Recreation Center invites families to dive into an afternoon of laughter, creativity, and friendly competition at the Family Yacht Race, taking place on Sunday, July 26, from 3-7 p.m.

This exciting event features the ever-popular Cardboard Yacht Race, where teams build and race hand-made yachts constructed entirely from cardboard and duct tape across the Edgar May’s lap pool. Prizes will be awarded for speed, creativity, team spirit, and even the most spectacular sinking.

After the races, families are invited to stick around for a family night out, featuring open swimming, climbing, and a pizza party to celebrate a great day at the pool.

Every cardboard boat entered in the race will receive

a one-month family membership gift certificate to the Edgar May Health and Recreation Center.

“This event brings out the best in family teamwork and imagination,” said Zoe Lirakis, youth and family program director, “and it’s a perfect way to celebrate summer at the Edgar May.”

Team registration is open to families with children under the age of 18. Materials are limited to cardboard, duct tape, and paper tubes – no



Participate in Edgar May’s Cardboard Yacht Race. PHOTOS PROVIDED



include Fastest Finish, Most Creative Design, Best Sink, and Spirit Award.

Yachts will be inspected for rule compliance prior to racing. Participants should come prepared to get wet and bring towels and dry clothes. Spectators are welcome to join in the fun.

For full race rules or to register your team, visit www.edgarmay.org or contact the Edgar May Health and Recreation Center at info@edgarmay.org or 802-885-2568.

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INDEX	
Health & Home	4
Obituaries & Services	5
Calendar	6
Legal Notices	6
Classifieds	7
Arts & Entertainment	8

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BILLING ADDRESS:
PO Box 116 • Rutland, VT 05702

PHONE NUMBER:
802-228-3600

WEBSITE:
www.VermontJournal.com

CONTACT US

SHAWN TAE WEBB
publisher@vermontjournal.com
ads@vermontjournal.com

NICK GIBERTI
editor@vermontjournal.com
calendar@vermontjournal.com

JOE MCCAFFREY
sales@vermontjournal.com

LISA STICKNEY
messagesales@vermontjournal.com

PAULA BENSON
billing@vermontjournal.com

DEADLINES

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

EMAIL CALENDAR EVENTS
calendar@vermontjournal.com

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Local students honored at SkillsUSA’s National Leadership & Skills Conference

ATLANTA, Ga. – Career and technical education students were recognized with a certificate of accomplishment at the SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC), held June 1-5, in Atlanta. An all-time high of 7,000 students competed in the 2026 SkillsUSA Championships at NLSC, which is the largest gathering of the future skilled workforce.

As an indicator of proficiency, Skill Point Certificates were awarded to SkillsUSA Championships competitors who met a pre-

determined threshold score for their respective competition. Students can add this certificate, an indicator of career readiness, to their employment portfolio.

The following students from The Vermont Journal’s area are Skill Point Certificate recipients: Violet Haight, from Springfield and a student at River Valley Technical Center, was awarded a Skill Point Certificate in technical drafting; and Team Q, consisting of Mary Margaret Jones and Liam Taylor, from River Valley Technical Center,

was awarded a Skill Point Certificate in video production.

To be invited to the SkillsUSA Championships, students first had to win their state-level competition, demonstrating their technical skills, workplace skills, and personal skills. The national competition featured state champions from middle school, high school, and college/postsecondary divisions across the country in 115 hands-on career and leadership competitions, including robotics, automotive technology, draft-

ing, criminal justice, aviation maintenance, public speaking, and more.

“This showcase of career and technical education demonstrates SkillsUSA at its finest,” said SkillsUSA Executive Director Chelle Travis. “Our students, instructors, and industry partners work together to ensure that every student excels.”

The SkillsUSA Championships is the largest skill competition in the world and covers 1.79 million square feet, equivalent to 31 football fields or 41 acres.

It is supported by leaders from 850 businesses, corporations, trade associations, and unions who planned and evaluated the competitors against their industry standards. More than 2,000 industry judges and technical committee members also volunteered their time to ensure a successful event.

The next NLSC will be held June 21-25, 2027, in Atlanta. Learn more about SkillsUSA, the No. 1 workforce development organization for students, at www.skillsusa.org.

Central African music and culture take root in Springfield with documentary screening

BY PAULA BENSON
The Vermont Journal

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – On Tuesday, June 30, a free screening was held at the Springfield Town Library of a documentary titled “Congolese Rumba: History and Economy.” The event was hosted by Root Sounds Productions, a local artistic and cultural production company.

Root Sounds Productions was founded by Paulin Lukombo Sinu, a percussionist and musician born in

the Congo region in Central Africa, and Johanna Sorrentino, a communications strategist, performing artist, vocalist, and Springfield native. Sorrentino cofounded Root Sounds Productions with her husband Sinu, to bring diverse, global sounds and experiences to the state they now call home, and to enrich the area’s cultural landscape through music education and production, and community events.

“The date [of the screening] holds particular significance,” relayed Sorrentino,

“as June 30th marks the anniversary of the Democratic Republic of the Congo’s independence.”

Additionally, Sorrentino said, “Thanks to a new partnership with the film’s producer, historian and Senator Didier Mumengi, this will be the first time the film has ever been shown with English translation – anywhere.”

