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A new chapter begins for the owners of Southern Pie Cafe

BY PAULA BENSON

CHESTER, Vt. – The Southern Pie Cafe has become a favorite stop for visitors traveling to the charming Town of Chester and an annual tradition for many of the area's seasonal residents. For locals, the cafe is where they go each morning for coffee, a muffin, or one of Southern Pie's famous "Breakfast Sammys."

The popular bakery holds a special place in the hearts of its customers, and much of that feeling and connection can be credited to Southern Pie's chief cook and baker, Leslie Blair.

Leslie and her husband, Scott, started the business from scratch 12 years ago, baking at home and selling their products at pop-ups in Londonderry and at Goodman's American Pie in Ludlow. Leslie's first recipe was a strawberry sour cream pie, a Southern style pie that she introduced to the area. She then expanded into other fruit varieties like blueberry, apple, and peach. The menu continued to grow from there.

The couple initially faced some resistance from the town economic development committee at the time, which questioned the sustainability of a pie shop. Leslie said she was told, "It will never work."

"That just gave us fire," Scott said.

When a space became vacant at 287 Main Street, now Community Art Garden, Scott recalled, "We found a used deli case on Craigslist for $250, and we brought in a fold-out table…we baked at home and brought it in to sell."

Leslie remembered, "We had no furniture. We had a baker's rack with coffee mugs, and an old register where you typed in the numbers." The couple laughed, thinking about their early days, when, in addition to the bakery start-up, they each had full-time jobs.

Over the years since they purchased the building at 94 Common Street and relocated the cafe, the couple has taken almost no vacations and made countless sacrifices for the sake of the business. One recent weekend, Leslie had to close the bakery to accompany the couple's son on his first college tour.

But the feeling was still bittersweet when Leslie and Scott made the decision to permanently shut down the bakery and transition into something different. Nov. 29 marks the date when Southern Pie Cafe will officially exit its brick and mortar storefront at 94 Common Street.

"I have loved it here, but I am ready to take a step back from all of it," Leslie relayed. "Cooking is me. It's the only thing I've ever done, the one thing that I know I love. So, I don't necessarily want to step away from that, but maybe just change it up a little. I have been doing this for 30 years."

Although Leslie is sad to say goodbye to the cafe's regular customers, one thing she looks forward to is finally attending her son's basketball games and other events. Jacob, a junior at Vermont Academy in Saxtons River, was excited when his mother told him she was going to walk away from the bakery full time.

"We need to really focus," Scott remarked. "It's family and the future."

It does feel like the natural time for the family to move on to a new chapter, and the community is rallying behind whatever comes next. This Thanksgiving will be the final pie sale at the shop, and orders are pouring in.

Leslie said her immediate plan after that is "to take a month off." She and Scott explained that, since starting out, the pair has been so immersed in Southern Pie, they never had a chance to take a honeymoon. At first, the couple will go back to

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Long lost letters returned

BY SHAWNTAE WEBB

CHESTER, Vt. – Chester resident Anna Kendall moved into her home on Mountain View Road 10 years ago, and found a box full of old letters, postcards, and newspaper clippings stored on a shelf in the basement, addressed to Christine Mueller. Kendall held on to the box, hoping some day she could return it. "I couldn't bring myself to throw away someone else's precious memories. I know I would be devastated if I lost all mine."



Anna Kendall.
PHOTO PROVIDED



Christine Mueller.
PHOTO PROVIDED

This spring, during her semiannual cleaning, Kendall came across the box again, and reached out to Jon Clark, president of the Chester Historical Society, to see if he could help. The historical society took a few days, and "miraculously [they] found her!" Kendall exclaimed.

Mueller had moved to Andover, Vt., in the '80s, after graduating from college in Madison, Wis. She had decided that she did not want to go to graduate school, and, being heartsick from a breakup, she needed a change of scenery. Lauren, a friend from high school, lived in Belmont and worked at Crowley Cheese Factory. Mueller made the move to Belmont, and shortly after relocated to Andover, where she lived and worked on Lydia Ratcliff's farm, Lovejoy Brook Farm. Mueller said she always had a desire to work on a farm.

During her stay in Andover, Mueller would write back and forth with friends, an old boyfriend, and family. Mueller saved all of these letters and various other memories. She later moved around in Chester, and for five years she lived in the house on Mountain View Road. She moved out in 2006, leaving behind the box of memories and relocating to Florida. She thought that anything she left behind was gone.

Two decades later, having survived various occupants of the Chester home, the box was returned. Kendall and Mueller corresponded, and planned a date in October when Mueller could retrieve the box while she would be visiting the area. Unfortunately, Kendall explained, she had to work that day and could not meet Mueller. But they each took a photo with the box and shared it with one another.

"It's quite a sweet story," Mueller said, thankful to be able to go back down memory lane. "This is a real chunk of history from when I first moved to Andover...a lot of stories generated from Lydia's farm." She recalled and pieced together how she knew each person from each letter. "Memories were flooding."

Kendall thought about how Mueller's letters were dated "from the '80s, when she was living on Lydia Ratcliff's farm, and all the while I lived right up the road from her that whole time as a kid. Strange how the world turns."

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Next steps for Jewell Brook dam sites

BY NICK GIBERTI

LUDLOW, Vt. – The Ludlow Selectboard on Nov. 2 heard a presentation from Charles Johnston, of consulting engineering firm DuBois and King, regarding the four Jewell Brook dam sites (numbered 1, 2, 3, and 5 – there is no No. 4), a perennial topic of concern, particularly since the Great Flood of 2023 which did significant damage to Ludlow and the surrounding region. While the dams held during that flood, they have generated concern in the time since due to their age and potential for significant damage and loss of life should they fail.

Johnston emphasized that, at present, the dams are not in imminent danger of failure. "The physical condition of the dams is great," Johnston said. However, Johnston explained that the original service life of the dams was estimated at 50 years, and that, having been built in the early 1960s, the dams have now exceeded that service life and are in need of maintenance and attention to ensure they can last "another 50 years."

However, the Jewell Brook dams, Johnston explained, are considered high-hazard potential dams because of the likelihood of fatalities should the dams fail during flood conditions. "The primary deficiency at the dams," Johnston said, referencing a 2015 Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) report, "is that, during the design flood, which is…27 inches of rain in 24 hours, the auxiliary spillways at all four dams fail, which results in…almost a 100-foot wave propagating down through the Jewell Brook Valley into the Black River Valley." Johnston added that, while the dams are in good condition, they do not meet current NRCS dam safety guidelines.

The proposed project before the selectboard, which has been in the works for more than a decade, is intended to prevent this possibility by structurally reinforcing the earthen auxiliary spillways and the hillsides downstream of them with articulated concrete blocks to prevent erosion when they are activated. Currently, the auxiliary spillways are made of earth only, the same material as the dams themselves.

The goal, Johnston continued, is for construction on the dam improvements to begin in 2028, though this is contingent on Ludlow having funding immediately available prior to the project's commencement. NRCS covers 100% of the cost of planning, design, and engineering, and 65% of construction costs, leaving Ludlow with 35% of construction costs, or roughly $11.5 million, and 100% of any permit costs, and land or easement acquisition costs required. Jonhston did say that work is ongoing to try to lower the amount for which Ludlow would be responsible, but urged the board to act in a timely fashion. "Right now my understanding is there are [federal] funds set aside for this project," Johnston stated, "but if you were to delay it another five, 10 years, that could go away."

The board also debated whether or not to accept several letters requesting appropriations at Town Meeting 2027 received after the town's Sept. 30 deadline. The letters were from the Fletcher Memorial Library, in the amount of $35,000; Health Care and Rehabilitation Services, in the amount of $2,537; and Dartmouth Health Home Care, in the amount of $14,700.

Board member George Tucker believed that the board should not set the precedent of accepting late letters, as it could effectively

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Londonderry Planning Commission requests seat reduction

BY SHAWNTAE WEBB

LONDONDERRY, Vt. – The Londonderry Planning Commission recently submitted a letter to the selectboard requesting that the commission become a three-member board. Planning Commission Clerk Pamela Spaulding addressed the selectboard at its Nov. 2 meeting, reporting that the planning commission has had difficulty recruiting and retaining members, referring to the two recent resignations from Chad Stoddard and Jen Greenfield. The letter added that, "If reducing the seats on the planning commission is not acceptable," then the commission would like to "be part of the interview and decision-making process."

Spaulding expressed that currently, the commission is able to meet its obligations to the other committees that it is supposed to represent, which is why members felt they could maintain a three-member board and fulfill their duties.

