

The Charlotte News

July 25, 2024

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Tax rate goes up

Brett Yates
Contributor

Charlotte homeowners can expect a bigger property tax bill this year. Only a tiny portion of the increase, however, is due to growth in the town's budget.

On July 22, the selectboard approved a municipal tax rate of 0.1834 percent, as recommended by treasurer Mary Mead, for fiscal year 2025, which began on July 1. Previously, the rate was 0.1804 percent.

The homestead education tax rate, meanwhile, rose from 1.0911 percent to 1.2921 percent. This figure comes from the state, which uses a complex formula that takes into account the local school district's "weighted" per-pupil spending.

That 18.4 percent jump comprises the lion's share of the 16-percent rise in Charlotte's overall homestead rate, which went from 1.2715 percent to 1.4755 percent. A resident who owns a house with an assessed value of \$500,000 will now pay \$7,377.50 in property taxes.

The new non-residential tax rate is 1.5146 percent. In total, Charlotte expects to collect \$2,529,467 in municipal taxes, with non-tax revenue covering the remainder of the town's \$4,241,234 budget.

Mead characterized Charlotte's financial position as "much, much better than last year." The town

underspent its budget for fiscal year 2024, and revenues exceeded expectations, creating a surplus of \$221,229.44 with just a few bills still to arrive.

Mead highlighted savings on employee health benefits. She said those ended up costing \$22,591 less than anticipated because municipal workers submitted fewer claims for out-of-pocket medical expenses than the town had budgeted for in its Health Reimbursement Arrangement.

After setting the tax rate, the selectboard considered enacting an ordinance amendment that would have dropped the speed limit on Ferry Road, between Greenbush Road and the railroad tracks, from 40 to 35 mph, as advised by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. But board member Lewis Mudge urged a more significant reduction. At its next meeting, the board will consider a 25-mph limit.

The board spent the remainder of Monday's meeting in a trio of executive sessions, concerning "a formal complaint made against a public officer" and "potential disciplinary action against a public officer." Having invited an unnamed complainant into the first of these sessions and Charles Russell, the chair of the development review board, into the second, the meeting ended without the board taking action.

Grilling and chilling



Photo by Lee Krohn

Brian Fortin was handling the grilling, along with wife Melissa Fortin, at the town party as they have in years past. You could say Charlotte uses 'griller' glue to hold the festivities together.

See more photos on page 3

The Charlotte News: today and tomorrow

John Quinney
Board of Directors

If an organization has been in business for 66 years, is it sustainable?

At The Charlotte News, that question has framed much of our work over the past six months and the short answer is ... not yet.

In June, we joined the Local Independent Online News (LION) Sustainability Audit process. This program caught our eye because it offered grants for "pathways to sustainability."

Two weeks ago, LION awarded us a grant to develop new print and digital advertising packages and to design a major donor program.

It's wonderful news but not the whole story. Welcome as it is, the grant won't, in the short term, keep the presses rolling, our small staff employed or our bills paid. For that, we turn to you, our readers.

For 66 years, this community has

sustained The Charlotte News with gifts of time, talent and dollars. Now we're coming to you again to ask for your contribution to our Annual Fund campaign. More than 60 percent of our annual budget comes from generous contributions from readers like you.

Help support your nonprofit community newspaper this year with a gift in any amount. Every donation matters. And thanks to a generous donor, first-time gifts will be matched dollar-for-dollar. This means that a \$30 gift doubles to become \$60 and a \$100 gift becomes \$200.

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Thanks so much for your support. *(John Quinney is a member of The Charlotte News Board of Directors and chair of the fundraising committee.)*

Charlotte wrestling with huge bills for storm-damaged road repairs

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Charlotte residents can be forgiven if they have been sleeping with one eye open and a hand on their wallets for the last couple of weeks.

After the flooding that came to town the night of July 10 and 11, there have been a series of storms that might have increased their concerns about the possibility of more property damage — both public and private.

A number of town roads and private driveways were torn up by rushing waters, and the cost of making things safely drivable could be big.

Selectboard chair Jim Faulkner said the price tag for all of the road repairs may be as steep as \$2 million.

Faulkner said, so far, the town has not gotten a clear answer from the federal or state government about how much, or even if, they will help pay for fixing the damage.

"It's a real issue. How are we going to fund this? We need the federal money and need the state to give us some money as well," he said.

Although the town is already applying for help, Faulkner said, "There's really no guarantee that they're going to give it to us."

"There are people in town who are thinking, 'Oh, well, FEMA will take care of it.' That's not the case," he said. "With a little bit of luck on some of the projects that we're doing on the road to have FEMA pay for 75 percent."

In a later conversation, Faulkner said, although FEMA officials have been in Vermont, they haven't made it to Charlotte yet, so there is still no word on how much if any help the town might get from that agency.

But even if the town gets lucky, it will still be on the hook for 25 percent of the expense.

Repairing the damage on Spear Street between Carpenter and Lime Kiln roads where the Mud Hollow Brook's raging waters wreaked havoc, washing a culvert downstream, will be expensive. Faulkner said it may cost as much as \$700,000 to repair the damage here, so even if the town

SEE **FLOODING** PAGE 4

A boat trip to see impact of three big floods

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

On July 18, a group of journalists took a cruise on the University of Vermont's research vessel, the Marcelle Melosira, with a group of scientists, to hear and see what impacts flooding, and specifically the July 11 flood, have had on Lake Champlain's water quality.

Although they do have some data, it's too early to tell definitively what the impacts of the most recent flood will be, the scientists said, but what they know so far tells a story of expected degradation of the lake — with some bright spots.

"What we do on the land is very significantly impacting the water quality," said Kris Stepenuck, the Lake Champlain Sea Grant's associate director and extension program leader.

The watershed that drains into Lake Champlain extends as far east as Cabot, as far west as Saranac Lake, as far south as Rutland and into southern Quebec, Stepenuck said.

That's a lot of land to worry about to try and keep the lake clean. That watershed is 19 times the size of the lake. As watersheds go, it's an extremely large one. For comparison, consider that the watershed to the Great Lakes ratio is 2 1/2 to one.

There are more than 20 stations collecting water quality data from the lake, said Ryan Mitchell, the organization's communications and publications coordinator.

It should not come as a surprise that, so far, the indications are that last summer's flooding had much more impact on the lake than this summer's.

Although this year's flooding did much more damage in Charlotte, which in 2023 escaped mostly unscathed, the damage was much more widespread and impacted the total watershed much more last year.

"We had two very different meteorological events. Last year in July, we had kind of a high-pressure system collide with a low-pressure system and that moisture just sat over our region for



Photos by Scooter MacMillan

Captain Taylor Resnick pilots the only hybrid vessel in the world. The Marcelle Melosira can travel for three hours on just its lithium-ion batteries.

48 hours, a very slow-moving storm," said Matthew Vaughan, chief scientist with the Lake Champlain Basin Project.

Last summer's storm dumped 4-9 inches of rain over a vast area, while this year's storm was very different.

The remnants of Hurricane Beryl, which hit us a couple of weeks ago, did bring similar amounts of rain in some regions, like Charlotte, which received around 6 inches this year and in a very short time. Consequently, it was much more intense here.

So, we had higher intensity, greater amount of rainfall falling through time in a smaller amount of area," Vaughan said. "That's why we saw the damage and the devastation really more concentrated in our higher, steeper streams."

Although the event this year is expected to have significant impact on Lake Champlain, it should not have as much impact as last year and be less widespread,

he said.

On July 11, 2023, Vaughan said the Winooski River, the largest tributary to Lake Champlain, was at the highest flow seen since 1990, when the Lake Champlain Basin program was created by an act of Congress and the organization's monitoring of the lake began.

This July's flooding produced a flow that was only the tenth highest the organization has seen. However, the flooding this December 2023 produced the fourth highest flow in the Winooski that the Lake Champlain Basin program has measured. So, three of the 10 highest flows in the Winooski River in the organization's more than 30 years of measuring have come in a year's time.

In December, according to VTDigger, Gov. Phil Scott said the flooding that came in the midst of the holiday season, just five months after the previous flood, was "a real gut punch."

Last July, the flood deposited about half the amount of phosphorus the lake can handle in a year and still meet its total maximum daily loads, or TMDL, the maximum daily loads of a pollutant that a body of water can tolerate and meet water quality standards.

Vaughan said he is still working on the figures for this July's flood, but because the overall flow into the lake this July was about two-thirds of the flow last July, they expect the phosphorus dumped in the lake by the flood to be lower this year.

Last year, the lake rose by three feet after the flood. This year, it's still rising, but it's gone up by about a foot and half so far.

"The most immediate impacts to lake water quality is something we can all see with our eyes — the decrease in water clarity," Vaughan said. "When waters are running high, they're very turbid."

Turbidity is a measure of how murky it is because of sediment being suspended in the water. Increased suspended sediment is



Rebecca Diehl tells the gathered journalists on the Marcelle Melosira that what's best is "inefficiency in our watershed." Rather than dredging streams and rivers to make the flow faster, the best thing for the lake would be if water moved more slowly.



Mission Statement

To engage and inform Charlotte and nearby communities by:

- Publishing rigorous, in-depth reporting on town affairs.
- Providing a home for stories from our neighbors and friends.
- Reporting on how other towns have addressed challenges similar to our own.

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The editor makes final decisions on the stories that are published in The Charlotte News. While we are funded by advertising revenue and donor contributions, our news judgments are made in accordance with our mission and are independent of all sources of financial support.

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The Charlotte News has adopted the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics as the touchstone to guide newsroom practices. The Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics is built on four principles:

- Seek truth and report it.
- Minimize harm.
- Act independently.
- Be accountable and transparent.

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Send submissions, questions, photos, etc. to scooter@thecharlottenews.org.

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BOAT TRIP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

expected to continue mixing in the lake for one to three weeks, he said.

Turbidity is measured with a Secchi disk, a black-and-white disk that is lowered into the water to see how deep it can go and still be seen from the surface. Anna Hoppe, who has an agroecology fellowship with the University of Vermont, demonstrated how the measurements are made.

The research vessel traveled just past where the Winooski dumps into Lake Champlain, and the light brown turbid water of the river was easy to see in the clearer water of the main body of the lake.

Last year, it took about two weeks for turbidity to drop and clarity in the water to rise. Monitoring of the process, so it is still to be seen how long it will be before the water returns to normal.

“The turbidity level was about three times higher at its peak last year than the peak we’re seeing this year,” Vaughan said. “Although it’s a significant event, it’s about a third of what we saw from the drop in water clarity compared to last year.”

Weather Service records date back to the 1850s and Hurricane Beryl is the earliest Category 5 hurricane in those records. The early appearance of such a strong hurricane can be tied to climate change and increasing air and ocean water temperatures, Vaughan said.

“In the past, the highest flows to the lake would be in the springtime when the snow is melting. That’s kind of a natural cycle, but what we’re seeing now, due to climate change, is more precipitation falling as rain rather than snow,” Vaughan said.

Now, we are seeing higher flows in the winter and a decrease in spring because of less snowpack to melt. This leads to more intense, more frequent and extreme rainstorms in the summer and fall.

The beginning of this story promised some good news. Well, Vaughan said he was surprised and encouraged by how well the lake recovered from last year’s flooding.

“We had a huge input of phosphorus from last year’s storm and the December storm,” he said. “What we saw was an increase in the short term in phosphorus, and then a recovery over the next few weeks, where things looked more like normal.”

TOWN PARTY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Photo by Lee Krohn

Is there anything better than a juicy chunk of watermelon at a summertime picnic?



Photo by Bill Regan

A paddleboarder enjoys a hallowed moment as the sun sets at the Charlotte Town Party.



Photo by Bill Fraser-Harris

Charlotte hit another home run with this year’s town party.



Photo by Lee Krohn

The Mystic Party Band once again cast its musical magic to enliven the celebration of all things and persons Charlotte.



Photo by Lee Krohn

If there is anything better than watermelon at a picnic, it might be being sated and taking a nap.

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Charlotte events, people or places. We want to publish your photos.
Email them to: news@TheCharlotteNews.org



The Charlotte News



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FLOODING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

benefits from government largesse, 25 percent will be a hefty price to pay.

Road commissioner Junior Lewis said it may be two-three months before Spear Street is opened here.