The documentary explores the history and global influence of Congolese rumba music, a genre that emerged in the early 20th century and fused Central

African rhythms with Afro-Cuban influences. The screening was followed by a brief drum demonstration from Sinu.

Root Sounds Productions is dedicated to creating a lasting impact in Springfield, in Vermont, and across the globe, cementing rumba and Central African culture in history, and creating an economy around the traditional music, through education and innovation.

Located at 60 Park Street, in the former Park Street School building, now the

Black River Innovation Campus, Root Sounds Productions offers classes for all skill levels. The courses are led by Sinu, whose teaching philosophy is “to equip students with both technical proficiency and cultural awareness, empowering them to apply Central African rhythmic concepts within jazz, global music, and modern performance settings.”

For more information, or to register for classes, visit www.rootsoundsproduction.com.

Springfield Family Center announces leadership transition

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield Family Center Board of Directors announces a leadership transition and the beginning of a search process for the organization’s next executive director.

The board would like to extend its sincere appreciation to Trisha Paradis for her service, dedication, and leadership. Throughout her tenure, Paradis has helped advance the Springfield Family Center’s mission and strengthen its impact on children, families, and community members throughout the region. The board thanks her for her many contributions and wishes her continued success in the future.

The Springfield Family Center remains fully committed to its mission and to providing uninterrupted

services to the community during this transition period.

To ensure continuity of operations, Steffanie Baker will continue managing the day-to-day operations of the Springfield Family Center. Administrative and governance-related responsibilities will be overseen by Board Treasurer Paul Cioffi, who will work closely with staff and the board to support the organization throughout the transition.

The board of directors is forming a search committee to begin recruiting the family center’s next executive director. The committee will develop the position announcement, review applications, conduct interviews, and recommend candidates for consideration.

“We are grateful for Trish’s leadership and are

confident in the strength of our staff, board, and community partnerships as we move forward,” said Tara Chase, board chair. “The Springfield Family Center remains focused on serving families and meeting community needs while we undertake a thoughtful search for our next executive director.”

The Springfield Family Center values the support of its clients, partners, funders, volunteers, and community members, and looks forward to sharing updates as the search process progresses.

For more information, please contact Paul Cioffi, board treasurer, Springfield Family Center, at 802-885-3646 or pcfioffi3@gmail.com.

American Legion Post 18 recognizes Trisha Paradis

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The American Legion Post 18 Cmdr. James Harris proudly recognizes Trisha Paradis, of the Springfield Family Center, for her outstanding dedication and leadership in serving our community. Through her work as executive director, Paradis has made a lasting impact by fostering programs that support families and veterans, strengthen community bonds, and promote positive change. Her unwavering commitment to service exemplifies the spirit of community and compassion for those in need. Thank you, Trisha, for your dedication, leadership, and ongoing efforts



Post 18 Cmdr. James Harris presents Trisha Paradis, Springfield Family Center executive director, with a Certificate of Recognition.

PHOTO PROVIDED

to make Springfield a better place for all.

All about homesharing at Springfield Library

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – On Wednesday, July 15, at 5:30 p.m., join HomeShare Vermont at the Springfield Town Library for a presentation all about homesharing.

Homesharing is an innovative and practical housing model that brings people together for mutual benefit. At its core, homesharing in-

volves two or more individuals sharing a home in a way that supports both parties’ needs and enhances quality of life.

In a typical homesharing arrangement, one person provides a private bedroom and access to shared living spaces. In return, the home seeker may offer rent, assistance with household tasks, or a combination of both. Unlike traditional roommate situations, homesharing emphasizes collaboration, companionship, and personalized support between participants.

Each homesharing match is unique. Arrangements are thoughtfully tailored to reflect the individual preferences, lifestyles, and needs of those involved, ensuring a mutually beneficial living experience.

HomeShare Vermont

facilitates these connections across a broad service area, including the counties of Addison, Caledonia, Chittenden, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, Orange, Orleans, Washington, Windham, and Windsor. Services also extend to the towns of Brandon, Killington, and Pittsfield in Rutland County.

This program is presented by Kayla Bernier-Wright, of Windham & Windsor Housing Trust and HomeShare Vermont; and Shari Borzekowski, of Thompson Senior Center and HomeShare Vermont.

For more information about homesharing opportunities or to learn how to participate, community members are encouraged to reach out to HomeShare Vermont.

To sign up for a reminder, visit www.springfield-townlibrary.org/calendar.

Bellows Falls Third Fridays return

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Spend your Friday evening in downtown Bellows Falls during Bellows Falls Third Fridays (BF3F), beginning on Friday, July 17.

The evening begins alongside the Bellows Falls Farmers Market, from 4-7 p.m., with BF3F continuing from 7-9 p.m., as downtown businesses stay open late and visitors are invited to explore Canal Street and the surrounding downtown district.

This month’s event features live music on Canal Street, a local food vendor, and a community raffle with prizes donated by participating businesses.

Visitors can enter the community raffle at participating businesses throughout the evening for a chance to win this month’s prizes while also being entered into the season-ending grand prize basket drawing.