Selectboard Chair Tom Cavanagh voiced that he did not see an issue, and that the commission could revert to a five-member board if it needed to. Board member Taylor Prouty countered that there are minimums to have a quorum, and if the commission reduced the number of seats to three, it may be limiting itself. Cavanagh agreed with Prouty, noting that if someone could not attend, the commission could not hold a meeting.

Prouty stated his inclination to maintain the planning commission at five seats, and expressed hope that the right person or people would show interest in joining. Spaulding reiterated the difficulty in gaining members, reporting that Chair Trevor Powers and Vice Chair Stephen Twitchell had reached out to a number of people who declined a seat.

Town Administrator Aileen Tulloch confirmed there are state statutory requirements for the planning commission, but that it could potentially appoint an individual who does not live in Londonderry. Selectboard member Jim Flemming voiced that he would prefer the members live in town. Prouty suggested that the right candidate that lives in a neighboring town could bring relevant information to the commission.

The selectboard decided to not reduce the seats on the commission, and supported the idea of making recommendations for new applicants.

Zoning Administrator Will Goodwin then proposed to the board adopting a 10-acre rule, meaning that applications for subdivisions of 10 acres or less would not require an Act 250 permit.

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Local midterm election results

REGION – Below are the results of the Vermont state legislature elections relevant to the coverage areas of The Vermont Journal and The Shopper Edition.

Vermont State Senate

Bennington District: Seth Bongartz (D), Robert Plunkett (D)

Rutland District: Brian "BC" Collamore (R), Dave Wolk (I), David Weeks (R)

Windham District: Wendy Harrison (D), Nader Hashim (D)

Windsor District: Rebecca "Becca" White (D), Joe Major (D), Elizabeth Burrows (D)

Vermont State House

Rutland-Windsor District (Ludlow, Mount Holly, Shrewsbury): Phoebe Tucker (D)

Windham-3 (Brookline, Rockingham, Westminster): Michelle Bos-Lun (D), Chris Lundberg (D)

Windham-Windsor-Bennington (Andover, Londonderry, Weston, Winhall): Chris Morrow (D)

Windsor-2 (Baltimore, Cavendish, Weathersfield): Mark Yuengling (D)

Windsor 3 (Springfield): Kristi Morris (D), Alice Emmons (D)

Windsor-5 (Plymouth, Reading, Woodstock): Charlie Kimbell (D)

Windsor-Windham (Athens, Chester, Grafton, Windham): William "Will" Hoser (D)

Windsor County Sheriff

Claude Weyant (D)

Chester launches business directory, seeks public comment

CHESTER, Vt. – Did you know that Chester has more than 160 businesses operating within the town? The newly created Chester Economic Development Commission set as a priority the creation of a Chester business directory, and the results can be found at www.chestervermont.net, under the dropdown menu "Directory" option. Please notify the commission if you know of a business it has missed.

The Chester Economic Development Commission has created brief online surveys where community members can voice their opinions, give their thoughts, and provide feedback. There are separate, brief surveys for business owners, vacationing visitors, property owners, older residents, younger adults, resident families, and farmers. Visit www.chestervermont.net to take one or more of the surveys. Each survey has ample space for comments, and the commission reads them all.

Small, in-person, by-invitation, morning Chester Business Coffee Meetups are underway to invite suggestions from Chester's business community. The primary questions being asked are: "How do we make Chester a destination? What are your challenges? What do you need?" Candid comments are encouraged, and an anonymous summary of input received will be provided to the selectboard at its Dec. 2 meeting.

For more information, contact Town Manager Julie Hance at Julie.Hance@chestervt.gov or Town Planner Preston Bristow at Preston.Bristow@chestervt.gov, or call 802-875-2173.

SAL donates to BRGNS



LUDLOW, Vt. – Pictured here is John Taylor Sr., representing the Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Squadron 36, presenting checks to Krey Kellington, of Black River Good Neighbor Services, for fuel assistance and holiday baskets.

PHOTO PROVIDED

CORRECTION:

In the "Green Mountain Fireside opens Fireside Market in Proctorsville" article in the Nov. 4 edition of The Vermont Journal, an employee's name was incorrect. Kayla Wade is pictured behind a display of cheese and other products at the Fireside Market.

PHOTO PROVIDED





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GMUHS guidance department receives HCRS Ripple Impact Award —



Members of the GMUHS guidance department.

PHOTO PROVIDED

CHESTER, Vt. – The guidance department at Green Mountain Union High School was recently named the recipient of the Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS) Ripple Impact Award. According to HCRS, "The guidance team at Green Mountain Union High School goes above and beyond to ensure students and families have the support and resources they need to thrive. As valued HCRS partners, they work closely with our school-based services, Youth in Transition, and JOBS teams, fostering meaningful collaboration that makes a lasting difference in students' lives."

Bridge work in Plymouth and Bridgewater complete



Bridge work in Plymouth and Bridgewater is complete.

PHOTO PROVIDED

REGION – The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has completed the full replacement of bridges No. 112 in Plymouth and No. 116 in Bridgewater, on Vermont Route 100. The projects included temporary closures and detours during construction.

VTrans is seeking feedback on the construction and project communications. Please take the short survey at www.tinyurl.com/VTransBridgeSurvey2026 about your experience throughout this project by Nov. 20, at 5 p.m. The survey should take no more than five minutes to complete, and your feedback will provide valuable insight to the project team.

PIE

From Page 1

their roots, with Leslie baking at home. They will likely hold a pop-up sale around Christmas. "And then," Leslie said with a grin, "kind of whenever we want."

The Facebook post announcing the bakery's closure reads, "We look forward to our last Thanksgiving Pie Blitz in store, but not the last pie served."

As for the space at 94 The Common, that will not remain vacant for long. The community can celebrate the relocation of another unique store on the Chester Green, Thyme & Again Apothecary. Owners Michelle and Charlie Golden and their daughters, Vaylyn and Jayda, have built the wellness business throughout the past few years, offering natural and locally produced products, honeys, teas, herb blends, and much more.

Michelle said it would likely be mid-December before Thyme & Again will open at the new location. The Goldens will keep the cafe kitchen operational, where they will make products as well as "drip coffee, tea, and, in the near future, lattes and organic smoothies."

Additionally, Michelle plans to offer Leslie's baked goods and soups, once Leslie is ready to get back at it. "We are super excited to support Leslie in whatever capacity she would like," said Michelle.

"[The Blairs] have offered endless support to Thyme and the family," Michelle remarked. "[They] support Thyme continuing to grow for the community and our children's future."

LUDLOW

From Page 1

signal to applicants that the town's deadlines are meaningless. However, board member Scott Baitz countered that he believes the Fletcher Memorial Library in particular is too important of a town service for the board to risk losing its funding, and that in his tenure on the board, he cannot remember the library ever having submitted a letter late before. However, he agreed with Tucker that, if the board allows the library's application letter, it must then also allow the application letters of the other two organizations.

When put to a vote, a motion to accept the letters passed, with Tucker as the lone dissenting vote (Vice Chair Justin Hyjek was not present for the meeting.)

Finally, the board also gave its consensus to expand the proposed Tier 1B designated area, wherein housing developments of 50 units or fewer on a lot of 10 acres or less would be exempt from Act 250 review. This was a revision, in conjunction with the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission, from a previously designated, narrower area, theoretically allowing for easier development in areas slightly outside the current village center.

The Ludlow Selectboard holds its meetings on the first Monday of every month, at 6 p.m., in the auditorium at the Ludlow Town Hall.

DERRY

From Page 1

He explained that the town originally opted for a 1-acre rule because it did not have subdivision bylaws. Now, Goodwin stated, the town has comprehensive subdivision bylaws which conform to state regulations, which is the prerequisite to adopting a 10-acre rule.

Goodwin explained that a 10-acre town is less likely to have to complete zoning permits for subdivisions, while a 1-acre town is more likely to require them. He quickly noted that there are many state permits that would still be required for things like wastewater and stormwater, but fewer permits for archaeological purposes and dig reviews.

Goodwin also explained that in a 1-acre town, Act 250 would apply for any commercial development over 1 acre, but that if the municipality becomes a 10-acre town, Act 250 would only apply to commercial projects over 10 acres.

Upon questioning, Goodwin confirmed this meant that the town would have more opportunity to develop on a smaller lot, with less state interference. The board approved becoming a 10-acre municipality.

The transfer station will be closed on Thursday, Nov. 12, to observe Veterans Day.