Besides the expense, the town needs permission from the Vermont Land Trust, the state's river and stream management department and the landowner. There is just one landowner in the one-mile stretch of Spear Street that is closed, but the erosion is so extensive that it goes beyond the town's right of way.

For the time being, Spear Street is closed where it crosses Mud Hollow Brook. Lewis has parked trucks at both Carpenter Road and Lime Kiln Road, blocking vehicles and the curious from traveling here.

The rest of the damaged roads in town are open and back to two lanes, Lewis said.

Getting the roads back in use has been quite a bit of work for Lewis and his crew of two. They have been working 12-hour days, since tropical storm Beryl dropped 6 inches of rain in one night, on road damage, including East Thompson's Point, Greenbush Road near the Williams Woods Natural Area and State Park Road.

Charlotte's infrastructure isn't designed to handle that much rain in that short of a time, Lewis said. Normally, the town is OK with an inch and half of rain in that timeframe, but now the ground is



Photos by Jim and Nancy Faulkner
Damage was substantial on Greenbush Road near the Williams Woods Natural Area.

saturated, so he hopes heavy rain is gone for now.

Charlotte Library director Margaret Woodruff said in a post to social media that the Vermont Department of Libraries has asked libraries around the state to remind communities about the following resources available for flood damage:

- Whether or not they are submitting an insurance claim, residents should report damage to Vermont 211 by using the Resident Form (vermont211.org/resident-form) or Business Form (vermont211.org/business-form). This data will be used to help the state apply for a federal disaster declaration.



Selectboard chair Jim Faulkner examines damage on State Park Road.

- The Vermont Agency of Transportation is offering a package of enhanced incentives for income-eligible Vermonters whose personal vehicles were damaged by flooding (accd.vermont.gov/flood).

- The Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity has resources available for flood victims who live in mobile home parks including the Flooding Recovery Assistance Fund (cvoeo.org/get-help/mobile-home-park-rights-and-resources).

Lewis praised the help he has gotten from Faulkner, saying the selectboard chair had gone "way beyond the call of duty."

When Faulkner asked what he could do to help with the road repairs, Lewis said



East Thompson's Point Road is back to two lanes after extensive work to repair the areas where it had become dangerous to drive near the side.

that, if the town was going to apply for financial help, it would need pictures, and Faulkner and his wife Nancy have been photographing the damage.

Of course, the damage isn't limited to public roads. On Thursday, July 11, after the rain had stopped, Lewis got 76 calls, for driveways or private roads that needed to be fixed. He had to tell them that, as road commissioner, the town is his first priority.

On this Tuesday, July 16, he received 17 calls for people needing road repairs. On Wednesday evening, as he was being interviewed for this story, Lewis said it was pouring at his home on Ferry Road.

Around Town

Condolences

Roberta D. "Chick" Wood passed

away peacefully on July 11 at the McClure Respite House with her family by her side. Chick was born at her grandmother's home in Starksboro, Vt., on Aug. 22, 1944. She spent the balance of her years living in Charlotte.

Chick attended Charlotte Central School and Burlington High School.

Her youth was filled with driving tractors, gardening and helping cook for the family and hired hands on the family dairy farm. During her high school years, she was a majorette and had the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C., to help represent the dairy industry with the Vermont Farm Bureau. Chick graduated in 1962 from Burlington High School and continued her education at Mount Ida College in Boston. While in Boston she fine-tuned her love of fashion, graduating with a degree in fashion merchandising. Always a hard worker, Chick helped put herself through school by working as a live-in nanny while pursuing her studies.

She married her first husband Jack Palmer in 1965. They had two children,



Roberta D. "Chick" Wood

Christopher and Tyler Palmer. While raising her sons, Chick helped manage Guy Cheng's women's clothing store. Her time working at the store brought many happy memories, whether it be traveling to New York City for buying trips or spending time with many of her co-workers who became lifelong friends. After the dissolution of her first marriage, owners Guy and Barbara Cheng introduced Chick to her true soulmate, Charles R. "Bob" Wood. They married in 1977, combining their families and allowing Chick to add Kim, Cathy and Bobby Wood to her brood.

Chick and Bob made their new homestead on the lake in Converse Bay. From a tangle of poison ivy and black locust trees, clearing much of the property themselves, they were able to build a family home where many have been fortunate to gather. From Thanksgivings, Easters and Christmases to weddings and dinner parties, Chick loved to entertain at her home. She was always quick to invite those that may not have had a place to go and always made them feel welcome. Chick could be found gardening right up until her move to The Residence at Quarry Hill last year.

In 1982, Bob asked Chick to join his business, Wood's CRW, where she served for almost 25 years. She retired from the day-to-day business in 2006, allowing her to spend more time with friends, family and her beloved grandchildren.

AROUND TOWN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

She was an active member of the North Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church where she served on the board for many years. Chick loved people and their stories. In her final year she became a fixture in the lobby entrance at The Residence at Quarry Hill. Even though her ability to remember names and speak diminished, she made new friends every day with her smile and waved to all those coming and going.

Chick is survived by her brothers, Ralph and his wife Kathleen Dike of Ferrisburgh, and Rod and his wife Kathy Dike of South Dennis, Mass., children Chris & Kathy Palmer of Shelburne, Bobby & Dawn Wood of Westford, Vt., Cathy Wood of South Burlington, and Kim Ferguson of Hampton, N.H. She is also survived by eight grandchildren: Grace and Owen Palmer, Robert and Benjamin Wood, Jim, Scotty, Cooper and Trisha Ferguson. Chick was predeceased by her parents Henry and Beatrice Dike, the love of her life Bob Wood, son Tyler Palmer and granddaughter Julian Ferguson.

The family wants to extend a special thanks to the caregivers at Quarry Hill, who did an outstanding job of assisting Chick this past year, and her devoted friends at the North Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church, who would transport her to services each Sunday. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the McClure Respite House, 3113 Roosevelt Highway, Colchester, VT 05446, or HOPE (Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects) 282 Boardman Street, Middlebury, VT 05753.

A celebration of Chick's life will be held Monday, July 22, at 11 a.m. at the United Methodist Church, 227 Old Hollow Road, North Ferrisburgh, with a reception to follow.

Congratulations

Zachary J. Santos of Charlotte was named to the dean's list at Fairfield University for the spring semester.

Ben Leonard, Janet Smith, Amelia Chicoine and **Wesley Simard** of Charlotte were part of Vermont State University's inaugural graduating class in May.

No mandate bucking town paying employees' health care costs

To the Editor:

This is regarding the lengthy piece about town employees, their health benefits and their decision to unionize. It really does need an ongoing response.

The overall response, really, is simple: Why is providing our employees and their families the benefits they have so offensive? Is it somehow their fault? Didn't the people we elected decide they should have them?

And, since there's always a reason groups of employees turn to unions, what is that reason here?

This episode begins, I think, with mythology about last year's budget defeat. The myth is that the townspeople created a "mandate" that the selectboard cut employee health benefits. Well, the "mandate" was just a bare majority of those who voted, all of 35 votes out of nearly 1,000. And it is far from clear how many "no" votes on the budget had anything to do with health benefits for our employees' families.

So, now, the selectboard, after a year and a half, are looking at a proposal that would impose on every employee household an average \$3,000 hit to their compensation. The easy arithmetic: Property taxpayer "savings" would average less than \$30 or about the price of two small pizzas at Backyard Bistro.

And then there's a lot of rhetoric about the evils of unionization accompanied by a call to all townspeople to tell our selectboard they're against it. When the history of this episode is written (if ever), it will be plain the move to organize began because, and remains the result, of the selectboard's failure even to meet with our employees about all this until ...

I don't believe they have even yet. This absence of simple respect for those who do our work for us is key to understanding why our employees are organizing, as, by the way, is simply their right to do.

And, resorting to fearmongering about "big, bad" unions adds nothing.

There is plenty to bemoan about the state of our health care "system." Its costs balloon all the time. Our access to it when we need it is intermittent. Some insurance provides inadequate coverage. None of that should be laid at our employees' feet.

Joel D. Cook
Charlotte

Charlotte should adopt Declaration of Inclusion

To the Editor:

The town of Charlotte has the opportunity to join all other cities and towns in Chittenden County and 151 towns and cities, home to 77.4 percent of the Vermont population, to adopt a Declaration of Inclusion. The declaration is a public commitment to be more inclusive and welcoming to people of all backgrounds, races and abilities.

In May 2021, Governor Scott signed the Proclamation of Inclusion for the state of Vermont, formally condemning discrimination in all of its forms; welcoming all people who want to live and work and add richness to our state, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age or disability; and committing to protect these classes to the fullest extent of the law. He has signed a proclamation every year since to reinforce that message. It also establishes the second week of May as Inclusion Week in Vermont.

Over the past few years there has been a strong movement to have all 247 Vermont cities and towns adopt a Declaration of Inclusion. At this point, Charlotte is the only town in Chittenden County that has not adopted a Declaration of Inclusion. The Charlotte Selectboard considered it in 2021, but the statewide initiative was still new and the selectboard decided to wait to see if there would be improvements over time. In the three years since the governor originally signed the proclamation, the language for the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion has been modified. We would like the selectboard to consider once again adopting a Declaration of Inclusion.

The intent of the Declaration of Inclusion initiative is to reinforce the message that each town in Vermont that adopts the Declaration of Inclusion is a community that treats residents and visitors fairly, provides for their well-being and security, and provides encouragement and support for their interests.

When adopting a Declaration of Inclusion, Charlotte would be reinforcing the idea that our town is welcoming of all people and that we understand the value of diversity in our community. We need to be very mindful of our hiring practices, ordinances and policies to be sure that we are promoting fairness and equity.

It is important to note that, as Vermont begins to attract a more diverse population, the children of our town will be exposed to more cultures and different points of view. Knowing that Charlotte has adopted a Declaration of Inclusion will help them understand that diversity is a positive thing and that a healthy community is one of inclusiveness.

This is the Declaration of Inclusion for Charlotte that we propose that Charlotters support:

"The town of Charlotte condemns racism and welcomes all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age or disability, and wants everyone to feel safe and welcome in our community. As a town, we formally condemn all discrimination in all of its forms, commit to fair and equal treatment of everyone in our community and will strive to ensure all of our actions, policies and operating procedures reflect this commitment. The town of Charlotte has and will continue to be a place where individuals can live freely and express their opinions."

We hope that Charlotters agree that projecting an image of Charlotte as welcoming and inclusive would be good for our town. There is no cost to our town to adopt a Declaration of Inclusion.

More information on the Declaration of Inclusion initiative is available at: vtdeclarationofinclusion.org.

To take the next step, the Charlotte Selectboard would need to add it to an upcoming agenda. If you support this initiative and want the selectboard to consider adopting a Declaration of Inclusion, please contact them and let them know. It would be great if Charlotte could join the rest of Chittenden County in this effort.

Nina Regan and Julia Gilbert
Charlotte

(Nina Regan is the wife of Bill Regan, a member of The Charlotte News board of directors.)

Correction

The caption for the Senior Center News photo in the July 11 newspaper was incorrect. The picture was of Susan McDonald explaining exercises in the Bone Builders class.



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Photo by Evan Masseur

Lucy Weaver with Lila and Henry Weaver-Masseau and Willow and Mabel.

Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

It turns out, city dogs and country dogs aren't that different.

Lucy Weaver grew up in Charlotte but relocated to New York City where she started working with dogs. Moving back home, she founded her business Dog Speak in 2017 and discovered that the issues facing her canine and human clients had a lot in common with those she had dealt with in the city.

Weaver always knew she wanted to work with animals. She went to graduate school to study animal behavior and her work included research projects with leatherback turtles and whales. For her master's thesis, she studied miniature donkeys at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., analyzing the choices they made on whether or not to interact with humans.

While living in New York, Weaver worked at a doggie day care and then secured an apprenticeship with Andrea Arden, a dog trainer who has been featured on television shows ranging from the Late Show with Stephen Colbert to the Today Show and Animal Planet. Returning to Charlotte with her husband, she found conditions perfect for her new business.

"When I moved back here it suddenly seemed like everyone had gotten a dog," Weaver said. "There were so many more than when I was growing up."

Weaver is fascinated by the connection between humans and animals and notes that she works with people as much as she does with dogs. Although she is not currently taking private clients, she said that she found it humbling when people invited her into their homes to help them with their dogs' behavioral challenges. Weaver noted that these challenges can affect the entire family and often the dog owner has a lessened sense of self-worth because they believe they are failing their pets.