Bellows Falls Third Fridays is a monthly downtown event that celebrates

local businesses, encourages community connection, and creates a vibrant evening experience in the heart of Bellows Falls. Whether you’re shopping, grabbing dinner, enjoying live music, or simply taking a stroll, there’s something for everyone to enjoy. Admission is free, and everyone is welcome.

For updates, participating businesses, and event information, follow “Bellows Falls, VT” on Facebook and @BellowsFallsDowntown on Instagram.

Community forum with Springfield Town Manager Scott Pickup

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – On Tuesday, July 21, at 6 p.m., meet Springfield

Town Manager Scott Pickup at the Springfield Town Library, 43 Main Street. Everyone in the community is invited to this friendly forum with Pickup.

Come spend some time together, share your ideas, ask questions, and talk about what matters most in our town. This is an open and welcoming space

where everyone can listen, learn, and be heard. Whether you have a concern, a suggestion, or just want to stay informed, your voice is important. The Springfield Town Library hopes to see you there.

To sign up for a reminder, visit www.springfield-townlibrary.org/calendar.





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CROSSWORD

COUPON CONTEST

The Rules

Participants must complete the Crossword or the Sudoku puzzle and mail this page to The Vermont Journal, PO Box 228, Ludlow, VT 05149. Must be received by Friday, July 17, 2026. Limit one submission per person.

One participant will be selected by random drawing, and can choose one coupon from participating businesses on this puzzle page. Coupons are not valid until one is chosen by drawing winner. Coupon of choice will expire on August 31, 2026, and will be mailed to the winner.

The answers to the puzzles and winner will be published the following week.

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____ TOWN: _____

COUPON OF CHOICE: _____

Weekly SUDOKU

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

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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King Crossword

ACROSS

1 "Chocolat" actor
5 Audio giant
9 Prune
12 Antioxidant berry
13 Egg
14 — budget
15 Plumbing problem
16 Firsties
17 TiVo precursor
18 Foolproof
19 Sch. URL ender
20 Borscht base
21 Sailing hazard
23 — Victor
25 Daughter of Muhammad
28 Lynx
32 "West Side Story" role
33 Prefix meaning "water"
34 Ocean bottoms
36 Grapevine talk
37 Chow down
38 "— was saying ..."
39 Scoff
42 Half of bi-
44 Sod
48 Napoleon's title (Abbr.)
49 Mideast gulf
50 Verifiable
51 Brit. record label

DOWN

1 June honorees
2 Beige
3 Two of a kind
4 Specialist in the heating/cooling industry
5 Grocery store
6 Roman poet
7 Outlying area
8 Ambulance letters
9 Zero, in tennis
10 Formerly
11 Section
20 Date night hire
22 D-Day beach
24 Some Pacific salmon
25 Passing craze
26 Chemical suffix
27 Gratuity
29 LP successors
30 NPR's Shapiro

31 Pinnacle
35 Recording site
36 Olympic swimmer
39 "M*A*S*H" vehicle
40 Tennis star
41 Grand tale
43 Legendary loch
45 Language of Pakistan
46 Carpets
47 Shoe fillers
49 Illustrations

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health & home

Springfield Hospital health care education scholarship

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Springfield Hospital is pleased to announce Maggie Knox, of Stockbridge, Vt., has been selected to receive the 2026 Springfield Hospital Health Education Scholarship. The scholarship, established by Springfield Hospital and its medical staff, supports local students pursuing careers in health care and recognizes academic achievement, community involvement, and a commitment to serving others.

Knox is a graduate of Woodstock Union High School. She has committed to Salve Regina University in Rhode Island, where she will further her education in the field of nursing. Throughout high school, Knox demon-

strated a strong commitment to health care, leadership, and service. Her experiences included participation in the Mount Ascutney Hospital nursing internship program, volunteering with the Vermont Center on Aging, and serving as a member of the University of Vermont's inaugural Youth Leaders in Aging cohort. These opportunities strengthened her passion for geriatric nursing and deepened her understanding of the importance of compassionate care for older adults. "I am thrilled to start my nursing journey at Salve Regina and grateful that this scholarship helps make that possible. It will be an adventure to spread my wings in Rhode Island,

but I look forward to returning and serving Vermont's rural health care needs in the future," said Knox.

In addition to her health care experiences, Knox was a member of the National Honor Society, competed in varsity field hockey and lacrosse, and served as a teaching assistant. Her dedication to academics, service, and patient care made her a notable contender for this year's scholarship award.

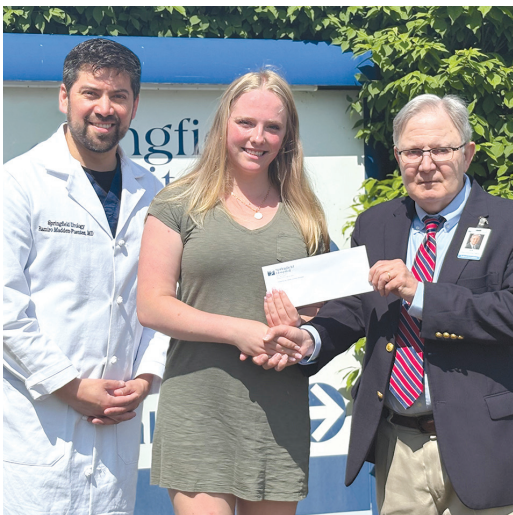
This new scholarship program is offered by Springfield Hospital and its medical staff. Each year in March, the hospital recognizes its medical staff during National Doctors' Day, an annual observance dedicated to honoring physicians for

their dedication and contributions to health care. This year, the medical staff suggested collaborating with the hospital to establish a \$3,000 annual health care education scholarship in honor of the medical staff.