The Londonderry Selectboard meets on the first and third Mondays of every month, at 6 p.m., at the town office and on Zoom.

health & history

Natural remedies workshop at Springfield First Congregational

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Discover how natural remedies and a healthy lifestyle support your wellbeing on Sunday, Nov. 15, at 4 p.m., in the vestry of the First Congregational Church of Springfield, 77 Main Street in Springfield, Vt.

As part of the LifeStyle Matters' Healthy Living Series, the organization invites the community to a free workshop focused on herbal remedies and a healthy lifestyle. Peggy Schauffler will share her knowledge of herbs, charcoal, and spiritual tips on how to improve your health outlook, and how these health factors support general wellness. Attendees will learn about natural remedies that support immune health and improve mental vigor, natural remedies for those who are are already sick, and other health habits that increase alertness and provide a sense of wellbeing. There will be samples of what is demonstrated, as well as free giveaways. Come curious, leave inspired, and take home practical ideas for your wellness routine.

The seminar is free. To preregister, please call 978-496-5006.

Learn Yang 24 tai chi this winter with Jo Bregnard

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Explore the well-known tai chi form Yang 24, in person or online, this season. Following the principles of safe and effective practice, you can play with these movements under the guidance of Tai Chi Vermont teacher and Springfield resident Jo Bregnard.

This winter program will step through the movements of Yang 24, the most popular tai chi form in the world. Sessions will also include supportive breath awareness, centering mindfulness practices, and qigong warmups and cooldowns. Practice both standing and seated – if being on your feet for an extended time is challenging for you, join right from your chair.

Meet on Tuesdays, at 10 a.m., Nov. 17, 2026 – April 27, 2027, at the Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse in Springfield, Vt., 21 Fairground Road, and via Zoom livestream online. Classes are 60 minutes, and recordings will be posted afterwards so you can access them on your schedule, whether you're able to attend the live session or not.

Choose from a variety of payment options, including monthly and weekly payment plans, and pay-what-you-wish. For complete details and to save your spot, visit studio.jobregnard.com/product/96859.

Experience with any style of tai chi, including Fall Prevention, Sun style, bafa wubu, or Seated Yang, will be helpful for this class, but it's not required. For answers to specific questions, email Bregnard at jo@jobregnard.com. All are welcome.

Kitten Yoga at The Well Collaborative NH

CLAREMONT, N.H. – In partnership with the Sullivan County Humane Society (SCHS), join certified yoga instructor Christy Catsos on Saturday, Nov. 21, for a joyful, gentle, beginner-friendly kitten yoga class at The Well Collaborative NH, 72 Pleasant Street in Claremont, N.H., featuring adoptable kittens from the Sullivan County Humane Society. As you flow through your practice, curious kittens will roam the room, curl up beside you, and bring smiles to every pose. Whether you are a seasoned yogi or brand new to the mat, this class is open to all levels and all animal lovers. After class, enjoy extra time for kitten cuddles, photos, and chats with SCHS staff about adoption opportunities. Come for the stretch, stay for the snuggles, and maybe even leave with a new furry best friend.

Kitten yoga will be held in two sessions limited to 15 participants per session. The first session will be held from 9:30-10:30 a.m., and the second session will be held from 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. Preregistration is required. Those ages 12 and older are welcome. Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian to sign the waiver. Please bring your yoga mat and any props you enjoy using and arrive 10-15 minutes early to check in and complete a waiver.

Tickets to this event can be purchased at www.donorbox.org/events/976462.

Please park along Pleasant Street, behind Citizens Bank and Claremont Savings Bank, in the public lot next to Mascoma Bank beside the American Legion, or behind the old theater building off Pleasant Street. Enter through the side garden (iron gate) on the Pleasant Street side of the church. Use the ramp entrance and go up the stairs once inside. Elevator access is also available.

Ignat Solzhenitsyn to speak in Proctorsville

PROCTORSVILLE, Vt. – Nov. 17 marks an important date for the work of the Nobel Laureate and Soviet dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. On this date in 1962, "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" was published in Novy Mir, ushering in a new understanding of Stalin's forced labor camps, the Gulag. In 2026, Nov. 17 is the publication date of "Love the Revolution: An Unfinished Novel," in English.

According to the Solzhenitsyn Center, the major part of this unfinished novel was composed in 1948, during Solzhenitsyn's stay in the Marfino sharashka. The writer had to leave behind what he had written when he was shipped to Ekibastuz in 1950, but was able to retrieve this material when he returned from exile. Solzhenitsyn's original intent was for "Love the Revolution" to be an account of his entire military career, but his attempt to resume the narrative after returning from exile failed, and the work remains fragmentary.



Ignat Solzhenitsyn.
PHOTO PROVIDED

On Wednesday, Nov. 18, at 6 p.m., Solzhenitsyn's son Ignat will be speaking about his father's latest publication at the Cavendish Fletcher Community Library, 573 Main Street in Proctorsville.

Ignat Solzhenitsyn is internationally known as a pianist and conductor, and is currently the editor of Solzhenitsyn's "The Calf Who Bullied the Oak," due to be published April 1, 2027.

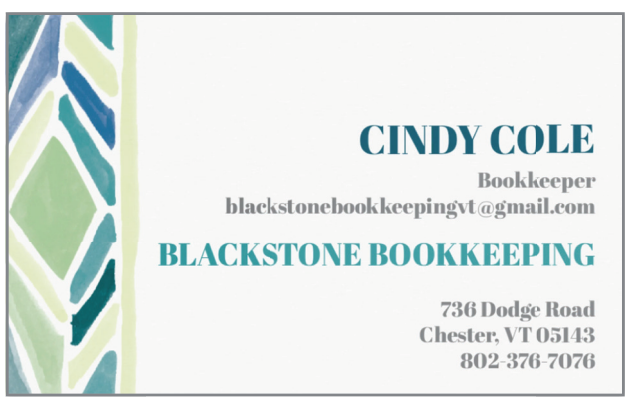
The Vermont Historical Society's exhibit "Solzhenitsyn in Vermont" continues to be on display at the Cavendish Library, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m., until Dec. 5. These events are free and open to the public. For more information, email margocaulfield@icloud.com or call 802-226-7807.

Heritage potluck and BRAM members meeting

LUDLOW, Vt. – A heritage potluck sponsored by the Black River Academy Museum (BRAM) will be held on Thursday, Nov. 19, from 6-8 p.m., at the Church of the Annunciation, 7 North Depot Street, to celebrate the early Finnish, Polish, and Italian immigrants who settled Ludlow. Please bring a favorite family recipe or a dish inspired by these cultures to share.

The guest speaker will be Phillip Gatenby, a passionate historian and researcher who has personally visited and recorded 100 of Vermont's historic covered bridges. Gatenby will take listeners on a visual and historical journey across the state, sharing the unique stories, architecture, and engineering marvels of these iconic landmarks.

BRAM invites both those who are already members and those who might like to become members to this fun and educational evening with wonderful food. If you are not able to cook or bake a cultural dish, please bring a salad or dessert to share. For more information, contact Sharon Bixby at seb1@tds.net or 802-228-8823.









real estate

PROS TO KNOW

Is it better to rent or own a home?

REGION – October is Financial Planning Month, which makes it a good time to look at one of the biggest financial decisions many of us make: Does it make more sense to rent or own a home?

There's no one-size-fits-all answer. Renting can offer flexibility and fewer responsibilities, while homeownership can provide stability and the opportunity to build equity over time. The key is making sure you're comparing the whole financial picture, not simply your current rent to a potential mortgage payment.

Start with the monthly costs. For renters, that typically means rent, utilities, and renters insurance. For homeowners, the picture may include principal and interest, property taxes, homeowners insurance, mortgage insurance, HOA fees, utilities, and maintenance. But monthly expenses are only part of the equation.

With a mortgage, a portion of each principal and interest payment may go toward reducing what you owe, helping you build equity over time. Your home may also appreciate in value, although appreciation is never guaranteed. Renting doesn't offer that same opportunity to build ownership in the property.

There are also up-front costs to consider when buying, including a down payment, closing costs, and moving expenses. And this is where one of the biggest homebuying myths can get in the way: Do you really need 20% down to buy a home?

No. A 20% down payment is not required for many homebuyers.

It's a common misconception, and one that can cause people to put off exploring homeownership because they assume they haven't saved enough.

Depending on your financial situation and eligibility, there may be conventional loan options requiring significantly less than 20% down, as well as FHA, VA, and USDA loans, and down payment or closing cost assistance programs. Some options may even allow qualified borrowers to purchase with little or no down payment.