Weaver and her husband adopted their dogs Willow and Mabel before their first child Henry was born. Weaver took an on-line course through an organization called Family Paws to learn how to help the dogs adjust to the new baby. She is now a certified Family Paws instructor, one of only two in the state, and she offers a workshop every other month for those who want to make sure their babies

and young children can exist safely with dogs.

Weaver said her training work isn't that different from what she provided in New York. She helps owners potty train their dogs and instill good healthy manners. A big part of her job involves leash reactivity — dogs that bark or lunge when they are on the leash.

"More and more people are taking their dogs more and more places," she said, "and they expect them to be members of polite society."

Weaver said dogs rely heavily on body language which is impeded by leashes and harnesses. Owners have to realize that their goal of walking with the dog may not be the same as the dog's goal of stopping and sniffing. If those dogs have lived in close quarters all their lives, they also may not have sufficient experience in socialization with other dogs on those walks.

For Weaver, it all comes down to the fact that humans are asking dogs to fit into our human world.

"I tell people that dogs are just toddlers with fur and teeth," she said. "They wear their hearts on their sleeves and their behavior comes from their emotional state."

She said that when a dog jumps on the counter to get something they shouldn't, it's not because they are stubborn and want to be dominant but because they do what they think they need to do.

Weaver appreciates that dog rescuers are bringing dogs to the Northeast from the South and the islands but said this has created unintended consequences. The most adoptable dogs come north while those with behavioral issues are left for communities which may not have the resources to help them succeed. Rather than spend money bringing dogs north, she would like to see money donated to poorer communities so they can keep their dogs rather than put them up for adoption.

"People who love dogs really want to do the right thing," Weaver said.

She describes herself as a positive reinforcement trainer but added that it is important to understand the mindset of her human clients and not judge them if they use tools like prong collars or e-collars that she doesn't agree with.

"My real goal is to help people understand how to listen to their dogs," she said. "I really strive to educate people and possibly get them to adjust their expectations."

Community Roundup

Outdoor Family Weekend promotes camping, outdoors

Now in its 26th year, Outdoor Family Weekend promises to educate and engage campers of all interests and abilities with a host of new workshops and evening entertainment.

As in past years, it will be held at Stillwater State Park in Groton. Dates for this year's event are Sept. 6-8.

The weekend is sponsored by University of Vermont Extension and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources' Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Forests, Parks and Recreation. A campsite (for up to eight people), expert-led workshops, Friday night ice cream social and evening activities are all included in the \$175 fee. Campers also will have full access to the park's facilities, including free rental of canoes.

For details or to register, go to go.uvm.edu/outdoor-family. Registrations will be accepted until Aug. 18 or all spots are filled. For the best selection of campsites and workshops, early registration is advised. Campsites are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis with every effort made to accommodate families that request adjoining sites.

For questions about registration or to request a disability-related accommodation to participate, please call Lisa Flinn at 802-656-7607 or 800-545-8920, ext. 67607, (Vermont calls only) by Aug. 18. A full scholarship is available for one Lamoille County family. To inquire, call Holly Ferris at 802-656-7562 or holly.ferris@uvm.edu.

Participants can add a Sunday night stay at their campsite for no additional charge. Arrangements should be made at the ranger station upon arrival. Fishing licenses also may be purchased at the park although are not required for kids 14 and under.

The weekend kicks off with an ice cream social and evening campfire. On Saturday afternoon, campers will gather to celebrate Smokey Bear's 80th birthday and learn about fire safety.

An evening fireside program will feature stories of fire and folklore told by Virginia Holiman, a farm-to-school educator from Highgate, and Kurt Valenta, founder of the Exordium Nature Experience in Enosburgh Falls.

Throughout the weekend there will be a camping gear swap. Families are encouraged to bring their gently used tents, sleeping bags, camp cookware and other hiking and camping gear to exchange for something new-to-them.

Each camper may sign up for three workshops, with each session offering more than a dozen choices, including some geared specifically to younger children. A few workshops will incur a nominal fee for materials.

Options include shelter building and knot tying, fire craft, painting on canvas, shooting sports, campfire cooking, yoga in nature, introduction to mountain biking, canoe fishing, edible and medicinal plants, basic first aid and compass orienteering, among many others.

Several new workshops are offered this year including tracking nature's clues, log tricks and tree climbing, reading

the natural landscape of the forest, low-angle rappelling, woodland stagecraft, dog-powered sports and more. Younger campers can sign up with a parent to create a fairy hideaway, explore stream and aquatic habitats, learn how to fish or investigate the various types of seeds found in the park to make a seed mosaic.

For more information, check out facebook.com/OutdoorFamilyWeekendVT.

Age Well's food insecurity work honored at national conference

Age Well received a 2024 Aging Achievement Award from USAging, one of the highest honors presented by USAging to its members. "Reducing the Stigma—Food Insecurity" was selected in the Home and Community-Based Services category, which was among 22 local aging programs to receive achievement honors during USAging's 49th Annual Conference and Tradeshow, July 8-11 in Tampa, Fla.

The 2024 USAging Aging Innovations & Achievement Awards recognizes USAging's Area Agency on Aging members that have found new and innovative ways to support older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers as they live in their homes and communities.

This year's Aging Innovations & Achievement Awards recipients' "programs and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of older adults set a high standard for excellence in our field," said USAging CEO Sandy Markwood.

Age Well worked closely with faith-based partners, community organizations and libraries in the area to establish eight new meal sites in underserved areas without local senior centers. Each meal site also provides SNAP education and easy access to a food pantry, allowing older adults to pick up goods that they may need while they are already out. This helps reduce the stigma that can prevent asking for help.

"I am incredibly proud of the work Age Well is doing" said Age Well's director of nutrition and wellness, Chris Moldovan.

Learn to use compost to feed your garden soil

Most Vermonters know that composting is an essential part of household waste management, as Vermont state law banned food scraps from the trash back in 2020. But composting is more than just landfill diversion.

It is a way to recycle nutrients at your home, saving you money by providing a free resource to feed the soils of your garden, lawn and other plants. Done correctly, composting will not attract bears, rats and other wildlife.

To learn how to compost at home or in your community, the University of Vermont Extension community horticulture program is offering its annual Vermont Master Composter course, beginning on Aug. 30.

The online course runs for eight weeks and covers how to make and use compost, compost ecology, community composting and relevant Vermont policies, and for those interested in becoming a Vermont Master Composter volunteer, a session on volunteerism.

The fee is \$50 for Vermonters and \$150



Photo by Allison Smith

As part of a log tricks and tree climbing workshop at the Outdoor Family Weekend, Sept. 6-8 at Stillwater State Park, participants will have an opportunity to climb a tree using a harness and ropes just as a professional arborist does.

for non-residents and covers instruction and all materials. Registration is due no later than Aug. 23. To learn more and to register, go to go.uvm.edu/vtcompost.

Anyone interested in becoming a Vermont Master Composter volunteer is required to attend live Zoom sessions each Thursday evening from 6 to 7:30

p.m. from Sept. 5 to Oct. 24 and attend an in-person workshop to gain hands-on experience with backyard and community composting systems.

For questions about the course, email debra.heleba@uvm.edu. Request a disability-related accommodation by Aug. 9.

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In Vermont vineyards, grape growers take a healing tack

Kate Kampner
Community News Service

Kendra Knapik fell in love in grad school. In love with her future husband and with wine. But it was only after attending a vineyard party almost 20 years later that Knapik realized wine could be a fitting business venture for her.

That summer, in 2017, she began taking viticulture classes at the University of Vermont, learning to use as few pesticides as possible and employ sustainable practices.

“That made sense to me,” said Knapik, and in 2018 she and her husband Rob opened Ellison Estate Vineyard after taking over an abandoned farm in Grand Isle.

Their operation belongs to a number of Vermont vineyards and wineries that practice regenerative agriculture — an increasingly popular method that goes beyond minimizing farming’s costs on land to instead help restore the environment agriculture relies on. Close to 30 wineries called the state home as of earlier this year, according to the Vermont Grape and Wine Council, and grapes are

grown on about 170 acres statewide. The industry has a strong focus on organic and regenerative farming, says the council.

Regenerative agriculture typically emphasizes soil health as the key to success. It requires high attention to crops and constantly being in the fields. Farmers practicing the method often forgo tilling soil, use cover crops and minimize water and chemical inputs, said Terence Bradshaw, the professor who taught Knapik.

Another regenerative practice Knapik has taken on is allowing her flock of sheep to graze and live among the vines. She also deploys polyculture — growing different crops together at the same time — to achieve healthy soil.

Part of regenerative methods “is about creating a balanced ecosystem and listening to the natural world,” said Knapik. “What we do in (conventional) farming is innately unnatural. ... We’re changing the landscape.”

She saw that firsthand after last year’s heavy rain, when she was surprised to find her vines bounce right back. “You’re allowing the vines to build a backbone,”

she said, by maintaining a balance between building a natural resistance and cultivation.

Most grapes grown in Vermont are cold hardy hybrids, Bradshaw said. Commonly, farmers in Vermont crossbreed North American cold hardy grapes with an Old World grape, *vitis vinifera*. The North American grapes resist diseases but lack taste, so combining their genes with those of the Old World species makes for a better product.

Vermont is making “big strides because we’re growing a crop that’s adapted to the region,” he said.

Typically, Bradshaw said, the Vermont species require only small doses of pesticides.

Bethany Pelletier, a University of Vermont grad student studying local viticulture management with Bradshaw, said within regenerative agriculture principles, “the difference really comes down to pesticides and what people are using for chemical management.”

A lot of non-chemical options like grape pruning or leaf pulling have a notable impact in the vineyard. Pelletier said, “Boots on the ground, physical management makes a big difference in their ability to combat disease.”

But many diseases found in vineyards are tricky to manage without chemicals, she said, which is why most growers aren’t interested in an organic certification, even if they do follow sustainable and fairly organic practices.

Pelletier said pesticide usage varies vineyard by vineyard. Many use mineral sprays with copper and sulfur, some of the strongest tools against diseases like black rot. Others use plant extracts and biological pesticides like Regalia, which can combat big fungal diseases.

Knapik makes her own brew of horsetail and nettle, two plants that can act as pesticides foraged from her vineyard. Her family’s operation doesn’t have an organic certification, but “our customers know what they are tasting and getting,” she said. “It’s intentional farming.”

Certified master sommelier David Keck, who owns Stella14 Wines in Cambridge, believes there is the potential to reduce the downsides in regenerative farming. “Vermont is a pretty challenging place to grow grapes, and so I think we do as much as we can as properly as possible,” he said.

“We’re at a really exciting time for winemaking in Vermont,” Keck said. “People are more serious and interested in drinking wine from different places than they’ve ever been before.”

In the Northeast, regenerative viticulture is somewhat unique to Vermont and northern New England, said Bradshaw, the UVM professor. In his work, he looks at how wine is handled: Cultured yeast, enzymes and other processing aids are avoided in many Vermont operations.

“The wine will taste different ... and therefore it fits into a different slot and a different product,” said Bradshaw. “Most of the time vineyards can have higher prices for the wine, but yields will be lower.”

The tradeoff for any momentary discomfort with a new taste?

“People can feel good about what they’re doing,” he said. “They can feel good about purchasing a product, about experiencing the literal fruit of the land, and that’s not for nothing.”



Photo by New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs

Typical winemakers outside Vermont keep winemaking and farming separate with many winemakers buying grapes from farmers, Knapik said. In Vermont, most grow the fruit and make the wine.

“If you have good fruit, winemaking is easy,” she said. “If you are true to the land, and you have beautiful fruit, then that is going to be the purest representation of the land.”

Keck, a member of the state wine and grape council, thinks that’s “totally on brand with the ethos of Vermont. It makes a lot of sense that most of the winemakers and growers are leaning into that.”

“We’re kind of set up well right now to focus in a regenerative way in ways that either weren’t done or were quite difficult 30 years ago,” he said.

But, Vermont’s vineyard industry “has plateaued,” said Bradshaw. The environment, regulatory and otherwise, makes it hard to add more outfits without losing existing ones. He and others agree the state needs more grapes and more grape growers. With more grapes, they reckon, comes more stability for growers in the state.

In the past year, Keck has been proposing policy and investment into grape growing to lawmakers. He’s hoping, with the help of the Vermont Grape and Wine Council, he can get policymakers to reduce challenges growers face like up-front costs during vineyard installation and lack of infrastructure.