The scholarship program, open to all area high school seniors who were accepted into a postsecondary program, was announced to area high schools in early April, with applications due by May 15. Applicants were asked to submit letters of recommendation along with an essay outlining why they chose to pursue a health care

career and how the scholarship would help them achieve their goals.

"We are pleased and excited to launch this new scholarship program in honor of our medical staff and in recognition of the important role they play in serving the health care needs of our communities," said Robert Adcock, Springfield Hospital CEO. "I am inspired by the many applications we received and the strong commitment the students demonstrated to continuing their education and serving their communities. On behalf of the staff at Springfield Hospital, I want to congratulate Maggie Knox on being selected to receive this year's scholarship award, and also send our best wishes to all who applied as they enter the next phase of their health care studies."



Left to right: Ramiro J. Madden-Fuentes, MD; Maggie Knox, scholarship recipient; and Robert Adcock, Springfield Hospital CEO.

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LEBANON, N.H. – Dartmouth Health has named Jonathan Welch, MD, MSc, as chief operating officer (COO). He will join the health system later this sum-

mer.

As system COO, Welch will work closely with leaders from across Dartmouth Health to strengthen integration, support the work-

force, and continue improving care delivery across the organization's hospitals, clinics, and services. He will oversee efforts to improve operational alignment across the system and support shared services including information technology, pharmacy, facilities, and supply chain operations.

"Dr. Welch's experience in academic and rural health settings positions him well to contribute to Dartmouth Health's mission to enhance operational priorities and enable support to meet clinical priorities," said Dartmouth Health CEO and

President Joanne M. Conroy, MD.

Welch joins Dartmouth Health from Geisinger Health System in Danville, Pa., where he served as chief population health officer and chief innovation officer.

Throughout his career, Welch has led large multidisciplinary teams and managed extensive operational portfolios. His work has focused on improving access to care, advancing value-based care models, and implementing system-wide initiatives designed to enhance patient outcomes and support care teams.

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obituaries

ASCUTNEY, VT.

Open Bible Baptist Church, 168 Cemetery Rd.
Sunday services are being held in the church. Sunday school is at 9:45 a.m., Sunday morning service is 11 a.m., and the afternoon service is 1:30 p.m. Wednesday evening service is at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call the church at 802-674-2266 or visit www.obbcvt.org.

ATHENS, VT.

Community Christian Church of Athens, 126 Brookline Road
Sunday services are at 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., and prayer meetings are held Wednesdays, at 7 p.m. If you have questions, call 802-869-2513. The 9:30 a.m. Sunday service is also streamed on Facebook Live at the Church’s Facebook page.

BELLOWS FALLS, VT.

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

St. Charles Church, 31 Cherry Hill St.
Masses are held on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, at 7 a.m.; Wednesday, at 7 p.m.; Saturday Vigil Mass, at 4 p.m.; and Sunday, at 9 a.m. For more information, call 802-732-8721.

CAVENDISH, VT.

St. James United Methodist Church, 570 Main St.
Please join us Sundays, at 8:45 a.m. All are welcome. For more information, go to www.facebook.com/stjamesumcproctorsville.

CHARLESTOWN, N.H.

Charlestown Congregational Church, 71 Main St.
Sunday service starts at 10 a.m. All are welcome. For more information, call 603-826-3335.

Charlestown Bible Church, 37 Hammond Rd.
Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 a.m. Sunday Worship at 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m. Wednesday Prayer Meeting at 7 p.m. To hear a sermon or learn more go to www.charlestownbiblechurch.org. Call 603-826-5121 for more info or to request a personal Bible study.

CHESTER, VT.

Chester Baptist Church, 162 Main St.
Worship is Sundays at 10:30 a.m. For more information, including online streaming, go to www.chesterbaptist.org.

LONDONDERRY, VT.

First Baptist Church, 62 Crescent St., S. Londonderry
Worship service is Sunday at 10 a.m. at the church. Services will still be live streamed at www.firstbaptistslondonderryvt.org/streaming-worship.html. For more information, visit www.firstbaptistlondonderryvt.org or call 802-856-7266.

MOUNT HOLLY, VT.

Village Baptist Church, 32 Church St.
We welcome all to come and worship with us Sunday at 9:30 a.m. For more information, call 802-259-2440.

PERKINSVILLE, VT.

Bow Baptist Church, 1102 Route 5, Weathersfield Bow
Sunday services are 10 a.m., 11 a.m., and 6 p.m., and Wednesday Bible Study and prayer at 7 p.m. For more information, call 802-546-4902.

SPRINGFIELD, VT.