Before you assume buying is out of reach, PrimeLending can help you look at your income, savings, debts, a comfortable monthly payment, and longer-term goals. Then you can compare loan programs and down payment scenarios to understand what's actually possible.

Homeownership can also have tax implications, but they vary based on your individual circumstances. This is an important conversation to have with your accountant or tax professional.

Consider asking the following questions: Could I potentially benefit from deductions related to mortgage interest or property taxes? Would owning a home affect whether it makes sense for me to itemize deductions? Are there tax considerations I should understand before buying or eventually selling a home? And how could buying a home fit into my broader financial plan?

So, is it better to rent or buy?

It depends on your finances, goals, lifestyle, local housing costs, and how long you expect to stay in the home. That's why PrimeLending encourages people to start with their numbers, not general assumptions about whether renting or buying is better.

PrimeLending's rent vs. own calculator, which can be found at lo.primelending.com/vblodgett/calculators/rent-vs-buy, is a great place to start. You can compare the potential costs of renting and homeownership and see how different assumptions may affect the numbers over time.

Then, PrimeLending can help you take the next step by exploring your financing and down payment options, answering your mortgage questions, and giving you real numbers to consider.

You don't have to be ready to buy to start the conversation. Sometimes, simply knowing what's possible can make your next financial decision a whole lot clearer.

Submitted by Victoria Blodgett, PrimeLending, Ludlow, Vt.

Saxtons River chef uses foraged ingredients at Mission Farm —

KILLINGTON, Vt. – Dandelions,dogwoods and dock, are among the many plants growing and thriving at Mission Farm in Killington, some intentionally planted and others taking up residence to thrive in the fertile floodplain soil. In May, the Ottauquechee Natural Resources Conservation District (ONRCD) received grant awards from the Trees For Streams program and from Greater Upper Valley Trout Unlimited to partner with Poultney-Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District (PMNRCD) on planting the bank of the river along an area of Mission Farm, a historically farmed parcel that now hosts a variety of public walking trails, a community kitchen, and a charming and welcoming 1890s Episcopal church.

At a recent workshop sponsored by the ONRCD, participants enjoyed a guided tour of the recently-planted riparian buffer, a wide strip of vegetation the roots of which will help stabilize the bank soil the next time the Ottauquechee River rises. The afternoon session featured guest chef Charlotte Galley, of Saxtons River, as she shared a collection of delightful recipes featuring foraged natural ingredients, such as crab apples, autumn olive berries, and even acorns. From tart and tangy fruit leather to a freshly baked loaf of crabapple and acorn bread, Galley tantalized everyone with delicious treats created right from the landscape and sent everyone home with recipes.

PMNRCD is planning a seed collection workshop in the coming months, inviting the public to participate and learn to identify local plants, shrubs, and trees, and help harvest seeds that will be propagated in the PMNRCD nursery for future plant sales. If interested, please contact Sadie Brown at sadie@pmnrcd.org.

Learn more about outdoor opportunities and public events at Mission Farm at www.missionfarmvt.org; for more information about riverbank buffer planting, contact Ottauquechee NRCD at onrcd1@gmail.com or 802-369-0697.



Charlotte Galley cooks up foraged treats and shared recipes.
PHOTO PROVIDED

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2055 & 2071 MAIN & 28 PLEASANT STREET, CAVENDISH - $399,000
Three properties are being sold together with some owner terms possible. 2071 Main Street could be used as a single family or two units. The upper level renovation is nearly complete. Prep work has begun in the lower level. Includes a large barn. 2055 Main Street has a newer concrete foundation at the back of the previous structure and is capped and covered. This property also has a large barn. 28 Pleasant Street is behind the Main Street properties and has a separate access off Pleasant Street.
Please view https://bit.ly/4pBUaFC or call Ty Murray at 802-777-8047.
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SERVICES

obituaries

ASCUTNEY, VT.

Brownsville Community Church, 66 Brownsville-Hartland Rd.
Sunday service is 9:30 a.m., held in the church with reduced occupancy or streaming online at www.facebook.com/brownsvillecommunitychurch and www.brownsvilleumc-vt.org.

Vision of Light Church of Spiritualism and Healing, P.O. Box 133, Windsor
The Sunday service is at 10 a.m. with Lay Pastor Dawn Hancy via Zoom. Sign up for the Vision of Light newsletter and Zoom links on Facebook @VOLChurch.

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.

United Church of Bellows Falls, UCC, 8 School St.
Worship service starts at 10 a.m. every Sunday. All are welcome to attend. Following the service, there will be a time of refreshments. Many other services are offered throughout the week. If you have any questions or want to learn more, call 802-463-4323, visit the church, or find them on Facebook.

CAVENDISH, VT.

Cavendish Baptist Church, 2258 Main St.
Sunday services are 10 a.m. online or in person. Online services are on Facebook at 10 a.m. Go to www.facebook.com/Cavendish-Baptist-Church-258814894244302. More at www.CavendishBaptist.com or call 802-226-7131.

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 Seventh-day Adventist Church, 242 Main St.
Saturday Services include Bible Study at 9:30 a.m. and Worship Service at 11:15 a.m. and a healthy lunch for all after the service. All are welcome, call 603-276-2383 for more information.

CHESTER, VT.

First Universalist Parish of Chester, Route 103 North
Services are Sundays at 10 a.m. in person. Sunday services run from September to early June. Contact chestervtuu@gmail.com for a Zoom link for the service.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 313 Main St.
Services are on Wednesdays, from 5:30-6 p.m.; and on Sundays, from 10-11:30 a.m., both in person and by Zoom, followed by coffee hour. All are welcome. Handicapped accessible. For a link to the Zoom service or more information about services and events, please visit www.stlukesepiscopalvt.org.

Andover Community Church, 928 Weston-Andover Rd.
Sunday school at 9:30 a.m. and worship service 10:45 a.m. For more information, go to www.andovercommunitychurch.org.

CLAREMONT, N.H.

Union-St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 133 Old Church Rd.
Weekly service of morning prayer or Holy Communion held on Sunday, at 9:30 a.m.

GRAFTON, VT.

Grafton Community Church, 55 Main St.
Worship begins Sunday at 10 a.m. View sermons on Zoom. For more information, go to www.graftoncommunitychurch.org or call 802-843-2346.

LONDONDERRY, VT.

First Baptist Church, 62 Crescent St.
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.

LUDLOW, VT.

Annunciation Catholic Church, Corner of Depot and High St.
Masses are celebrated on Saturday at 4:30 p.m. and on Sunday at 9 a.m. For further information, see our website at churchoftheannunciation.org, or call us at 802-228-3451.

Ludlow Baptist Church, on the Green, 99 Main St.
Weekly worship services are in-person. Sunday school is at 9:30 a.m. for all ages, and Sunday worship is at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Wednesday's prayer meeting is at 6:30 p.m. For more information, go to www.LudlowBaptist.org.

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.

SPRINGFIELD, VT.

Calvary Baptist Church, 156 Main St.
Sunday services are 9:30 a.m. in person. Services are still streamed at www.facebook.com/calvarybaptistchurchspringfieldvt. For more information, go to www.calvarylovesspringfield.com.

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, 90 Park St.
Sunday Liturgy is 9:30 a.m. and Saturday vespers at 5 p.m. For more information, call 802-885-2615 or Parish Council President Thomas Barton at 802-263-5719.

Springfield United Methodist Church, 10 Valley St.
Worship begins at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays. Springfield United Methodist Church welcomes everyone! The church can be reached at 802-885-3456.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 33 Fairground Rd.
Sunday Services 8:30 a.m. - Holy Days as announced. Services alternate between Clergy Officiated, Traditional Rite I and Contemporary Rite II, Holy Eucharist, and Licensed Lay Led Rites I and II Morning Prayer. All are invited regardless of religious affiliation. Call David at 802-885-2972 with questions.

WALPOLE, N.H.

St. John's Episcopal Church, corner of Westminster and Elm St.
Sunday services are 10 a.m. in person or via Zoom. For more information, go to www.stjohnswalpole.org, email pastor@stjohnswalpole.org, or leave a message at 603-756-4533.

Walpole Unitarian Church, corner of Union and Main St.
Sunday Service begins at 10 a.m. Services are also available via Zoom. For links and updates, go to www.walpoleunitarianchurch.org.

WESTMINSTER, VT.

First Congregational Church of Westminster, 3470 U.S. Route 5
Sunday services are at 10 a.m. in our historic church and on Zoom. We have a children's message each Sunday and following church is a time of fellowship in the Hall with coffee and snacks. For more information, call 802-518-0321, email us at westminstercongoline@gmail.com, or find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-Church-of-Westminster-Inc-1506511432980057.