“I think one of the challenges associated is that we don’t have that much wine, we don’t make that much,” he said.

From where she and her husband sit with their vineyard on Grand Isle, Knapik is optimistic.

“I think what’s going on in Vermont wine is super-duper exciting, and I think there’s a lot of people doing some really exciting work,” said Knapik. “Hopefully the state will start to notice that a little bit more and give agricultural support and some support to build this as an actual industry in Vermont.”

(Via Community News Service, a University of Vermont journalism internship.)

Commentary



Adobe stock photo

Climate change could return us to the pre-antibiotic era

Howard Dean
Contributor

The extreme heat that recently blanketed the United States is a clear sign of climate change. But rising temperatures are fueling more than just hotter summers. Climate change is contributing to the spread of drug-resistant infections. And alarmingly, the medicines we use to fight those pathogens are losing their effectiveness.

Antimicrobial resistance, or AMR, occurs when bacteria, viruses and other pathogens evolve to resist the effects of medications, making common infections harder to treat and increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness and death. Recent figures link antimicrobial resistance to nearly 5 million deaths annually — far more than the combined death toll of AIDS and malaria. By 2050, more people will die of drug-resistant infections than currently die of cancer.

Climate change is accelerating the spread of these superbugs, providing favorable conditions for pathogens to grow and spread. Warmer temperatures can increase the reproduction rates of bacteria and viruses, extend the range of habitats suitable for pathogens, and even heighten the chances of gene transfer among bacteria, leading to more robust strains of drug-resistant microbes.

The pressure cooker of climate change is moving us closer to the pre-antibiotic era. Patients I once treated as a family physician could have very different outcomes without the backstop of antibiotics. Ordinary infections could become life-threatening, and routine, minor surgeries could become high-risk procedures.

Investment in research and innovation is crucial to stay ahead of evolving pathogens. But our current efforts to develop new antibiotics are not keeping pace. There are fewer than 100 antibacterial therapies now in the pipeline, according to the World Health

Organization.

By contrast, there are over 6,500 active clinical trials for cancer treatments.

We are in a race with ever-evolving bacteria — and we are losing. The main hurdle is financial. It costs nearly \$1 billion to shepherd a new antibiotic through clinical trials.

But successfully developing an antibiotic is often financially ruinous. Most new antibiotics target small patient populations with specific drug-resistant infections, and the new medicines to treat those infections are rightly used sparingly, only as a last resort — since the more you use antibiotics, the more likely bacteria will eventually become resistant.

Combating climate change requires new technologies and new economic models. The same is true of antimicrobial resistance. We must rethink how we incentivize antibiotic research. Subsidies, tax credits or direct funding for early-stage research and development can provide relief to companies developing new antibiotics. Other countries, like the United Kingdom, have experimented with subscription models, where drugmakers receive a flat fee for bringing a successful new antibiotic to market. Faster FDA approval pathways can help reduce the time and cost of clinical trials.

Ultimately, the fight against antimicrobial resistance requires a multifaceted approach, integrating scientific innovation, policy reform and global collaboration. By addressing both climate change and antimicrobial resistance with the urgency and resources they demand, we can protect public health and secure a safer, healthier future for all.

(Howard Dean is the former chair of the Democratic National Committee and former governor of Vermont.)

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Shelburne

Renowned ceramic artist's work at Shelburne Museum

Leslie Wright
Shelburne Museum

The Shelburne Museum presents the work of renowned British artist Paul Scott in the exhibition *Confected, Borrowed & Blue: Transferware* by Paul Scott that includes provocative reinterpretations of 19th-century transferware from Shelburne Museum's permanent collection along with a work commissioned for the exhibition.

"Exhibiting contemporary work that is inspired or influenced by the collections is a longstanding tradition at Shelburne," said Kory Rogers, Francie and John Downing Senior Curator of American Art. "Paul Scott's wry way of using transferware, a major part of Shelburne's decorative arts collection, as a medium for social commentary often delivered with a sense of humor, is ingenious, and picks up on a thread seen throughout Shelburne's collections."

Scott transforms his medium, commercially

produced English and American ceramic plates, with his signature subversive imagery and insightful, and often ironic, commentary on both historic and contemporary issues. His work references traditional porcelain designs developed by late 18th-century English artisans, such as the Willow pattern or Spode's Blue Italian.

These early ornamentations include appropriated motifs copied from hand-painted blue and white wares imported from China, which were mass-produced using printed underglaze transfers applied on porcelain and pearlware blanks. Scott carries this tradition forward, borrowing from traditional patterns and narrative scenery typical of transferware from the period, juxtaposing them with contemporary-themed patterns drawing on controversial topics including environmental degradation, immigration and the legacies of slavery.

In late fall of 2023, when Scott visited Shelburne Museum, he was captivated by

the museum and the breadth of its collections ranging from European Impressionist paintings collected by founder Electra Havemeyer Webb's parents, to American folk art including weathervanes, quilts, decoys and transferware.

"The transferwares and mammoth jugs really captured my imagination," Scott said. "My large commissioned pearlware jug directly references the extraordinary collection and its origins."

Confected, Borrowed & Blue: Transferware by Paul Scott is on view at Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, Vermont, through Oct. 20.

Scott is a British artist and author, known for his innovative approach to ceramics that merges traditional pottery techniques with contemporary art. Born in 1953, Scott has developed a distinctive style that often incorporates printmaking techniques and explores themes related to history, landscape and the environment.

Scott's works have been exhibited and acquired by numerous art and teaching museums throughout the United States including Albany Institute of History & Art, Brooklyn Museum, Carnegie Art Museum, Crocker Art Museum, Everson Museum, Hood Museum at Dartmouth College, Los



Photo by Paul Scott and Ferrin Contemporary

Paul Scott's Sampler Jug, No. 7 from his *Cumbrian Blue(s)*, *New American Scenery* series.

Angeles County Art Museum, Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Newark Museum of Art, Philadelphia Art Museum, Peabody Essex Museum, Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Yale University Art Gallery and The William Benton Museum of Art at the University of Connecticut.

Mindful yoga



Courtesy photo

Enjoy mindful yoga with a tour and art-based meditation in the exhibition *A Grand Spectacle* in the Great Outdoors: Elliot Fenander's *Circus Photography* in Shelburne Museum's circus building, followed by an all-level, outdoor yoga class on Tuesday, Aug. 6, 5:30-7 p.m.

Legal

— Nowhere to go —

Migrant advocates: Deported Hondurans denied asylum rights

Charlotte Oliver
Community News Service

A Honduran mother and her two kids, who had been living in Vermont after fleeing threats to their lives, were deported last week after being detained by immigration authorities in St. Albans. Now, activists and legal experts say Greisy Mejia and her children were denied their rights and that officials violated immigration procedure.

“I cried, begging them to just send me back, to let my children stay in Vermont where it’s safe,” said Mejia in a translated statement released by advocacy group Migrant Justice, which has been working on her case with attorney Brett Stokes, director of the Center for Justice Reform Clinic at Vermont Law and Graduate School.

“I can’t stand this nightmare anymore,” she added later in the message. “I want to turn myself over to the people that want to kill my family just so that they’ll let my children be happy and free.”

The 29-year-old woman, along with her 9-year-old daughter and infant son, had twice fled violence in Honduras and, on their second attempt, crossed the southern border this February while avoiding border agents, according to her advocates. After entering the States, she and her kids were kidnapped, abused and held for several thousand dollars in ransom for weeks, her supporters said.

The family eventually reached police in southern Texas — where she was arrested by U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents on March 26. But authorities released Mejia to Vermont a few days later with an ankle tracker after she described her kidnapping and told them she had connections in the state, according to Stokes.

In Vermont, Mejia was in touch with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement while Migrant Justice set her up with legal counsel, said Rachel Elliot, a spokesperson for the activist group. (Elliot was previously a student journalist with Community News Service.) Mejia was working with her legal team to file for asylum and apply for a T visa, a type of visa available to victims of human trafficking, said Elliot.

Elliot said Mejia was set for a routine check-in with ICE personnel at the enforcement and removal operations office in St. Albans at the end of July. But then the office asked her to come in early on July 9.

“They said that it would be a totally normal check-in,” said Elliot, adding the officials implied they would take her ankle bracelet off.

A member of Mejia’s legal team accompanied her because the situation seemed abnormal, said Stokes.

But it wasn’t a normal check-in. ICE detained Mejia and her kids in the building for six hours that day, said Elliot.

Her lawyers tried to file a stay of removal, a formal request to keep Mejia in the U.S. while she awaited her visa, Stokes said. People usually file stays of

removal for humanitarian reasons, he said.

But ICE said the request would have to be filed in person at regional headquarters in Boston, over 200 miles by car from St. Albans, the lawyer said. A Migrant Justice volunteer had started driving down to do so when they found out Mejia and her kids had already been taken away, said Stokes.

“ICE failed the family,” said Elliot, characterizing the treatment of Mejia’s family as “dehumanizing” and her experience as “incredibly traumatizing.”

A spokesperson for Boston enforcement and removal operations, which oversees Vermont, said in a statement: “Non-citizens who are illegally present in the United States are removable from the United States in accordance with U.S. immigration law.”

The statement did not respond to claims that enforcement officers did not follow proper procedure.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security regulations required that Mejia have a meeting with an asylum officer — an opportunity to express the fear for her life in Honduras, said Stokes. He thinks authorities should have given her that interview.

“She never got to meet with a judge, which is also a requirement based on the regulations,” he said.

Community News Service asked ICE if officials intentionally misled the Mejia family about the July 9 meeting and if the paperwork process in Boston was designed to make it harder to file stays of removal. ICE didn’t respond to either question in the statement.

Sarah Sherman-Stokes, associate director of the Boston University Immigrants’ Rights and Human Trafficking Clinic, called Mejia’s situation “devastating.”

She said Mejia “sounds like a mom who wanted the best for her family, for her children, and she was struggling to get it. And I hope that she gets that safety, which is what we all want, you know?”

There often is little accountability for routine violations of people’s rights, Sherman-Stokes said.

On July 9, about two dozen people came out for a Migrant Justice rally outside the St. Albans facility.

“We called Greisy’s name, hoping that if she and her children were inside, that they would hear us and know that we were there supporting them and fighting for their release,” Elliot said.

Activists later found out the family had already been transported to another facility by the time they rallied outside.

Mejia, now in Honduras, is still in touch with her lawyer and staff at Migrant Justice. They plan on filing a visa application for her from overseas and hope she can re-enter the U.S. in the future, said Elliot.

“I wake up at 3 a.m. thinking that someone is knocking on the door of the hotel room,” Mejia said in her translated update, which is attached to an online petition that had over 1,100 signatures as



Photo by Migrant Justice

A rallygoer in St. Albans on July 9.

of Thursday.

“I hold my children tight and dream of running far from this place, but we have nowhere to go.”

(Via Community News Service, a University of Vermont journalism internship.)

Gardening

Try not to kill good bugs providing ‘biocontrol’ in garden

Vern Grubinger
University of Vermont Extension

Insect pests get a lot of attention because we see the damage they cause. Less obvious are beneficial insects that provide “biocontrol” of insect pests. These include predators that kill or disable their prey quickly and parasitoids that kill pests more slowly.

Predators include lady beetles, ground beetles, lacewings and mites. Predators are larger than their prey and eat a lot of them. Most are generalists that attack a variety of prey.

Parasitoids include wasps and tachinid flies. They specialize in one insect species, which is usually bigger than they are. Females search for a host, then deposit eggs or larvae in, on or nearby it.

The immature parasitoid grows, slowly consuming the pest. Unlike parasites, such as fleas and ticks, parasitoids typically kill their host eventually.

Lady beetles are familiar predators. Both adults and larvae prey on soft-bodied insects like aphids. The larvae don’t look like their parents. They have an elongated body like an alligator that’s dark with yellow or orange flecks. There are



Left: Parasitized tomato hornworms are often seen covered with multiple white, cottony cocoons of the parasitoid wasp *Cotesia congregata*.



Right: A lady beetle prowls for aphids on an eggplant leaf.

Photos by Vern Grubinger

many species of lady beetles, native and introduced.

The pink spotted ladybeetle is pink to red, oval, with six spots on each forewing. It feeds on lots of pests like European corn borer, corn earworm, imported cabbageworm, fall webworm and Colorado potato beetle. It also needs to eat pollen. Flowering plants, including dandelions, help support adults in the spring.