First Congregational Church, UCC, 77 Main St.
Sunday services are at 10 a.m. in person. Singing is encouraged! For more information, call 802-885-5728, email fccucc@vermontel.net, or go to www.firstchurchspringfield.org.

North Springfield Baptist Church, 581 Giddings Street, North Springfield.
All are welcome and invited to join us for worship on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. For more information, please email the church office at office@nsbcvt.org, or call 802-886-8107. We are handicap accessible.

WALPOLE, N.H.

First Congregational Church of Walpole UCC, 15 Washington Sq.
Sunday services are at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary, or via Zoom. For Zoom links, please call 603-756-4075. For more information, go to www.walpolenhucc.org or www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalWalpoleNH.

WESTON, VT.

The Old Parish Church, 644 Main St.
A diverse, informal, and welcoming congregation. Sunday service begins at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom. For more information, contact Jon Bliss, minister, at 802-824-4452 or email easthillfarm@vermontel.net.

Edward L. Foster, 1954-2026

ROCKINGHAM, Vt. – Edward Lee “Ed” Foster, 71, of Rockingham, Vt., passed away at his home on May 27, 2026.

Edward was born on Aug. 14, 1954, in Springfield, Vt., to Ellen Sylvia and Raymond Earl Foster.

He married the love of his life, Ruth Foster, on June 21, 1975.

He was a wonderful son, husband, father, brother, and friend. Ed was sure to make everyone smile and laugh. He enjoyed metal detecting, hunting, fishing (especially ice fishing), riding his motorcycle, and spending time with family and friends.

He was a jack-of-all-trades and did many different jobs throughout his life: driving dump trucks, mechanic work, towing and recovery, and carpentry.

Edward was preceded in death by his wife, Ruth Foster; his mother, Ellen Wade; his stepfather, Allen Wade; his father, Raymond Foster; his brothers Albert (Foster) Wade and Andrew (Foster) Wade; and his uncle Jerry Foster.



Edward Foster, 1954-2026. PHOTO PROVIDED

He is survived by his son, David Foster; his daughter, Beth Muzzey; his son-in-law, Travis Muzzey; his stepmother, Beverly Foster; his brother Mike Foster; his brother-in-law Marty Weinstein; his sister Judy Cenate; his brother-in-law Don Cenate; his sister Sher-yl Stowell; his sister Donna Foster; his uncle Harold Foster; his uncle Jim Foster; and many nieces, nephews, and friends.

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

Online workshop helps prevent Type 2 diabetes

REGION – More than one in three American adults has prediabetes, a condition that often has no symptoms but can lead to Type 2 diabetes and other serious health problems. The good news is that it can often be prevented.

My Healthy Vermont is offering a free online diabetes prevention program developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Research shows the program can reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by 58%.

The year-long program includes 26 sessions led

by a trained lifestyle coach who provides guidance, support, and practical strategies for making healthy lifestyle changes. Sessions begin weekly, then meet every other week, and finally once a month. All meetings are held on Zoom. The next program begins Monday, July 13, from 12-1 p.m.

To learn more or register, visit the My Healthy Vermont website, www.myhealthyvt.org, or call 802-859-5913. My Healthy Vermont also offers free workshops on chronic disease management, chronic pain management, and smoking cessation.

Londonderry Arts and Historical Society Champagne Birthday

LONDONDERRY, Vt. – Celebrate the birthdays of both our nation and the Town of Londonderry at the Londonderry Arts and Historical Society’s annual fundraising event, a champagne birthday celebration, on Thursday, July 23, at 5:30 p.m., at the historic Custer Sharp House, 2461 Middletown Road in Londonderry.

The evening begins with champagne and hors d’oeuvres, followed by a lively and entertaining presentation by local history buffs Bob Wells and Bev Foster. Discover the fascinating story of Londonderry’s founding through colorful characters and little-known tales, and even learn where the town’s founders are buried today.

The celebration concludes with another toast of champagne and a taste

of traditional election cake, the rich, spiced cake once served by early Americans on election day.

Guests will also have an opportunity to support the society’s “History Runs on More Than Memories” campaign, which helps build the reserves needed to preserve and maintain the Custer Sharp House, and continue the society’s educational programs and community events.

Reservations are requested by Friday, July 17. Tickets may be purchased at www.lahsvt.org.

For more information about the Londonderry Arts and Historical Society, and its events and exhibits, visit the website above. The society is open Wednesdays and Saturdays, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., through Columbus Day, or by appointment.

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John N. Swanson, 2026

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – John Nels Swanson passed away on July 1, 2026, at The Meadows in Rutland, Vt., at age 64. John was born in Rutland, Vt., but spent most of his life in Springfield, Vt. He was the son of Robert and Mary (Parker) Swanson.

John graduated from Springfield High School in 1980, received his Bachelor of Arts degree in secondary education from the University of Vermont in 1984, and, in 1991, received his Master of Arts degree in history from the University of Vermont. During his career as a history and social studies teacher, he taught at Fall Mountain Regional High School, Bellows Falls Middle School, Springfield High School, and Riverside Middle School for the last 22 years of his career.