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.

Leslie A. Cole, 1948-2026

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Leslie Alvin Cole, 78, died at the Springfield Center for Living and Rehabilitation on Monday, Nov. 2, 2026. He was born on Sept. 14, 1948, in Springfield, Vt., to Norman and Lois (Stoddard) Cole.

Leslie worked as a logger, enjoyed hunting, and loved to be outdoors.

He is survived by a daughter and his three brothers, Calvin Cole, Dennis Cole, and Gerry Cole.

Leslie is predeceased by his sister, Linda Hallett.

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

Howard Ryan, 1929-2026

WINDSOR, Vt. – Howard Ryan passed peacefully on Nov. 3, 2026, in Windsor, Vt. Born in Moretown, Vt., on Feb. 28, 1929, to Herman and Irene (Belisle) Ryan, Howard received his elementary education in a one-room schoolhouse in Moretown, then attended Montpelier High School. He left school in 1947, but later in life received his GED diploma.



Howard Ryan, 1929-2026.
PHOTO PROVIDED

Howard was employed by Bryant Grinder in Springfield, Vt., as a machinist, for 40 years, until his retirement in 1990. Hobbies included deer hunting and old cars.

Howard was predeceased by Dorothy, his wife of 75 years, as well as a special brother, Lyle. Howard is survived by his sons, Wayne and his wife, Colleen, of Saranac, N.Y.; and Mike and his wife, Lynn, of Colorado. He is also survived by his grandsons, David, Matthew, Duncan, and Nathan, and their wives and children.

Interment will be in Berlin Corners Cemetery at the family's discretion. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to your local humane society.

Knight Funeral Home has been entrusted with arrangements. Condolences may be expressed in an online guestbook found at www.knightfuneralhomes.com.

John A. Davis, 1956-2026

CHARLESTOWN, N.H. – John Albert Davis, 70, of Charlestown, N.H., died at the Jack Byrne Center, on Oct. 31, 2026. A burial service will take place at Oakland Cemetery on Nov. 12, at 1 p.m. His full obituary can be seen at www.davismemorialchapel.net/obituary/john-davis.



John Davis, 1956-2026.
PHOTO PROVIDED

Stephen Saunders, 1957-2026

SAXTONS RIVER, Vt. – Stephen "Stevie" Saunders, 69, of Saxtons River, Vt., passed away unexpectedly on Oct. 13, 2026, at the Springfield Hospital. He was born on April 6, 1957, the son of Patricia Saunders Kenyon, of Saxtons River, Vt., and the late Donald Saunders, of Waldoboro, Maine.

Stevie worked in the farming industry and also in the concrete industry with his nephews, Chase and Riley Saunders. He especially loved playing his guitar with his sister Janie, creating cherished memories through their shared love of music.

He is survived by his mother, Patricia Saunders Kenyon; his son, Jared Saunders, of Denver, Colo.; his sister Janie Hisler, of Waldoboro, Maine; his significant other, Sawyer Trevorrow, of Saxtons River, Vt.; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to his father, Stevie was predeceased by his sister Amy Saunders and his brother, Michael Saunders.



Stevie Saunders, 1957-2026.
PHOTO PROVIDED

Stevie will be remembered fondly by his family and all who knew him.

A graveside service will take place at the Saxtons River Cemetery on Nov. 28, at 2 p.m., with Pastor Harold Noyes officiating. Immediately following, there will be a reception for family and friends at the Bartonsville Grange.

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









calendar

HOLIDAY EVENTS

NOV. 14 –

ACWORTH, N.H. – Get into the holiday spirit with a full day of shopping, community connections, and old-fashioned holiday fun at the Acworth Community Project Holiday Fair on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., at the Acworth Town Hall, 13 Town Hall Road. The holiday fair is a wonderful opportunity to shop local and support talented area crafters, artisans, and small businesses. Visitors will find unique, handmade gifts and one-of-a-kind treasures just in time for the holiday season. Children of all ages are invited to stop by and visit with Santa Claus between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

NOV. 21 –

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield Senior Center, 139 Main Street, will hold a Christmas bazaar on Saturday, Nov. 21, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Start your holiday shopping early. There will be plenty of baked goods and tasty treats, as well as many vendors. A luncheon will be available. If you are interested in making food items for the bazaar, there is a signup sheet at the senior center.

CHARLESTOWN, N.H. – The Charlestown Congregational Church, 71 Main Street, will hold its 35th annual Christmas bazaar on Saturday, Nov. 21, from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Purchase a pie for your Thanksgiving table or many other food treats: breads, cookies, candy, and tasty gifts. Luncheon will be served from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. There will also be wonderful gifts and holiday decor, and numerous basket raffles, with a drawing at 2 p.m. Come visit the Up-Attic Thrift Shop and the bookstore with gently used pages for all ages. For more information, call 603-826-3335. Shop our hometown country bazaar.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOV. 12 –

CLAREMONT, N.H. – The New Hampshire Telephone Museum is coming to the Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, on Nov. 12, at 1 p.m., to present the history of telecommunications from the race to the patent office, the liquid phone, and the undertaker who invented the dial system, plus telephone movie trivia. This program is open to the public at no cost. Bring your family and friends to enjoy this event.



NOV. 14 –

S. LONDONDERRY, Vt. – The South Londonderry Free Library invites children of all ages to make Marc Chagall-inspired oil pastels with art teacher Casey Junker Bailey on Saturday, Nov. 14, at 10:30 a.m. Learn about the famous Russian-French artist known for his colorful, dreamy, and whimsical paintings, and receive a copy of the beautifully illustrated book "Through The Window: Views Of Marc Chagall's Life And Art." The program is free of charge thanks to a grant from Vermont Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts. All materials are provided, and the workshop is appropriate for all ages. For more information, contact the library at 802-824-3371 or visit www.slflibrary.org.

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – There will be a cozy and delicious stick season dinner served at the Springfield Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse, 21 Fairground Road, on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 5:30-7 p.m. The menu will include a variety of homemade lasagnas, including meat, vegetarian, and gluten free, as well as fresh garden salad, garlic bread, and dessert. You may eat in or take your meal out. The cost is discounted for children ages 5 and up.

NOV. 15 –

LONDONDERRY, Vt. – "Earth's Greatest Enemy," a documentary by Abby Martin looking at oil and the U.S. military-industrial complex, will be shown on Sunday, Nov. 15, at 4 p.m., at the Flood Brook School, 91 Vermont Route 11 in Londonderry, as part of the Consciousness and Contact conference. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with Martin, and conference speakers Paul Levy discussing the wetiko and Elana Freeland discussing Dr. Rudolf Steiner and the Eighth Sphere. This event is free and open to the public.

NOV. 16 –

LUDLOW, Vt. – A Red Cross blood drive will be held on Monday, Nov. 16, from 12-5 p.m., at the Ludlow Community Center, 37 Main Street. To make an appointment, visit www.redcrossblood.org or call 800-RED-CROSS.

NOV. 20-22 –

LUDLOW, Vt. – The Okemo Mountain School will be hosting its annual Ski Swap on Friday, Nov. 20, from 4-7 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 21, from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.; and Sunday, Nov. 22, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., at the Round House at Jackson Gore. New and used equipment will include skis, snowboards, and gear. To sell your used equipment, it must be dropped off at the Round House on Saturday, Nov. 14, Sunday, Nov. 15, or Wednesday, Nov. 18, between 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. All sales will benefit the Okemo Mountain School, www.okemomountainschool.org.

NOV. 21 –

CLAREMONT, N.H. – A turkey dinner will be served at the Claremont Senior Center, 5 Acer Heights, on Saturday, Nov. 21. Those who wish to attend must register by calling 603-678-0433 by 3:30 p.m. the day of the dinner. Please leave your name, how many dinners, a call-back number, and whether you will be eating in or taking your meal out. The menu will be turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes with gravy, squash, rolls with butter, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie.

RECURRING EVENTS

SUNDAYS –

PLYMOUTH, Vt. – The Plymouth Historical Society, at the former Plymouth Elementary School, will be open the first and third Sundays of every month, from 2-4 p.m. Watch for the "open" flag.

MONDAYS –

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Free Tobacco Quit class led by Sarah Doyle, Mondays, from 6-7 p.m., at Parks Place, 44 School Street Extension, Bellows Falls. Dinner included. Call or text Sarah at 802-289-0045 or email sdoyle@springfieldmed.org.