The convergent lady beetle is slightly elongated, with white lines converging behind its head, and a few to thirteen black spots on red forewings. It feeds on aphids.

Other beneficial lady beetle species include the two-spotted lady beetle, nine-spotted ladybeetle and transverse lady beetle. The multicolored Asian lady beetle was introduced to feed on aphids, scales and psyllids. Its annoying habit is congregating in homes in the fall. Another species, the Mexican bean beetle, is a well-known plant pest.

Ground beetles are dark and shiny, often found under stones and debris. Those active at night are black, and those active in the day may be a metallic color. Pests consumed include eggs and larvae of the Colorado potato beetle, root maggots and “cabbageworms.”

Rove beetles, soldier beetles and flower beetles are also insect pest predators.

Lacewings have net-like, delicate wings, long antennae and prominent eyes. They feed on aphids, leafhoppers, scales, mites and eggs of butterflies and moths.

Syrphid flies, or hover flies, are brightly colored, sometimes resembling bees. Adults can be seen feeding on flowers. The larvae, a tapered maggot, eats dozens of aphids a day.

Hunting wasps take their prey, whole or in pieces, back to their mud, soil or paper nests to feed their young. The common *Polistes* paper wasps can help control caterpillar pests.

Predatory mites eat plant-feeding spider mites. They’re a little larger and move faster than their prey.

Tachinid flies are parasitoids that look like common flies. Females lay eggs near

the heads of caterpillars, beetles and bugs. The eggs hatch fast, and the larvae tunnel into the host, feeding for a week or more before killing it.

Braconid and Ichneumonid wasps include small species that attack small insects such as aphids and larger wasps that attack caterpillars or wood-boring beetles. Diamondback moth larvae parasitized by the wasp *Diadegma insularis* appear as white fuzzy cocoons underneath cabbage leaves. Many gardeners have seen white cocoons of the parasitoid wasp *Cotesia congregata* attached to the outside of tomato hornworms.

One way to support beneficial insects is by providing pollen sources, which can be in weedy areas where dandelions, wild carrot and goldenrod are left to flower. In addition, try not to kill good bugs. And avoid the use of broad-spectrum insecticides.

For details about good bugs in the garden, visit biocontrol.entomology.cornell.edu.

(Dr. Vern Grubinger is University of Vermont Extension vegetable and berry specialist.)

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Gardening

Propagating perennials can give you more for free

Deborah J. Benoit
University of Vermont Extension

Do you wish you had more of your favorite plants in your garden? By propagating new plants from those already there, you can have additional perennials for free.

The easiest method to propagate perennial plants is by rooting cuttings, either in water or in soil. Catmint (*Nepeta*) and herbs such as oregano (*Origanum vulgare*) are good choices early in the season or at anytime to overwinter favorite herbs indoors. Using sharp, clean scissors, take cuttings 6 to 8 inches long. Put them in water immediately so they don't dry out while you're working.

Prepare the cuttings by removing any flowers or buds. Remove lower leaves, leaving only two to four at the top. Trim the bottom on an angle right beneath where a leaf was attached to the stem (called a node).

Place each cutting in a container of room-temperature water. Be sure at least one to two nodes are beneath the surface of water, but no leaves are. Place the container in indirect sunlight, changing water weekly. Once multiple roots form and are at least an inch long, pot up using a good quality potting mix.

Some cuttings, such as hydrangea (*Hydrangea*) root better in soil. Treat the bottom of a prepared cutting with rooting hormone. Using a pencil, make a hole in moist potting mix. Insert the cutting and carefully press soil around it. Water lightly.

Cover the container with a plastic bag to help retain moisture. Vent the cover if excess moisture builds up on the plastic. To check progress, gently tug on the cutting. Resistance will indicate roots are forming.

Air layering is a method that works



Photo by Katsten Paulick/Pixabay

Hydrangeas, can be propagated through cuttings, although they are best rooted in soil rather than water like many other perennials.

well with woody plants such as forsythia (*Forsythia*) and lilacs (*Syringa*). Select a healthy branch at least one-quarter inch in diameter. About a foot from the tip, with a clean knife, cut into the bark below a node at an upward angle.

Remove nearby leaves. Wrap moistened sphagnum moss around the wounded area, and cover with clear plastic. Tightly tie each end closed. When roots have formed, the new plant can be removed and put in soil.

For more information on air layering, see go.uvm.edu/layering.

If some of your perennials are looking a bit overcrowded, the time may be right to divide them into two or more smaller plants. Root division works well on clumping plants such as hosta (*Hosta*), daylilies (*Hemerocallis*) and ferns (*Polypodiophyta*). A good shovel, garden fork and a sharp blade will be useful.

Carefully dig up the plant, capturing as much of the root ball as possible. Remove



Photo by Philip Walenga/Pixabay

When dividing daylilies, carefully dig up the plant, saving as much of the root ball as possible, then shake off excess soil, and gently divide the roots into separate plants.

excess soil, and gently divide the roots into separate plants.

If necessary, use a garden fork or clean, sharp blade to divide the roots. Be sure each section contains healthy roots and foliage. Replant divisions as soon as possible to avoid damage to the roots by extended exposure. For more information on plant division, see go.uvm.edu/dividing.

Propagation by root division can be the most labor-intensive method of increasing your perennial plants. It is best done when the weather is milder, such as early spring or in the fall. Choose a cloudy day to help prevent roots from drying out, and work quickly once the roots are exposed.

Hostas, in particular, are easier to divide in spring when foliage has emerged but not opened. Fall-blooming perennials should be divided in the spring, and spring- and summer-blooming perennials in the fall, at least a month before anticipated ground freezing.

Whatever method you choose, there's no denying that multiplying your perennials is a great way to add plants to your garden.

(Deborah J. Benoit is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener from North Adams, Massachusetts, who is part of the Bennington County chapter.)

Shocking weather



Photo by Tanna Kelton

It's been a very stormy week in Charlotte. On Monday, July 15, an impressive lightning storm moved through the area.

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Food Shelf News

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Photo by Getty Images

Despite record bad weather, Charlotte community continues to help with food insecurity

Maj Eisinger
Contributor

Summer is in full swing. Despite record high temperatures and torrential rains, the Charlotte community continues to support those who experience food insecurity, and our food shelf has many exciting works in progress.

The Charlotte Grange is kicking off a special food and funds drive July 23-30, in honor of Karen Doris and her 31 years of food shelf volunteerism and leadership. During this special time and through the end of the month, tax-deductible financial donations are appreciated and can be made at the food shelf website (charlotteucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf), by scanning the QR code or via check to Charlotte Food Shelf, P.O. Box 83, Charlotte, VT 05445.



Nonperishable food may be donated at the Grange on the Green Concert at the town green in West Charlotte, 5-7 p.m., Thursday, July 25. For more information about the Grange and its programs, see charlottegrange.org. We are grateful to the Grange for organizing this community thank you to Karen, which will provide vital support to the food shelf as it acknowledges the exceptional volunteerism within our community.

Champlain Valley Union High students have been wonderful friends of the food shelf and we want to thank two, Tabitha Bastress and Nik Blasius, who have volunteered at the food shelf for the last two years and who are heading off to college in the fall with our good wishes. It has been a pleasure to have them volunteer, and we look forward to working with future student volunteers.

The food shelf is the grateful recipient of a Vermonters Feeding Vermonters grant through the Vermont Foodbank, which both supports local producers and provides fresh, local products to our food shelf families. We appreciate working with

collaborating partners Frog Song Farm and Adam's Berry Farm.

Farm Stand Together is another partner that provides vital support to the food shelf's mission. Farm Stand Together works with local organic farmers to provide gift cards to our families to use for buying local produce at designated farm stands. It also gives a generous gift card to the food shelf to purchase local produce for distribution.

Farm Stand Together is sponsoring a fun community event Sunday, July 28, 1-3 p.m. at Adam's Berry Farm. Come for live music, face painting, balloon artistry and to learn about this partnership and support the efforts.

We very much appreciate donations from Tim Hotaling, Jocelyn Schermerhorn, Margaret Berlin, Kathleen Nolan and the Charlotte Congregational Church.

Thanks also to all those gardeners who were moved to plant with a plan to donate to the food shelf. Those who grow, can still plant a row. Donations from community gardeners, such as spinach, lettuce and green beans, play a vital role in ensuring a supply of nutritious, fresh food. Produce can be donated beginning at 3 p.m. on distribution Wednesday.

The following donations of nonperishables are always helpful: snack foods, paper products and condiments.

Food is provided at 403 Church Hill Road, behind the Charlotte Congregational Church on the second and fourth Wednesday (4-6 p.m.) and second and fourth Saturday (9-11 a.m.) of each month. For emergency food, to schedule drop-offs or if you cannot come to the food shelf due to illness, please call 802-425-2402.

Charlotte Food Shelf and Assistance also provides limited utility, rent, medical or dental, school supply and other emergency assistance to residents of Charlotte and North Ferrisburgh. If you or someone you know is facing unexpected hardship, help is available. Simply call 802-425-2402 or fill out a request form. Request forms are available during food shelf open hours or at charlotteucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf.

Weeds are often just unwanted wildflowers

Deborah J. Benoit
University of Vermont Extension

When someone mentions wildflowers, what comes to mind? Daisies? Black-eyed Susans?

They're as familiar as the summer days of our youth, so well loved that we often pick wildflowers for bouquets or add them to our gardens. What we call weeds tend to be any plant claiming a place for itself at our homes uninvited and unwelcome.

Goldenrod (*Solidago*) blooms in late summer and early fall. Allergy sufferers curse the yellow-plumed wildflower as a truly obnoxious weed. The truth is goldenrod doesn't cause all the sniffing and sneezing (its pollen isn't windborne as it is too heavy).

The real culprit is ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*), a weed you probably never noticed that blooms at the same time as goldenrod. Its pollen is plentiful and spreads easily on the breeze.

While goldenrod can be a bully in the garden if allowed to spread unchecked, this perennial's flowers are a favorite of bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. It's a native wildflower that grows between three



The sap of the wild parsnip, a Queen Anne's lace lookalike, contains toxic chemicals that are activated by sunlight and can cause serious burns and blisters to human skin after contact.

and five feet tall, so it's hard to miss.

Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*) with its lacy foliage and flat, umbrella-like clusters of white flowers is a familiar sight along roadsides. Unlike goldenrod, it is a naturalized non-native with origins in Europe and Asia. It grows 3-4 feet tall and flowers from June through August. While it makes a lovely addition to cut flower arrangements, some people may be sensitive to its sap.



Photos by Deborah J. Benoit

Above: If allowed to spread unchecked, goldenrod can be a nuisance, although many gardeners welcome this perennial as its flowers are a favorite of bees, butterflies and other pollinators.

Right: Queen Anne's lace with its lacy foliage and flat, umbrella-like clusters of white flowers is a familiar sight along Vermont roadsides.



If you're out picking wildflowers, beware of lookalikes. American cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*) is native to North America. While its flowers are similar to those of Queen Anne's lace, its foliage is quite different and the plant is much larger, growing up to eight feet high. Its sap is phototoxic, meaning that if it gets on your skin and is exposed to sunlight, blisters can result.

Wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) looks like Queen Anne's lace, too, but its flowers are yellow. It is highly invasive. Remove the plant or flowerheads before blooming to avoid spreading by seed. Be sure to cover exposed skin to avoid contact with the sap as it's also phototoxic.

Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) is an even more dangerous lookalike. It is invasive in Vermont and a federal noxious weed. Giant hogweed can reach heights of seven to 20 feet. Touching it causes exposure to its phototoxic sap and can result in severe skin reactions or chemical burns.

Jewelweed is a native wildflower you've probably seen even if you don't know its name. Spotted jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), also known as orange jewelweed or spotted touch-me-not, and pale jewelweed (*Impatiens pallida*), also known as yellow jewelweed, are annuals native to eastern North America.

Jewelweed grows 2-5 feet tall and blooms from mid-summer through frost. Its dangling flowers are attractive to hummingbirds and bees. Jewelweed spreads by seeds that "explode" out of the pod when touched and easily self-seed. If you find yourself with an overabundance of jewelweed, it's easy to pull by hand due to its shallow roots.