His accomplishments include being a track and cross-country coach for several schools, a member of the Springfield Select-board, a cemetery commissioner for the Town of Springfield, and a Vermont VFW Middle School Social Studies Teacher of the Year; attending 15 years of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College; completing the Vermont 251 Club; and serving many roles as a member of the Springfield Calvary Baptist Church. He was also a member of the Springfield Historical Society, cofounded its high school history intern program, and served as archivist and officer. He was a member of the Vermont



John N. Swanson, 2026. PHOTO PROVIDED

Civil War Hemlocks, Civil War reenactors.

One of his proudest achievements was publishing his book “War Tears” in 2024 and signing it for his readers. He was an avid reader and loved going to bookstores and book talks. He was known for his extensive history book collection.

John was predeceased by his parents. He is survived by his sister and brother-in-law, Diane and Ken Nelson; his nephew and nieces, Joel (Christy) Nelson, Emily Nelson, and Dana (Kyla) Nelson; and two great-nephews, Julian and Luca.

A service for John will be held on Saturday, July 25, at 11 a.m., at the Calvary Baptist Church in Springfield, Vt. Memorial contributions can be sent to the Calvary Baptist Church, 156 Main Street, Springfield, VT 05156; or The Springfield Art and Historical Society, 65 Route 106, North Springfield, VT 05150.

Davis Memorial Chapel is assisting with the arrangements.

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.

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

PROS TO KNOW

classifieds

Economic development project solicitation

REGION – Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC), Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC), and Windham Regional Commission (WRC) have opened the annual project submission process for southern Vermont’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and Regional Priority Project (RPP) programs.

Organizations throughout Bennington County and the Windham region, which includes all Windham County towns and the Town of Weston, are invited to submit projects that are in alignment with regional economic and community development goals.

An informational webinar will be held on Wednesday, July 22, to explain both programs (CEDS and RPP), review submission requirements, and answer questions from prospective and returning applicants. To learn more, register for the webinar, or submit a project, visit www.sovermontzone.com/ceds-rpp-project-submission. Project submissions will be accepted through Sept. 18.

“The projects submitted through this process tell the story of where southern Vermont is headed,” said Adam Grinold, executive director of the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation. “Every year

we see communities, businesses, nonprofits, and institutions bringing forward ideas that address housing, workforce, infrastructure, child care, health care, and economic opportunity. Our job is to help connect those projects to partners, funding opportunities, and the broader regional strategy that can help move them forward.”

The submission process serves two related but distinct purposes. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is southern Vermont’s federally recognized economic development strategy and serves as the region’s implementation framework for economic development. The annual update tracks projects across Bennington and Windham counties, measures progress toward regional goals, and helps align local initiatives with state and federal funding opportunities.

Projects at all stages of development are encouraged for submission. Whether a project is in the concept phase, actively seeking funding, under construction, or recently completed, inclusion in the CEDS update helps create a more complete picture of economic development activity across southern Vermont.

Projects that are implementation-ready and seeking additional visibility

may also be considered for the Regional Priority Project (RPP) process by completing supplemental questions within the same submission form.

Regional Priority Projects are part of a state-wide initiative coordinated through Vermont’s Regional Development Corporations in partnership with the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development and the Northern Border Regional Commission. The RPP process highlights the top economic and community development projects in our region that are best positioned to attract state and federal funding.

In southern Vermont, all Regional Priority Projects are first submitted through the CEDS process, allowing applicants to complete a single form for both opportunities.

Organizations that submitted projects in previous years do not need to start from scratch. Previously submitted information can be updated and reused as part of the 2026 submission cycle.

Technical assistance, office hours, and proposer support will be available throughout the submission period.

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LUDLOW, Vt. – CAREGIVER – COMPANION, six hours per weekday during ski season for mildly handicapped wife. Kindly call or text 717-215-9703 or rayhedger@hedgerandhedger.com.

OTHER

LUDLOW, Vt. – Please contact me if you witnessed a skier-to-skier collision on the Lower Arrow Trail, near the Village Run crossover at Okemo, on January 25, 2025 at 11 a.m. If you are the good Samaritan who first helped the woman with the broken leg, or know who that is, we thank you

and ask that you please contact me at jlevins@tdlevins.com or 802-775-4361.

WANTED

CAVENDISH, Vt. – Horse literate person wanted to assist lady carriage driver several times a week in Cavendish. 802-226-7364.

MOUNT HOLLY, Vt. – WANTED TO BUY – Looking for some stone fence post to replace broken ones in my fenceline. Call Kris at 802-259-2529.

YARD SALE

LUDLOW, Vt. – Multi-family yard sale on Saturday, July 11, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., at 59-61 Andover Street in Ludlow.

Dear Editor,

On behalf of the board of directors and staff at Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS), we extend our sincere thanks to the residents of Windsor and Windham counties for supporting our town funding requests during this year’s Town Meetings.

Your continued investment in HCRS helps sustain our access navigator program, connecting individuals and families with the mental health and substance use services they need. This local support makes a meaningful difference, helping ensure that people can access

care, resources, and guidance when they need it most.