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – Overeaters Anonymous 12-Step Recovery Program is Mondays, from 6-7 p.m., at Parks Place, 44 School Street Extension in Bellows Falls. The program is free, and is for anyone suffering from obesity, binge eating, anorexia, or bulimia. All are welcome. For more information, call 802-376-3507, or visit www.oa.org.

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

TUESDAYS –

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

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

WESTMINSTER, Vt. – Beginner tai chi classes are held at the Westminster Institute, 3534 Route 5, on Tuesdays, at 10:30 a.m. Admission is on a sliding scale.

WESTMINSTER, Vt. – Seated tai chi classes are held at the Westminster Institute, 3534 Route 5, on Tuesdays, at 12:15 p.m. A gentle, all-body workout. Admission is on a sliding scale. Join anytime.

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 9-10 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 –

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

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

LUDLOW, Vt. – Certified instructor Helena Wu will teach tai chi classes every Thursday, from 9-10 a.m., at the Black River Valley Senior Center, 10 High Street in Ludlow. Classes are free, and are limited to 10 participants. Registration is required. For more information, contact the Senior Center at 802-228-7421, or Helena Wu at 802-289-7369.

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield Senior Center, 139 Main Street, will host a crafting group on the first and third Thursday of every month, at 1 p.m. This will be open to anyone who practices knitting, crocheting, needlepoint, paper crafts, card making, and other crafts. Come work on your craft and enjoy some conversation.

FRIDAYS –

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – On Fridays from 11 a.m. – 12 p.m., John Bohannon will teach tai chi and qi gong at the Rockingham Library in Bellows Falls, Vt. No special equipment or clothing is required.

CHESTER, Vt. – Alcoholics Anonymous meetings held every Friday at 6:30 p.m. at St. Joseph's Church, located at 96 South Main Street in Chester. If you have a problem with alcohol, this is an understanding place to come to.

SATURDAYS –

WESTMORELAND, N.H. – Books & More Thrift Shoppe, 9 South Village Common behind the brick church, is open every Saturday, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., featuring a selection of adult, young adult, and children's books; games, puzzles, household items, office supplies, pet items, crafts, fabric, yarns, sewing and knitting items, small appliances, gardening tools, and more; as well as a book nook and children's area.

DAILY –

REGION – If you want to drink that's your business, but if you want to stop, that's ours. Contact Alcoholics Anonymous at www.aavt.org or call your local hotline at 802-802-2288 and join a meeting. You are not alone.

LEGAL NOTICES

ACT 250 NOTICE
MINOR APPLICATION 700038-2
10 V.S.A. §§ 6000 - 6111

Application 700038-2 from Eric Richard 226 Old Tavern Road, Weston, VT 05161 and Duke Enterprises, Attn: Edward Brown, PO Box 1363, West Townshend, VT 05359-1363 was received on October 19, 2026 and deemed complete on October 30, 2026. The project is generally described as the demolition of the Old Mill Tavern structure. The project is located at 2242 North Main Street in Londonderry, Vermont. The application may be viewed on the Land Use Review Board's website (https://act250.vermont.gov/) by clicking "Act 250 Database" and entering the project number "700038-2."

No hearing will be held and a permit may be issued unless, on or before Tuesday, December 1, 2026, a party notifies the District 2 Commission in writing of an issue requiring a hearing, or the Commission sets the matter for a hearing on its own motion. Any person as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6085(c)(1) may request a hearing. Any hearing request must be in writing, must state the criteria or sub-criteria at issue, why a hearing is required, and what additional evidence will be presented at the hearing. Any hearing request by an adjoining property owner or other person eligible for party status under 10 V.S.A. § 6085(c)(1)(E) must include a petition for party status under the Act 250 Rules. To request party status and a hearing, fill out the Party Status Petition Form on the Board's website: https://act250.vermont.gov/documents/party-status-petition-form, and email it to the District 2 Office at: Act250.Springfield@vermont.gov. Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law may not be prepared unless the Commission holds a public hearing.

For more information contact Stephanie Gile at the address or telephone number below.

Dated this November 5, 2026.

By: /s/ Stephanie Gile
Stephanie Gile
District Coordinator
100 Mineral Street, Suite # 305
Springfield, VT 05156-3168
802-261-1943
Stephanie.Gile@vermont.gov

TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Springfield Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, November 18, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at 96 Main Street, Springfield, VT to receive public input and take testimony on the following applications.

DRB 2026-01: Downtown design control district review application for painting and exterior alterations to the structure at 40 Main Street, parcel 26-5-11. Zoning District: CB.

DRB 2026-02: Site plan application for addition of a third dwelling unit to the 2-unit building at 1 Slack Avenue, parcel 27-2-64. Zoning District: MDR.

Two Rivers Supervisory Union
Employment opportunity, part-time bus driver

The Green Mountain Unified School District is seeking a part-time bus driver. This school year position includes 4 to 6 hours of driving per day in the morning and afternoon. Additional hours are available. Class B CDL license with a school bus endorsement is required along with a background check and DOT medical card. Visit www.schoolspring.com/jobdetail?jobId=5936331 for more information.

Town of Westminster
P.O. BOX 147 WESTMINSTER, VT 05158
Tel. 802-722- 4524 Fax 802-722-9816

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD (DRB)

WESTMINSTER TOWN HALL
Westminster, Vermont

Legal Notice

The Westminster Development Review Board will meet at 6:00 pm on **Monday**, **December 7, 2026** to consider the following:

Application # 27-19 — **Linda Fawcette (Owner & Applicant)** property located at 3505 US Route 5. The owner is requesting to remove existing shingles and sheathing and replace them with stone coated metal shingles in the Historic Village District of Westminster, Vermont. This Application will be reviewed under **Section 311 Site Plan Review; Section 445 Historic Village District Zone; & Article IX Historical Preservation Overlay District** of the adopted 2017 Zoning Bylaws.

Application # 27-20 — John MacArthur & Isabeall Logan (Owners & Applicants) property located at **110 Arnof Way.** The applicants are requesting a Change of Use – adding a studio apartment to one section of the Barn / Home Business. Application will be reviewed under **Section 311 Site Plan Review; Section 448 Resource Conservation District; and Section 215 Zoning Permit Procedure** of the adopted 2017 Zoning Bylaws**.**

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

The application is available for review in the Westminster Town Hall, 3651 US Route 5 Westminster, Vermont 05158, Monday – Thursday from 7:30 am - 4:30 pm.

LEGAL NOTICES classy & opinion

Dear Editor,

Twenty years ago, on Nov. 6, 2006, I walked through the doors of what was then called the Southern Vermont Health and Recreation Center for my first official day of work. At the time, I was an employee of the Greater Burlington YMCA, contracted to help get this new organization off the ground. The walls weren't finished. The pools had no water. The locker rooms needed lockers. There were no operational plans, no established routines, and certainly no playbook for what lay ahead.

There was, however, one very clear directive: Be open for business by Dec. 31.

Looking back, I'm not entirely sure we appreciated the magnitude of what we were undertaking. We were building more than a recreation center. We were creating an organization, developing a team, and asking a community to believe in something that hadn't yet opened its doors.

I would like to recognize the individuals who brought me here and placed their trust in me during those early days. Edgar May, George Lamb, Bob Flint, Rick Bibens, Doug Priestley, Clint Martin, Marie Gelineau, Nora Swierczynski, and Ted Cody were among the board members whose vision, commitment, and determination helped bring this facility to life. Sharon Ayer, who served as the organization's administrative staff member at the time, was also an important part of those earliest days. I remain incredibly grateful to each of them for the opportunity they gave me and for their belief in what this organization could become.

Something else stands out when I reflect on those first months: how welcoming this community was to me. I arrived here as someone new to Springfield, tasked with helping open a facility that so many people had worked hard to make possible. From the beginning, I was met with kindness, encouragement, and a genuine sense of community. That welcome, and the relationships I've built here over the years, are among the biggest reasons I'm still here 20 years later.

Over these two decades, I've watched children learn to swim who are now adults. I've seen friendships develop, people overcome challenges, and countless individuals discover the benefits of being active and connected to others. I've also had the privilege of working alongside dedicated staff, volunteers, board members, donors, and community partners who have given so much of themselves to make the Edgar May what it is today. Whatever success we've enjoyed has always been a collective effort.

There have been plenty of challenges along the way, and certainly more than a few lessons learned. But there has also been an incredible sense of purpose in being part of something that means so much to this community.