While native jewelweed is a beautiful and beneficial wildflower, its lookalike relative, Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), is an import from Asia. It's on the watch list as a potential invasive plant in Vermont. Although its appearance is similar to its native counterparts, Himalayan balsam is easy to identify when in bloom. Its flowers are pink or purple in color.

More information on invasive plants (and the dangers they present) can be found at vtinvasives.org.

So, the next time you're out for a drive in a rural setting, take a look at what's growing along the roadside. Are they wildflowers? Or are they weeds?

(Deborah J. Benoit is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener from North Adams, Massachusetts, who is part of the Bennington County Chapter.)

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In the Outdoors

Summer woes and wins

Elizabeth Bassett
Contributor

Another month, another column, another weather debacle. June's drama was a heat wave, miserable but only for a few days. July brought a deluge the results of which we continue to endure and pay for, damaging both to our town roads and our homes and property. Charlotte's dedicated road crew and local contractors have done yeoman's work to return our lives to some level of normalcy. Thank you, thank you.

I've been reading a book that makes humans seem rather bumbling, "An Immense World" by Ed Yong. While our five senses, vision, hearing, touch, taste and smell, guide us through life, Yong's volume enumerates 13 ways that animals navigate their world.

A human breath goes straight to the lungs while a dog's inhalation splits. "A smaller tributary ... enters a labyrinth of thick, bony walls that are plastered with a sticky sheet called olfactory epithelium," Yong says.

Neurons, dozens of times more than humans possess, carry messages from passing odorants to part of the brain called the olfactory bulb. There's more, much more, but my takeaway is that dogs explore their world with a sensory richness that humans cannot imagine.

Bats navigate and pursue their prey using echolocation, up to 200 ultrasonic bursts per second. Unlike human senses that are passive, bats actively transmit, receive via sensitive ears and interpret these pulses. In a darkened lab, bats

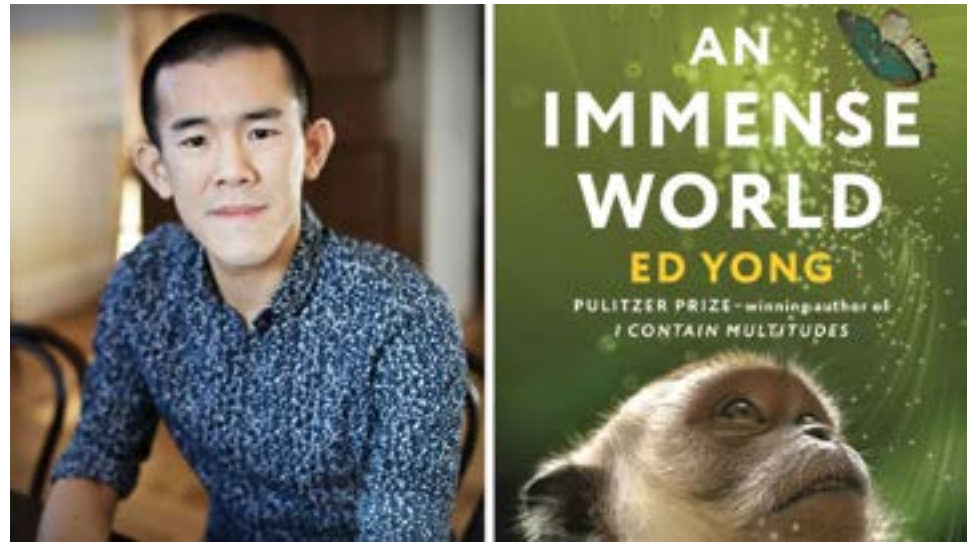
can avoid thin wires and find their way around clear glass panels to flying meals that lie beyond.

Dolphins share this skill set, although the mechanisms differ and are devilishly difficult to study. Dolphins are big, smart and willful, refusing to participate in many experiments. Thus, researchers can only study those that live in aquariums or naval facilities. In the 1970s, the U.S. Navy invested heavily in echolocation research in a quest to improve military sonar by reverse-engineering the animals' abilities.

Another animal ability, magnetoreception, guides monarch butterflies, spiny lobsters, songbirds, sea turtles and many others. A geomagnetic field surrounds the planet, driving migrations that can span oceans and continents.

One of the most perilous journeys is that of hatching sea turtles. Emerging to a world of predators on land and in the air and sea, the hatchlings must make their way as quickly as possible to the ocean depths. There they locate a clockwise current that spans the Atlantic Ocean. Sea turtles ride this slow, circular flow for five to ten years while growing big enough to evade all but the largest sharks on the return journey to reproduce where they began life. As the hatchlings began their journey on sandy beaches, this response to magnetic fields in the ocean is embedded in their DNA.

If you read no other chapter in this book, that on magnetic fields is worth a drive to the Charlotte Library. At more than 400 pages, this volume is too much



information for even this columnist, but there are layers of fascinating insights and answers to questions you never thought to ask.

A note of hope

While there is no silver bullet to reverse climate change, there are areas of hope and progress. It seems healthy, in this summer of grim weather news, to focus on positive developments. I learned recently, on WNYC's Science Friday, about a strain of millet that manifested climate resilience in Iowa. After completion of another experiment, the plants were forgotten in a greenhouse.

When time came to clean up, not only had this lone plant survived a torrid summer month with no water, but it produced a nutritional crop. The grains can replace corn in both animal feed and ethanol. Millet is grown in northwestern Colorado and other western regions where summer rain is scarce but had not been tried in Iowa, one of the nation's grain breadbaskets. Definitely good news.

We'll end on that note of hope. Enjoy the good of summer and keep track of your umbrella.

Sailors' delight



Photo by Claudia Pfaff

The old saying goes: 'Red sky at night sailors' delight.' If that's true, sailors must have been as delighted as a creemee is sweet when they saw this sunset.

Be where you belong, become an integral part of nature

Bradley Carleton
Contributor

July marks mid-summer and the rise of the Buck Moon. It is named such because it is the season when male whitetail deer are actively growing their crown of antlers.

The reason you do not typically see the large racks is because, for a buck to grow larger antlers every year, it means that that buck has been able to avoid being harvested through archery season, rifle season, another archery season and then a muzzleloader season. He has learned to stay behind in the shadows of the wood line. He lets the does and young bucks wander into the field first. He has learned to travel off the main trail to access his food or bed. He has learned to use the wind to his advantage and lies down in a bed with the strategic advantage of catching the first whiff of a predator's scent. He has learned the various fragrances of the woods and fields. He can smell the difference between a white or red acorn, the white being more nutritious and less tannic. He knows the scent of apples, all the edible berries, pears, types of grasses and most importantly, the scent of a carnivore.

The only time he might lose his focus is during the rut, when his entire concentration is to find every doe in heat and breed her. Even the most mature and wise old buck will slip up from his pattern to pursue a "hot" doe.

Years ago, I read an article by a Native American hunter who said that he always fasted from eating any red meat for two weeks before the hunting season began.

I decided to investigate this concept and stopped eating red meat for two weeks before the opening of archery season. I had been running 6 miles a day and noticed that my sweat smelled differently than when I was an active carnivore.

Then an interesting thing happened on my daily loop. There was a black lab who lived at the 3-mile mark. He had always left me alone when I ran by until I was mid-experiment. He became extremely aggressive and for about a week, he would chase me, growling and nipping at my heels. He never went far from his yard but would chase me down the road for a 100 yards or so. "Why?" I asked myself. "What had changed?"

I started asking people I respected in the medical field and learned that red meat, when consumed, produces uric acid when we sweat. When we do not eat red meat there is a marked decline in this byproduct. Following this scientific fact, I hypothesized that a prey animal consumes only vegetable matter, and thus might then be keyed in on carnivorous predators and have an enhanced ability to smell uric acid emanating from a carnivore's body. I tested this theory by asking a few medical professionals, and they said that it was entirely possible.

I have been testing this theory for a quite a few years now, and it has led me to further inquiry into "becoming invisible" to the animal world. Again, I found a link to native hunting practices. Most hunters will agree that a deer, and many other animals, seem to have a "sixth sense" for danger.

When we drive on icy roads, most of us have accepted that we need to be extra careful. So, what if a deer, turkey, duck or goose also had a "sense" that they might be in danger? Would they make a different decision on where to walk or land? Following that idea, what if we could eliminate the intention to kill what we were waiting for? What if we just blended our intention and thoughts into our surroundings? What if, like



Photos by Bradley Carleton

During the Buck Moon male whitetail deer's antlers are growing.

Native Americans, we focused instead on becoming a part of the tree we are sitting in? Or found our spirit becoming a part of the swamp grasses, completely

immersed in the fragrance of the decaying vegetation of the swamp?

After all, to hunt, we seek to conceal ourselves with camouflage. Why not take that one step further like Indigenous people who have survived for millennia? Become the tree, the grasses, the wind, the fruit of the woods around us? My favorite quote from Big Thunder, Wabanaki Algonquin, is: "When we go hunting, it is not the arrow that kills the moose, no matter how powerful the bow; it is nature that kills him."

If I see myself as an integral part of nature, I am where I belong. I am a part of all that surrounds me. The moose and I are One. The taking of the animal becomes a sacred practice that reflects love and respect for all that is.

(Bradley Carleton is executive director of Sacred Hunter.org, a privately owned limited liability corporation that seeks to educate the public on the spiritual connection of man to nature through hunting, fishing and foraging. His writing can be followed on substack.com.)

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On Books

The past in light of the present, the present in light of the past

Katherine Arthaud
Contributor

It's a beautiful day in northern Vermont but, holy cow, the wind is muscular, tipping over pool umbrellas, toppling tomato plants, ripping furniture covers off sofa and chairs, whipping up the wind chimes into a gaudy symphony that's verging on ear splitting. Even the dogs look a little alarmed. But I'm not going inside.

The fourth of July is one day away, and though I am rather looking forward to the fireworks tonight, there is a sadness inside, not unrelated, I am sure, to the July 1 Supreme Court decision (Donald J. Trump v. United States) that seems to be taking one more step in turning the presidency back into just the kind of regime we are tomorrow celebrating the end of. I just saw on Instagram: "America does not deserve a birthday party this year." Ugh.

Speaking of which, have you read Heather Cox Richardson's "Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of America"? Author of the newsletter, "Letters from an American," Richardson is the keenest, most engaging, clarifying and compelling historian I have ever come across.

"Democracy Awakening" has its origins in 2019, when Richardson began posting daily Facebook essays explaining the historical roots underlying today's politics and goings on. These essays morphed into a nightly newsletter which now has a readership of upward of two million. "Democracy Awakening" is dedicated: "To the people who have joined me in exploring the complex relationship between history, humanity, and modern politics. This book is yours as much as it is mine."

The frontispiece is from Walt Whitman: "We have frequently printed the word Democracy. Yet I cannot too often repeat that it is a word the real gist of which still sleeps, quite unawaken'd." (Hence, the title.)

I have always been interested in history, but during my years in school was consistently disappointed to discover that "history" was little more than an endless series of wars and dates and white men doing things like starting wars, fighting wars and getting elected, all of which I was supposed to absorb and remember. But that's not "history" with Heather Cox Richardson, whose essays, newsletters and recent book illuminate the past in light of the present and the present in light of the past with tremendous clarity and insight. Her work tells how, in the last few decades, a small but determined group of rich and privileged Americans have eroded American ideals. Through the weaponization of language, the promotion and promulgation of false history and disinformation, and a bunch of other shenanigans, they have led us, basically, into authoritarianism.

And yet somehow Richardson's work doesn't depress or make me feel defeated — her newsletter is the first thing I read upon waking every morning — or like a helpless victim of political villains I can't touch, see or influence, but rather, inspires me to pay attention, to stand up for and to



continue to believe in the ideals embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Writes Richardson, in her newsletter, "For my part, I will stand with the words written 248 years ago today, saying that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

As the Guardian puts it, "Democracy Awakening" is "an excellent primer for anyone who needs the important facts of the last 150 years of American history — and how they got us to the sorry place we inhabit today."

One of the gazillion things I learned from reading this excellent book is about President John Fitzgerald Kennedy; how his assassination on Nov. 22, 1963, had a good deal to do with his stance on desegregation. Richardson tells of black veteran James Meredith of Mississippi, who decided to "test the resolve of the young president who talked so inspirationally about the torch being passed 'to a new generation of

Americans' whom Kennedy descried as 'unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed.'" The day after Kennedy took office, Meredith applied to the whites-only University of Mississippi. With the help of Medgar Evers, the head of the NAACP in Mississippi, on May 31, 1961, Meredith sued for admission.