We are deeply grateful to the voters of the following Vermont towns for their partnership and commitment to the health and well-being of our communities: Andover, Athens, Bethel, Cavendish, Chester, Dover, Dummerston, Grafton, Guilford, Halifax, Hartford, Hartland, Jamaica, Landgrove, Ludlow, Marlboro, Newfane, Plymouth, Pomfret, Putney, Reading, Rockingham, Royalton, Sharon, Springfield, Stratton, Townshend, Vernon, Wardsboro, Weathersfield,

Westminster, West Windsor, Weston, Whitingham, Wilmington, Windham, Windsor, and Woodstock.

We are honored by the confidence you continue to place in HCRS. Together, we are strengthening access to care and helping build healthier, more resilient communities throughout southeastern Vermont. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
Anne Bilodeau, Chief Executive Officer
Health Care and Rehabilitation Services

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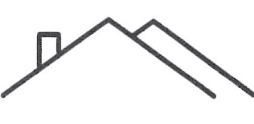
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(07/15/26 - TFN - 13)

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(03/17/27 - 52)

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(09/16/26 - 26)

arts & entertainment

Springfield Community Band upcoming concerts

REGION – On Sunday, July 12, the Springfield Community Band will present a concert in Walpole, N.H., under the direction of Nick Pelton. The evening will feature familiar, exciting, and well-loved music from Broadway musicals, including “Phantom of the Opera,” “The Greatest Showman,” “Wicked,” and “Chicago.”

The featured performance of the evening will be by vocalist Grace Thompson, who will sing a medley of familiar selections from “The Sound of Music.”

The concert will take

place at the gazebo at 34 Elm Street in Walpole, N.H., at 6:30 p.m. Please bring a chair.

On Tuesday, July 14, at 6:15 p.m., the band will present its annual children’s concert at The Common, a park on Cherry Hill in Springfield, opposite the Summer Hill Cemetery.

Pelton will conduct. Children are invited to come in costume.

The concert will feature dancers from The Dance Company enacting the story of “Peter and the Wolf,” with choreography by Ashley Hensel-Browning. Children

who would like to conduct the band will have the chance to do so. There will also be a free frozen treat for all the kids.

Another treat will be Pelton on saxophone, playing “Lightning Fingers.” The title speaks for itself.

Please bring a chair. Note that the above programs could change due to unforeseen circumstances. If rain threatens to cancel either concert, information will be available on the band’s Facebook page.

Peter Tavalin accompanies “Safety Last!” at Next Stage —

PUTNEY, Vt. – Next Stage Arts presents an evening of classic silent film and live music on Friday, July 17, at 7 p.m., when pianist and composer Peter Tavalin performs a live improvised score to Harold Lloyd’s beloved 1923 comedy “Safety Last!” at Next Stage, 15 Kimball Hill in Putney. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. Tickets are available at www.nextstagearts.org.

A graduate of Berklee College of Music and a lifelong jazz improviser, Tavalin has been accompanying silent films since 1979, creating expressive, in-the-moment soundtracks that bring classic cinema vividly to life. Drawing on his skills as both composer and improviser, he crafts a unique musical experience for each performance, responding in real time to the action, emotion, and humor unfolding on screen. No two presentations are ever exactly alike.

For this performance, Tavalin selected “Safety Last!,” widely regarded as one of the greatest silent comedies ever made. The film follows an ambitious young man navigating big-city life in pursuit of success, culminating in one of cinema’s most iconic and suspenseful sequences.

“These days we can all use a good laugh,” says Tavalin.



Peter Tavalin at his keyboard, composing music for “Safety Last.”

PHOTO PROVIDED

“Harold Lloyd definitely rates as one of the great silent film comics, in the same class as Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton.”

Rather than recreating the sound of early-20th-century movie palaces, Tavalin uses a synthesizer and contemporary musical vocabulary to create a modern accompaniment that blends seamlessly with the action on screen. His repertoire includes more than 25 silent films, and he continues to expand it through performances at

universities, museums, film series, festivals, and other venues.

Audiences can expect an engaging evening of laughter, cinematic history, and live musical artistry as one of silent film’s most enduring classics springs to life through a freshly created score.

For more information and tickets, visit www.nextstagearts.org.

The Suitcase Junket and Rachel Kilgour at Next Stage

PUTNEY, Vt. – Next Stage Arts Project and Twilight Music present swamp-Yankee music one-man-band The Suitcase Junket and Canadian-American singer-songwriter Rachael Kilgour at Next Stage, on Saturday, July 11, at 7:30 p.m.

The Suitcase Junket, the internationally touring project of artist Matt Lorenz, developed in the tension between the grand and the solitary—grand in imagery, sound, and staging, solitary in thrift and self-reliance. NPR calls Lorenz a “master of musical imagination.” What instruments he requires Lorenz builds from scratch and salvage. What parts five players would perform, he performs alone. The spectacle of the one-man show bears comparison

to legends of showmanship, brilliance, madness, and invention.

While audiences are captivated by that solitary form and the show itself, Lorenz, who homesteads in Western Massachusetts, is most serious about the songs. The world he writes into existence is crowded with characters, narratives, voices, imagery, and sounds as wide and varied as mountain throat singers and roadhouse juke boxes, plus newsreels of the planet’s destruction and salvage. Lorenz’s most recent album, “The End is New,” was released at Renew Records/BMG. He has been in the studio in recent months recording toward a new release.