As we approach the Edgar May's 20th birthday on Jan. 1, I am particularly excited about what lies ahead. In many ways, our work to redevelop the neighboring foundry property reminds me of those early days in 2006. We have a vision for what is possible, a great deal of work ahead of us, and a community whose support will be essential to making it happen.

I didn't want this anniversary to pass without acknowledging this milestone and, more importantly, saying thank you!

Thank you for welcoming me into this community 20 years ago, for believing in the Edgar May, and for continuing to make this place such an important part of so many lives. It's been quite a journey, and I'm looking forward to what comes next.

Sincerely,
Christian Craig, Executive Director
Edgar May Health and Recreation Center

Springfield Senior Center seeks vendors for Christmas bazaar

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – The Springfield Senior Center, 139 Main Street in Springfield, Vt., is looking for more vendors for its Christmas bazaar. If you are interested in being a vendor, please call the senior center at 802-885-3933.

The annual Christmas bazaar will be held on Saturday, Nov. 21, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., at the senior center. There will be plenty of baked goods, a luncheon, and many vendors with goods available for purchase.

For more information, please reach out to Lori Johnson, executive director, at 802-885-3933 or lorijohnsonssc@gmail.com.

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OPINION POLICY

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.

REBUTTALS: In the event that a direct reply or rebuttal to a letter is published, each party will get only one rebuttal thereafter.

All opinion pieces will be published in the opinion section of the newspaper. Viewpoints do not necessarily reflect the views of The Vermont Journal.

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EZ-Dump Enterprises has a 15-yard dump trailer available for rent. 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.

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HELP WANTED

LUDLOW/CHESTER, Vt. – Do you live in Ludlow or Chester and participate in local selectboard meetings? Write for us! Please email publisher@vermontjournal.com or call 802-228-3600.

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CHILD FIND PUBLIC NOTICE
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In accordance the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Child Find Mandate, Fall Mountain Regional School District, which serves the towns of Acworth, Alstead, Charlestown, Langdon, and Walpole, seeks to locate, identify, and evaluate all children under the age of 22 who qualify for Special Education Services regardless of the severity of their disability.

The Child Find requirements of Fall Mountain Regional School District also apply to highly mobile children, homeless children, and those children in grades K-12 who attend approved, non-public private schools within the geographic boundaries of Fall Mountain Regional School District.

If you know of a child who may need special education services or would like additional information, please contact the Assistant Special Education Director, Emma Kobeski (ekobeski@sau60.org or 603-835-7104) to schedule an appointment for Friday, November 20th from 9am-1pm.

Town of Ludlow, Vermont
FT Patrol Officer Job Opening

Ludlow Police Department is accepting applications for a Full-Time Patrol Officer.

Seeking motivated certified candidates. Lateral transfers and out-of-state certified officers are encouraged to apply. Competitive starting pay is $30.96–$49.49/hour, commensurate with level of certification/experience, plus shift differentials of 5% and 7%.

Excellent benefits, including but not limited to, Insurance/ Pension/ PTO.

Must possess a valid driver's license, pass background, physical, psychological exams, and meet Vermont Criminal Justice Council requirements.

To apply: Submit resume, cover letter, and completed application to Chief Jeffrey Warfle at Jeffrey.warfle@vermont.gov. Application is available on Town's website www.ludlow.vt.us

YOUR CAREER IN LAW ENFORCEMENT BEGINS HERE

The Town of Ludlow Police Department is seeking a highly motivated individual ready to begin a career in law enforcement.

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Starting pay: During entry-level training: $26.47/hour with benefits including insurances/pension
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The Town of Ludlow seeks a qualified professional to lead municipal planning, zoning administration, permitting, and community development.
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Apply: Submit cover letter, resume and three professional references to Penny Wu, Municipal Manager, at PWu@ludlow.vt.us or Town of Ludlow, PO Box 359, Ludlow, VT 05149.
Position Open until filled. Equal Opportunity Employer.
For more Application and Job Description details: go to our website: www.ludlow.vt.us

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(12/09/26 - 52)

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Upcoming Workshops
Make a Wreath w/ Joanna Bombadil Nov. 21
Wire Wrapped Earrings w/ Lisa Caron Hickey Dec. 5
Raku Pottery w/ Andrew Berends Dec. 5 & 12
Info & sign up: https://galleryvault.org/workshops/

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(01/06/27 - TFN - 13)

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(04/07/27 - 26)



Veterans Day ceremonies and celebrations

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The American Legion Post 37, 42 Rockingham Road, in Bellows Falls, will host ceremonies on Wednesday, Nov. 11. Members of the American Legion and the community are welcome to meet at the post, at 5:30 p.m., with ceremonies to start at 6 p.m., including color guard, flag disposal, POW/MIA service, military flag honors, and Post Everlasting. Thank you to all veterans near and far! For more information, call 802-463-0962.

CHESTER, Vt. – The American Legion Post 67, 637 Vermont Route 103 North, in Chester, will host a Veterans Day dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 6 p.m. Veterans and their spouses, and the spouses of deceased veterans, will eat for free. There will be a charge for all other guests. The menu will include roast beef, baked potato, green beans, and dessert.



Honoring our veterans, today and every day.
PHOTO PROVIDED

The significance of Nov. 11

REGION – Nov. 11 is a significant day in world history because it marks the signing of the armistice between the Allies of World War I and Germany, at 5:45 a.m. on Nov. 11, 1918. Though the formal peace treaty, the Treaty of Versailles, was not signed until 1919, and hostilities between the sides continued for hours after the armistice was signed, the day is still viewed as the end of World War I. Today, in the United States, Nov. 11 is celebrated as Veterans Day.

What distinguishes Veterans Day from Memorial Day? The Department of Veterans Affairs notes that Veterans Day honors all those individuals who served honorably in the miliary during both wartime and peacetime. Memorial Day is a day to honor and remember military personnel who died in the service of their country, particularly those who lost their lives in battle or as a result of wounds sustained in battle.

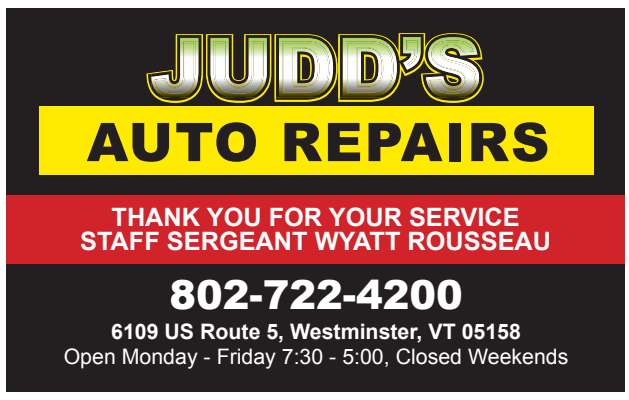






































8 ways to honor veterans

REGION – The term "veteran" refers to a person who served in the active military, naval, air service, or space service, and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. In the U.S., there are actually five types of protected veterans, according to the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (VEVRAA). Under VEVRAA, a veteran may be classified as a disabled veteran, recently separated veteran, active-duty wartime veteran, campaign badge veteran, or Armed Forces service medal veteran.

Veterans deserve respect and admiration all year long, but also get their own holiday each November. Veterans Day celebrates veterans' patriotism and willingness to sacrifice and serve. This Veterans Day, people can consider these eight unique ways to honor the veterans in their community.

(1) Attend events. Organize or participate in local Veterans Day celebrations, such as parades and ceremonial events.

(2) Get involved with veterans' affairs. Support veterans by volunteering with organizations that assist them, such as the VA, local veterans groups, VA hospitals, or charities dedicated to veteran services.

(3) Petition for veteran speakers. Reach out to schools, scout troops, or other groups and arrange opportunities for veterans to share their stories and contributions. Learning about the sacrifices these men and women made can heighten individuals' appreciation for veterans.

(4) Support the families of veterans. Reach out to veterans' families, who also must make sacrifices and concessions. Anything from shopping, to babysitting, doing chores, or making a meal can help the families of veterans.

(5) Make a donation. If finances allow, make contributions to reputable charities that provide services for veterans like those that offer mental health counseling or job placement services. If there isn't a charity that fits with your vision, begin one.

(6) Hire veterans to work. If you are a business owner or hiring manager, consider hiring veterans for open positions at your company. It can be challenging to reenter the workforce after service, so make it known that your firm welcomes veterans.

(7) Offer personal acknowledgements. Take the time to speak to veterans and thank them for their service. If possible, when dining out, ask the server if you can pay for the meal of a veteran who also is dining that day.