It was decided by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit that Meredith had the right to enroll. Which put Kennedy, says Richardson, in a tough spot. "He would have to pick between northern urban Democrats who embraced the liberal consensus and southern white supremacists." Kennedy's attorney general, and brother, Robert F. Kennedy, told JFK that the government had no choice and must enforce the decision of the Supreme Court requiring racial desegregation.

Despite violent resistance and protest by white supremacists on the Ole Miss campus (they killed two men, wounded others and destroyed property), the military intervened, and on Oct. 1, Meredith registered.

Because "Kennedy had put the muscle

of the federal government behind desegregation," he was accused of being a communist sympathizer and revolutionary. And because of "that conflation of Black rights and communism" in the southern right wing, Kennedy decided to travel to Dallas, Texas, in November 1963 to "mend some fences in the state Democratic Party."

On the morning of Nov. 22, there was a flyer in The Dallas Morning News announcing that the president of the United States was wanted for "treason" for "betraying the Constitution" and "giving support and encouragement to the Communist-inspired racial riots." Kennedy warned his wife, Jacqueline, that they were "heading into nut country today."

"They were," writes Richardson, "and he paid with his life for that attempt to enforce the liberal consensus."

Such a good, good-hearted, brilliant, illuminating book. I would say it is a must read for every American. (Though I am aware there are many of our countrypeople who would rather hurl it into a bonfire than read it.) I listened to it on Audible but bought the hard copy so that I could reread certain parts. I also highly recommend subscribing to Heather Cox Richardson's newsletter, which will fall daily into your inbox and make everything so much clearer, and better, and more... well, understandable, and even bearable, somehow.

OK, well I'm off to see the fireworks. God help us. Happy reading!



The Town of Charlotte TOWN MEETINGS AND AGENDAS

Visit charlottevt.org
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Planning Commission
Thursday, July 25, 7 p.m.

Recreation Commission
Monday, Aug. 5, 5:30 p.m.

Trails Committee Monthly
Tuesday, Aug. 6, 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commission
Thursday, Aug. 8, 7 p.m.

Regular Selectboard
Monday, Aug. 12, 6:30 p.m.

Development Review Board
Wednesday, Aug. 14, 7 p.m.

Charlotte Energy Committee
Wednesday, Aug. 14, 7 p.m.

**Bennington Battle Day Holiday —
Town Hall Closed**
Friday, Aug. 16, all day

Calendar

Send your events two weeks in advance to news@thecharlottenews.org.

Grange on the Green Thursday, July 25, 5:30 p.m.

The final Grange on the Green concert will feature Forest Station & Friends playing lively bluegrass music.

Farm Stand Together Sunday, July 28, 1-3 p.m.

Farm Stand Together is holding a family event at Adam's Berry Farm. There will be Americana music from Shady Rill, balloon artist Big Blue Trunk, face painting, baked goods and drinks for sale (proceeds support Farm Stand Together), a raffle for a hand-stitched tote from New Duds and pick-your-own blueberries and popsicles for sale from Adam's Berry Farm. Farm Stand Together distributes \$40,000 via gift cards to 300 food-insecure families to use for buying goods at 13 farm stands in order to eliminate barriers to food choice.

UPDATE - Music at the Beach Sunday, July 28, 6 p.m.

Music at the Beach, featuring Skylark at the Charlotte Town Beach, was postponed. The planned Wednesday, July 24, performance was postponed because of the unfavorable weather prediction. The weather Sunday is supposed to be more harmonious. The performance is free with park admission. There are upcoming Music at the Beach performances at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays, July 31 and Aug. 7.

'The Mousetrap' auditions Sunday, July 28, 4 p.m. & Tuesday, July 30, 6:30 p.m.

The Valley Players will hold auditions for Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap" at the Valley Players Theater, 4254 Main St. (Rt. 100), Waitsfield. Part murder mystery and part psychological thriller, this is the world's most successful and longest-running play. Auditions will consist of reading scenes from the play with no need to memorize anything, but a familiarity with the script is recommended. For more information email ruthann@valleyplayers.com.

Free coffee & muffins happy hour Friday, Aug. 2, 8:30-10 a.m.

Free iced coffee, hot coffee, tea and

homemade muffins at the Charlotte Grange, 2858 Spear St. All are welcome. Stay for a moment or an hour. These "happy hours" will continue on first Fridays through November.

Festival of Fools Friday-Sunday, Aug. 2-4

Burlington's Festival of Fools returns for the first weekend in August with dozens of internationally acclaimed street performers, musicians and other artists, including Moon Hooch, an explosive horn-and-percussion trio from Brooklyn; Street Circus, a circus spectacle with an award-winning show that has traveled the world, won awards and entertained millions of people; Billy Kidd, a magician who excels at sleight-of-hand, close-up magic and stage magic; and Mutts Gone Nuts, talented four-legged performers whose hilarious dog hijinks leave audiences howling for more.

50th annual Essex Day Saturday, Aug. 3, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first Essex Day with a free street party and town-wide yard sale in historic Essex, N.Y. The event will feature musical performances by Too Tall String Band (10 a.m.) and Mark Henry (12:30 p.m.); food from The Pink Pig, Essex Ice Cream Cafe, The Old Dock, the Essex Inn, Indian Bay Marina's Pizza On Point and Papa Duke's BBQ; over 40 artisans and crafters; unique finds at brick-and-mortar Main Street shops; special kids' activities and more. Info at visitessexny.com/events/essex-day.

Mindful Yoga Tuesday, Aug. 6, 5:30-7 p.m.

Tour and art-based meditation in the exhibition A Grand Spectacle in the Great Outdoors: Elliot Fenander's Circus Photography in the Shelburne Museum's circus building, followed by an all-level, outdoor yoga class led by instructor Lynn Alpeter. Cost: \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/59822wtx>.

Wednesday Aug. 8, noon-1 p.m. Historic fashion in Middlebury

Costume designer Summer Jack and exhibit curator Eva Garcelon-Hart will present an informal tour of the From



Courtesy photo

Ray Lingle will give a demonstration of vintage hairstyling and talk about how to use modern tools to achieve it at Grandma's Trunk — Vintage Fashion on Saturday, Aug. 10, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Henry Sheldon Museum in Middlebury.

Homespun to Couture: Fashion in Historic Middlebury exhibit at the Sheldon Museum in Middlebury. They will discuss how local 19th-century women dressed, how they learned about fashionable trends and reveal the intricacies of fashionable dress wearing and making. Admission is free. For more information visit <https://tinyurl.com/2mue37zn> or call 802-388-2117.

Vermont Genealogy Day Friday, Aug. 9, noon-2 p.m.

The Vermont Genealogy Day, or Day of Remembrance, will be celebrated at the town hall in Concord. Started in 2010, the event is intended as day to honor everyone who is no longer with us. For more information call 802-578-4225.

Grandma's Trunk — Vintage Fashion Saturday Aug. 10, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Bring your vintage hats, dresses, shoes and other items to learn about vintage fashion. Fashion historians, accessory makers, mending artists and more will be available to answer your questions at the Sheldon Museum in Middlebury. Featured experts will share their knowledge of historic fashion, the history of buttons with antique examples, how to creatively mend

your clothes, traditional knitting techniques and patterns and a demonstration of vintage hairstyling. The event will also include fun activities for children including whimsical hat making for all ages. Free. For more information visit <https://tinyurl.com/5by28yvj> or call 802-388-2117.

Pie and ice cream social Sunday, Aug. 11, 1-4

Having a great day is as easy as pie at Rokeby Museum's annual Pie & Ice Cream Social. Come hungry and plan to enjoy music and more. This day includes yards and yards of homemade pies, ice cream donated by Ben & Jerry's, live music from Vermont Folk Life Sugar in the Pan Trad Band, raffle baskets, croquet and badminton on the lawns. Let's Grow Kids will have a table with games for kids. The historic house and museum exhibitions will also be open to the public. Admission is free. Pie and ice cream are \$8 per serving, \$2 for ice cream and \$1 for beverages. At the end of the event, if any pies are still available, they will be sold for \$20. Raffle tickets are one ticket for \$5 and 5 tickets for \$20.

CALENDAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

Vergennes Day

Saturday, Aug. 24, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Vergennes Day is an annual celebration featuring over 60 vendors in the city park. The event includes live music on the bandstand, a pancake breakfast, Lions Club chicken barbecue and the Little City Road Race. For the kids, there is a bubble pit at the fire station and horse-and-wagon rides. There will be merchant sales and more throughout the Little City. More at vergennesday.com.

'Flee North' lecture

Thursday, Sept. 5, 6:30-8 p.m.

Scott Shane, author of "Flee North: A Forgotten Hero and the Fight for Freedom in Slavery's Borderland," will talk about his book at the Rokeby Museum. Tickets are \$6 for members and \$10 for nonmembers. "Flee North" unearths the lost story of Thomas Smallwood, born into slavery in Maryland, who bought his freedom, educated himself, and became a shoemaker in southwest Washington, a short walk from the U.S. Capitol. Smallwood began to organize mass escapes from slavery with the help of a young white partner, Charles Torrey, and wrote about the escapes in satirical dispatches for an abolitionist newspaper in Albany. Learn more by visiting the event page on the museum's website.

Historic shirt workshop

Saturdays, Sept. 21 & 28, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

In this two-day workshop in Rokeby Museum's Historic House students will learn how to create a historically accurate 18th-century, gender-neutral shirt. This will include the fundamentals of no-waste cutting, period hand stitching, an overview of tools and materials and the basics of shirt construction. Please expect homework in between sessions. The course will be taught by Rebecca Ranta, a fashion and textile historian and fiber artist with a passion for learning and preserving traditional textile crafts. For over four years, she has created historic garment reproductions using period-accurate tools and techniques. Cost: Member \$350; nonmember \$375. All materials included. You must be able to attend both workshops.

Bristol Harvest Festival

Saturday, Sept. 28, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Bristol will hold its 25th Bristol Harvest Festival, featuring more than 70 vendors displaying local crafts and terrific food options. All day there will be live music at the Bristol Town Green bandstand with kids' activities and a handicap-accessible children's playground.

Car show & fall festival

Sunday, Oct. 13, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Middlebury holds its third annual Car Show & Fall Festival on Sunday, Oct. 13. Main Street will close to welcome 75 classic cars and trucks, including food trucks, over 50 vendors, live music and raffle drawings. This event is fun for the whole family and free for spectators. More at addisoncounty.com/middleburycarfest.

Green Mountain Bicycle Club rides for August

Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

Here is the Green Mountain Bicycle Club's rides for August. Please remember these important things about riding with the club:

- All riders must fill out one waiver of liability per season.
- Although it isn't mandatory, we ask cyclists to sign up online prior to doing a Green Mountain Bicycle Club ride.
- All riders must wear helmets and obey the rules of the road. Please do not ride two abreast if there is traffic in either direction.
- In the event of inclement weather, ride leaders will notify those who have signed up in advance and post to the listserv if the ride is being cancelled no later than two hours before the start of the ride.
- Riders below the age of 18 must have a signed waiver from a parent.
- E indicates an easy ride, M is for moderate, and S is for strenuous.
- Rides begin promptly 15 minutes after the meeting time.
- All riders should carry some basic tools including a pump or CO2 cartridge, tire levers and a spare tube or patch kit.
- Social rides are more leisurely versions of the mapped ride — usually the shorter route — with longer food breaks. Always contact the social ride leader before the ride to make sure those versions of the ride are taking place.

All riders are required to sign our annual waiver which is available at thegmbc.com. We also request, but do not require, cyclists to sign up for each individual ride so our ride leaders know how many people to expect. For more information, visit thegmbc.com.

All riders are required to sign the annual waiver which is available at thegmbc.com. We also request (but do not require) cyclists to sign up for each individual ride so our ride leaders know how many people to expect.

Date: Sunday, Aug. 4

Ride: Covered Bridges of Franklin and Lamoille County — The hilly 41-mile loop (M) goes through Eden and Johnson, while the 55-mile ride (M/S) passes more covered bridges in Montgomery Center, returning through Bakersfield.

Meeting Time: 8:45 a.m.

Meeting Place: Jeffersonville Fish and Wildlife Access (three tenths of a mile north of Route 15 and Route 108 intersection, across the bridge).