Singer-songwriter Rachael Kilgour writes in hopes of finding a truth she can live with. Her intimate live performances radiate with

sincerity and humor, as she expertly balances her poignant, literate songs with her quick wit. She was awarded a prestigious McKnight Music Fellowship in 2025, was an official showcasing artist at the Folk Alliance International Conference (2025), and was a winner of both the Kerrville New Folk Contest (2017) and the Newsong Songwriting and Performance Competition (2015). Kilgour’s oft-noted “unapologetic lyrics” (Rolling Stone) and “master crafted indie folk” sensibilities (Billboard) are on full display in each of her delicately woven songs.

Next Stage is located at 15 Kimball Hill in downtown Putney, Vt. Advance tickets are available discounted at www.nextstagearts.org. Next Stage will provide a beer, wine, and cocktail cash bar. For more information, call 802-387-0102 or visit the website above.

Vermont playwrights at Springfield Community Players

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – From July through September, theatergoers in Springfield will experience two full productions and one staged reading, all by local playwrights.

Springfield Community Players’ (SCP) Local Summer Spotlight opens in July with Larry Kraft’s “Waiting for a Eulogy.” In the spirit of Beckett’s “Waiting for Godot,” two travelers on the road of life banter and bicker about things they may or may not have done. Only this time, they’re in a bar – and one of them is dead. Kraft, a published playwright and North Springfield resident, allows his characters to “take [him] where they want to go.” Influenced by his 20 years at Springfield Hospital and his board service at Senior Solutions, “Waiting” explores mortality and the enduring power of

friendship.

Directed by Patty Greene-Pawelczyk, “Waiting for a Eulogy” runs July 18, 19, 24, and 25. Tickets will be available soon through SCP’s website.

In August, audiences can enjoy a staged reading of “Kentucky Fried Zombies” by Sebastian Taylor. When folks in town start getting sick, all eyes turn to the manager of a local fast-food chain who has a unique way of dealing with “problem customers.” Taylor, of Springfield, holds a Master of Fine Arts from New England College in writing for stage and screen, and is excited to introduce “Kentucky,” his first full-length play, in the staged reading format. His previous work was featured in a 10-minute play festival in New York. Catch Kentucky Fried Zombies on Aug. 7.

And, because one can never get enough of the undead, wrap up your summer

fun in September with “Zip Zap Zombies,” written and directed by Springfield resident Josie Munroe. Inconvenient truths and fragile egos take center stage in this dark comedy, when an adult acting class is interrupted by a zombie apocalypse unfolding just beyond the theater’s walls. Munroe is a psychotherapist with a lifelong love of theater. Inspired by the dynamics of a real acting class, her idea for “Zombies” arrived “in a flash and took on a life of its own.”

Auditions for “Zip Zap Zombies” are open to the community and will be held July 8 and 11, with performances running Sept. 19, 20, 26, and 27.

Springfield Community Players is Vermont’s oldest continuously operating community theater group. For tickets, audition information, and more, visit www.springfieldplayers.org.

Bandwagon Series presents The Mammals, Michael Veitch Band, and Doozy Jane

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Next Stage Arts continues its Bandwagon Summer Series with a folk, roots, and Americana music festival on Saturday, July 18, at Robertson Paper Company Field, 21 Island Street in Bellows Falls. The festival begins at 4 p.m., with gates

opening at 3 p.m.

Featuring acclaimed Americana favorites The Mammals, veteran singer-songwriter Michael Veitch Band, and rising folk quartet Doozy Jane, the festival celebrates the enduring power of song, storytelling, and community.

Headlining the event, The Mammals bring their signature blend of high-energy Americana, string-band virtuosity, and socially conscious songwriting. Led by Mike Merenda and Ruth Ungar, the group is renowned for performances that balance rafter-raising enthusiasm with intimate, reflective moments. Their latest release, “Touch Grass Vol. 1 & 2,” explores themes of freedom, kinship, and ecological renewal while continuing the band’s tradition of connecting audiences through music and shared purpose.

Also taking the stage is the Michael Veitch Band. Veitch’s soaring tenor voice, expressive guitar work, and deeply personal songwriting have earned him national recognition throughout a long and distinguished career. His songs

explore themes of love, activism, memory, and hope, delivered with warmth, sincerity, and masterful musicianship.

Opening the festival is Doozy Jane, a dynamic quartet known for lush four-part treble harmonies and inventive arrangements. Combining fiddle, clarinet, guitar, and bass, the group reimagines folk traditions through a contemporary feminist lens, drawing inspiration from both historic and modern voices in American roots music.

Together, these artists create a rich tapestry of folk traditions, modern roots music, and Americana spirit. Whether drawn by the harmonies, the storytelling, or the sense of community, audiences will find an afternoon and evening of music that celebrates connection and shared experience.

Food vendors for the festival include Smokin’ Bowls, Taza Afghan Foods and Catering, and The Blue Pig. A cash bar will also be available onsite.

The event is sponsored by Vermont Plank Flooring. Advance tickets are available at www.nextstagearts.org.

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