(8) Don't forget the fallen veterans. Although Memorial Day is designed to honor those who lost their lives through military service, people still can honor the fallen veterans on Veterans Day by sharing stories or placing flags at veteran cemeteries.

Veterans Day is celebrated on Nov. 11, marking an opportunity to express one's gratitude and support for the scores of veterans who have served honorably.

American Legion Post #37
Bellows Falls, Vt.
VETERANS DAY
Wednesday, November 11th, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m.
– MEMBERS & COMMUNITY –
Meet at the POST at 5:30 pm / Ceremonies start at 6:00 pm: Color Guard, Flag Disposal, POW/MIA Service, Military Flag Honors, and Post Everlasting

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honoring all who served
Nov 11th
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arts & entertainment

Proctorsville Ghost Walk

PROCTORSVILLE, Vt. – Poctorsville seems to favor a very diverse group of hauntings and spirits. One ghost is actually written into the deed of a home, another has a thing for pennies, child spirits have their favorite haunts, and the village boasts the most haunted inn in Vermont, the Golden Stage Inn.

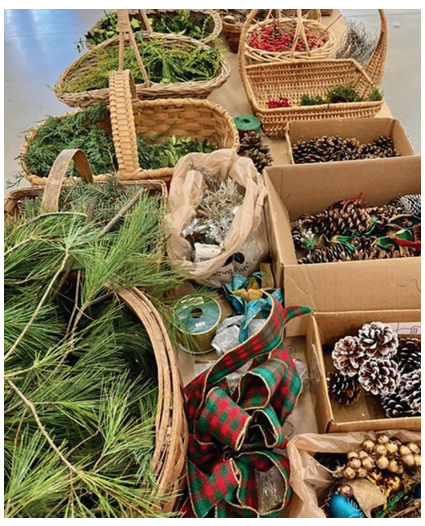
The annual Cavendish Historical Society (CHS) Proctorsville Ghost Walk takes place on Sunday, Nov. 15 , at 2 p.m. Meet at the Proctorsville War Memorial, which is at the intersection of Route 131 and Depot Street. Wear comfortable walking shoes. This tour includes both a visit to the Proctor Cemetery and free copies of the CHS Cemetery Guide.

This event is free and open to the public. Donations are welcomed and appreciated. For more information, email margocaulfield@icloud.com or call 802-226-7807.

Holiday wreath-making workshop through the Vault

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. – Gallery at the Vault invites you to create a beautiful 12-inch seasonal wreath using fresh, locally gathered greens, cones, and seed pods with Joanna Bombadil, on Saturday, Nov. 21, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., at the First Congregational Church, 77 Main Street. This workshop is limited to 10 participants; however, another workshop will be added if there is overflow.

In this class, participants will learn the techniques for securely attaching evergreens to a wire frame and discover creative ways to personalize their wreaths with embellishments. Materials will be provided, but participants are welcome to bring additional items for decoration. Snips and wire cutters are appreciated.



Wreath supplies will be provided.
PHOTO PROVIDED

This is perfect for beginners and seasoned crafters alike. Participants will leave with a stunning, handcrafted wreath to enjoy throughout the season.

The cost of the workshop is discounted for gallery members. Register by Wednesday, Nov.18.

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

Bellows Falls Emblem Club annual Thanksgiving pie sale

BELLOWS FALLS, Vt. – The Bellows Falls Emblem Club's annual Thanksgiving pie sale will be held on Nov. 25, at Simone's Styling Salon, 41 The Square.



Order your pie early.
PHOTO PROVIDED

Please preorder the pies of your choice by Nov. 21, or stop in and see what is available. Call Simone at 802-463-3573 or 802-463-3992. If there is no answer, please leave a message.

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NIKKI LUND (802) 289-2140
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give thanks
Ludlow Baptist Church
Saturday, November 21
Dine-In Only
5:30 - 7:00 pm
99 Main Street, Ludlow
Reservations required by Nov. 14
802-289-2825 or jhchester@vermontel.net

Claremont MakerSpace celebrates local illustrators

CLAREMONT, N.H. – The Claremont MakerSpace (CMS) is excited to announce illustrator and comic maker Tabitha Randall is the fall 2026 artist in residence. She takes over the residency from outgoing artist John Garoutte, who is also an illustrator and mural artist. This fall program is made possible thanks to support from both the Northern Border Regional Commission Catalyst program and a sponsorship by Eastern Propane.



John Garoutte's Claremont mural.
PHOTO PROVIDED

Randall is a New Hampshire-born artist specializing in narrative storytelling, character development, and sequential art. Graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in illustration from the Maine College of Art & Design, her diverse practice spans intimate autobiographical comics, psychological horror tales, and evocative standalone illustrations that explore unconventional thematic moments. She shared, "I am currently developing a 12-page autobiographical comic that chronicles my experiences as a recent creative graduate, specifically addressing the professional and mental health challenges encountered during this transition."

For Randall's residency community requirement, she plans to work with area high school students, explaining, "I intend to donate a copy of my comic to the Stevens High School art department, where I aim to speak with students about my college experience and provide guidance as they navigate their own creative career paths." She will also teach classes at Claremont MakerSpace in addition to classes she offers at The Apiary.

Come meet Randall, see some of her work, and learn about her residency plans during an artist reception and open house event on Thursday, Nov. 19, from 5-7 p.m., at the Claremont MakerSpace, 46 Main Street in Claremont, N.H. You can also see a some of her prints at the CMS microgallery at the Claremont Common Man Restaurant, and she created the logo selected for the Claremont Art Walk. Follow Randall's work at www.tabitharandallillustration.com.

Garoutte completed his summer residency in October with the installation of his new mural about Claremont that was installed as part of the Claremont MakerSpace Art Walk, on the exterior of the Latchis Building on Pleasant Street. The residency was sponsored by Canam Bridges, and the community response to his project was extremely positive. "I'm happy to have created a piece of large-scale public art that Claremont residents helped paint and can feel proud of for many years to come," said Garoutte.

Garoutte has been painting murals since 2021, with work displayed throughout Vermont, in Lebanon, N.H., and now in Claremont. He also creates graphics for snowboards, which is his winter passion. Garoutte's past work can be viewed on his website, and also at the Common Man microgallery.

"There is so much artistic talent in Claremont and our surrounding region, and we are thrilled to be able to provide support and exposure to these emerging local artists," said Felicia Dalke, who is the executive director of the Claremont MakerSpace. CMS helped launch the first phase of the Art Walk in the downtown on Oct. 3, in partnership with the city's arts commission and with the many businesses and organizations that already display and sell modern and historic public art. "The Art Walk is a way for us to shine a spotlight on the growing presence of the arts and crafts in downtown Claremont," said Dalke.

The artist in residence program is designed to empower New Hampshire- and Vermont-based artists with tools, training, and space to create compelling new work. Each artist receives $1,000 towards the creation of new work during the residency, three months of unlimited membership, a dedicated studio space, and training to use new tools. In return, the artists teach public classes and/or work with local students. The past recipients can be found on the artist in residence program page.

TwinState MakerSpaces, Inc. is the parent company of the Claremont MakerSpace, and it is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. For more information about the Claremont MakerSpace or to schedule a tour, please visit www.claremontmakerspace.org.

Candlelit Fleetwood Mac experience in Claremont

CLAREMONT, N.H. – Lumos brings a candlelit, classical Fleetwood Mac tribute featuring a string trio playing the band's classic repertoire at the First Congregational Church of Claremont, 72 Pleasant Street, on Friday, Nov. 20. There will be two sittings, the first from 6-7 p.m., and the second from 8-9 p.m. Doors will open for the first sitting at 5:15 p.m., and for the second sitting at 7:30 p.m.

The setlist includes "Go Your Own Way," "Second Hand News," "Dreams," "Don't Stop," "The Chain," "You Make Loving Fun," "I Don't Want To Know," "Gold Dust Woman," "Landslide," "Gypsy," "Little Lies," and "Everywhere."



Lumos brings candlelit Fleetwood Mac tribute to Claremont.
PHOTO PROVIDED

Lumos brings audiences enchanting concert experiences paying homage to world famous artists, in partnership with spectacular locations and churches across the U.K. and U.S. to deliver a concert experience that is nothing short of magical. Tickets can be purchased www.lumos-experiences.com/event/a-fleetwood-mac-candlelight-experience-in-claremont-nh-friday-november-20th.

The First Congregational Church of Claremont is accessible. This event is for those 8 years old and older. For more information, email customerservice@lumos-experiences.com.



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