Leader: Phyl Newbeck — 802-734-7016 or vtphyl72@gmail.com

Co-Leader: Kevin Batson — 802-825-2618 or kevbvt@gmail.com

Date: Saturday, Aug. 10

Ride: Gravel Grinder — Hollows, Ponds, and Falls

Meeting Time: 9:15 a.m.

Meeting Place: Richmond Round Church area lot below the Church across the street from Richmond Park area.

Leader: Brian Howard — 802-304-0610 or bjhowd@gmail.com

There is no co-leader for this ride.

Date: Sunday, Aug. 11

Ride: Venise En Quebec — Ride 40 (E/M)



Photo by Lee Krohn

miles from Alburgh across the border through farmland to Venise en Quebec, a summer resort on Missisquoi Bay. We will stop for lunch in Venise. There are stores and restaurants or you can bring your own lunch. The return is through Alburgh Springs border crossing. Bring your passport or Vermont Enhanced Driver's License as the required customs documents.

Note that the border crossing closes on the Quebec side at 4 p.m., so do not dally in Venise for too long.

Meeting Time: 9:45 a.m.

Meeting Place: Alburgh Community Education Center

Leader: John Bertelsen — 802-557-4633 or jo.bertel@gmail.com

Co-Leader: Karla Ferrelli — 802-864-0101 or karla.ferrelli@gmail.com

Date: Saturday, Aug. 17

Ride: Gravel version of the Covered Bridges of Chittenden County. Rolling hills through Shelburne and Charlotte with the longer ride going through Ferrisburgh. Possible food stops include the Old Brick Store in Charlotte or a convenience store in Ferrisburgh for the long ride. Visit up to four of the five covered bridges in Chittenden County: the Shelburne Covered Bridge and the Holmes, Sequin and Quinlan bridges in Charlotte.

Meeting Time: 9:15 a.m.

Meeting Place: Shelburne Community School, Shelburne

Leader: John Bertelsen — 802-864-0101 or jo.bertel@gmail.com

Co-Leader: Josh Simonds — 802-355-4352 or jsimonds9@gmail.com

Date: Sunday, Aug. 18

Ride: Waitsfield and Waterfalls — Enjoy a scenic tour through the countryside of Waitsfield and Warren with a visit to Moss Glen Falls south of Warren (not the one in Stowe). Turn around at the falls for a 35-mile (M) ride or continue up Middlebury Gap with a stop at Texas Falls for a 60-mile (M/S) ride. A visit to the Warren Store is always popular and the general store in Hancock provides an additional respite for those on the long ride.

Meeting Time: 9:15 a.m.

Meeting Place: Waitsfield Elementary School, Route 100 on the left when approaching the village area in Waitsfield.

Those coming from the Burlington area may want to carpool.

Leader: Allan Kunigis — 802-324-9958 or akunigis@gmail.com

Co-Leader: Mark Dupuis — 802-864-5567 or mdd514902@yahoo.com

Date: Saturday, Aug. 24

Ride: Gravel Ride — Cambridge, Canyon, Bryce

Meeting Time: 9:15 a.m.

Meeting Place: Underhill Central School — Irish Settlement Road

Leader: John Stuart — 802-734-9805 or jhstuartsqn@gmail.com

Co-Leader: Brian Howard — 802-304-0610 or bjhowd@gmail.com

Date: Sunday, Aug. 25

Ride: Buck Hollow and Beyond — The 40-mile (M) route goes north to Fairfax, through Buck Hollow into Fairfield, returning via St. Albans. The 58-mile loop (M/S) continues into Sheldon. There are potential food stops in St. Albans, Georgia, and Fairfax.

Meeting Time: 8:45 a.m.

Meeting Place: Milton High School

Leader: Dave Merchant — 802-825-3808 or merchand59@gmail.com

Co-leader: Joyce McCutcheon — 802-734-4999 or mellowmiti@aol.com

Library News

Thanks to Friends of the Library for a successful book sale

Margaret Woodruff
Director

It was a busy day at the library. More than 30 people waited patiently for the doors to open at 10 a.m. on Sunday, July 14.

A steady stream of book lovers came to the Friends of the Library successful book sale with over 120 people enjoying the well-curated offerings. Lulu's ice cream provided refreshment. Mary Jean Egglefield was the raffle winner of the book-themed quilt by Amanda Herzberger.

Garden inspiration

The youngest gardeners can enjoy Mr. McGregor's Garden, designed and planted by youth services librarian Cheryl Sloan and volunteer Barbara Jetton and inspired by Beatrix Potter's story about Peter Rabbit's adventurers in a neighboring garden.

Older garden fans take inspiration from the Welcome Garden on the south side of the library. Two artists set up their easels for en plein-air painting last week.

If you're interested in learning more about the library gardens, ask at the circulation desk or join one of the Garden Circle sessions each week.

Story time spotlight Fridays, 10 a.m.

We've added a story-time session on Friday mornings at 10 a.m. Genevieve Trono brings her good cheer and fun to share stories for kids ages 2 and up.

Busy Morning Duo Thursday, Aug. 1, noon

Join Busy Morning Duo as they tour Vermont libraries. They will perform on the library porch with family friendly music and storytelling.

Very Merry Theatre Friday, Aug. 2, 6-8 p.m.

The Very Merry Theatre traveling show brings the classic musical "42nd Street" to the Charlotte Library lawn. Please bring low lawn chairs and blankets. Library open for restroom use only.

Saturday Babytime Saturday, Aug. 3, 10 a.m.

You're invited to an unstructured hour for parents, caregivers and babies to play, explore books and chat in the young children's area. Ages birth to 18 months.

Adventure Monday Mondays, 10 a.m.

Great activity for age 7 and above on July 29 — What would you do? Stories of survival.

Preschool story time Tuesdays & Fridays, 10 a.m.

Come to the library for preschool stories, crafts and activities. No registration required. Age 2 and over.

Preschool free play Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

Play in the preschool years enables children to explore and make sense of the world around them, as well as to use and develop their imagination. Explore the sensory table, sorting, playing with blocks, playdoh — these are a few of the open-ended projects planned



Photo by Susanna Kahn

A couple of en-plein-air artists, or artists who paint outdoors, were practicing their craft recently outside of the library.

for Wednesday morning play-based learning at the Charlotte Library.

Babytime Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.

You're invited to an unstructured hour for parents, caregivers and babies to play, explore books and chat in the young children's area. Ages birth to 18 months.

Let's Lego Saturdays, 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Drop in for LEGO free play. We'll have loads of Lego bricks out, along with some books and prompts for inspiration. For ALL ages. Please note, children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult.

Programs for adults

Stillwater meditation Saturdays, 9 a.m.

Poetry and meditation are offered freely and in person to the Charlotte community. Come for quiet reflection, contemplation and gentle meditation instruction. Respect for all beings and faiths is a foundational quality of our time together. Beginning and experienced meditators are welcome.

Grange on the Green Thursday, July 25, 5:30-7 p.m.

Enjoy lively bluegrass music on the Charlotte Town Green from Forest Station & Friends. The rain location is the Charlotte Senior Center. The concert is sponsored by Lake Champlain Chocolates, and Grange on the Green is sponsored by Otter Creek Awnings and Shearer Audi-VW-Acura.

Thursday Night Book Club Thursday, July 25, 7:30 p.m.

Join a discussion of "The Art Thief" on Zoom (<https://tinyurl.com/49awjb8j>). No one has been as successful at art theft as master thief Stéphane Breitwieser. Carrying out more than 200 heists over nearly eight years, in museums and cathedrals all over Europe, Breitwieser stole more than 300 objects, until it all fell apart in spectacular fashion. Copies available at the circulation desk.



Photo by Margaret Woodruff

As a treat for young readers, those of the bunny persuasion and fans of Peter Rabbit, the library garden has been established as Mr. McGregor's Garden.

Going Solar 101 Tuesday, July 30, 5-6 p.m.

You may have seen some of the large solar arrays going up all over Vermont. Curious about how to participate in this on a smaller scale and be a part of the climate solution? As part of their mission to promote energy efficiency and renewables, the Charlotte Energy Committee has launched the Solarize Charlotte Program to promote residential solar installations throughout town, allowing residents to go solar at a discount. Stop by the library to chat with the Charlotte Energy Committee and learn more about how you can go solar for your home, business or as an investment opportunity and contribute to Charlotte's goal of transitioning to 90 percent renewable energy by 2050. They will be joined by local solar provider AllEarth Renewables (alleearthrenewables.com), which will run through the basics of solar.

Cooking book club Wednesday, July 31, 5:30 p.m.

Join a feast of local foods al fresco on the library porch or green, weather permitting. Bring a dish to share and, if you wish, a story to tell. The library has many cookbooks if you need inspiration including "Edible: A Celebration of Local Food" by Tracey Ryder and Carole Topalian, "From the Cook's Garden" by Ellen Ecker Ogden, "Local Dirt" and "Dishing Up Dirt" by Andrea Bemis and "The Vermont Non-GMO Cookbook" by Tracey Medeiros. Organizers will also be delighted if you bring a favorite recipe of your own. The cookbooks will be at the circulation desk for you to select from. Please email margaret@charlottepubliclibrary.org if you plan to attend.

Recurring programs

Book chat Wednesdays, 3 p.m.

Meet each week to discuss new books, old books and books we might have missed. Each week, Margaret Woodruff selects a theme and highlights related titles from the library collection. No registration necessary.

Crochet & knit night Wednesdays, 5-6:30 p.m.

Claudia Marshall is your host for a casual weekly session of crocheting and chatting, knitting and catching up. Bring your project or start a new one with yarn and needles available at the library, along with plenty of books to instruct and inspire. For teens and adults.

Short story selections Wednesdays, July 17, 1 p.m.

Join library director Margaret Woodruff to discuss short stories old and new on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Via Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/9c398wyy>.

Library Garden Circle Wednesdays, 4:30-6 p.m. & Fridays, 8:30-10 a.m.

Enjoy tending gardens and seeing them respond? Like friendly conversation while you pull weeds? Appreciate learning from others' gardening experiences and sharing your own? The Garden Circle of volunteers who tend the library's educational gardens would love to have you join the Friday morning group work. Experienced and new gardeners welcome. Sign up at seeds@charlottepubliclibrary.org, and you'll be contacted if plans change due to weather, etc. Coordinated by garden stewards Karen Tuininga and Linda Hamilton.

Library contact information:

Margaret Woodruff, director
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian
Susanna Kahn, tech librarian
Phone: 802-425-3864
Email: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org

For the latest information about programs, books and activity kits, sign up for the newsletter at <https://tinyurl.com/n5usd25r>.

The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets the first Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. unless otherwise rescheduled. For example, the next meeting is Wednesday, Sept. 5, 6 p.m. Contact the library or visit the library website (charlottepubliclibrary.org) for more information.

Senior Center News

Escape the heat, embrace the cool air and activities

Lori York
Director

On the hot and humid days of summer, consider spending the day in the cool air conditioning at the senior center. There are a wide variety of activities to participate in ranging from art programs, board and card games, exercise classes or just connecting with friends over a cup of coffee. The Charlotte Senior Center is a community center for active and engaged adults age 50 and older. The mission of the senior center is to provide services and programming for older adults in Charlotte and surrounding communities.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group Wednesday, Aug. 14, 4-5 p.m.

Are you caring for someone with Alzheimer's? Do you know someone who is? Please join this group for the monthly Caregivers Support Group on the second Wednesday of each month from 4-5 p.m. The meetings provide a safe place for caregivers, family and friends of persons with dementia to meet and develop a mutual support system. For additional information please contact Susan Cartwright: cartwright.susan1@gmail.com. Free. No registration required.

August artist exhibit

Lynn Cummings and her students will be showing a variety of paintings in watercolor, acrylics and collage. Cummings has taught hundreds of students at the senior center over almost 15 years.

Red Cross Blood Drive Thursday, Aug. 15, 1-6 p.m.

Please consider donating blood. The Red Cross is experiencing the worst blood shortage in over a decade. Call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit redcrossblood.org and enter: CHARLOTTE to schedule an appointment.

Women's kayak trips Second & fourth Friday mornings

These kayak trips are for active women who share a love for exploring Vermont's many local lakes, ponds and rivers. Trips listed are tentative, dependent on water and weather conditions. To be placed on a master list of paddlers to receive trip information, email Susan Hyde at susanfosterhyde@gmail.com. Free. Registration required.

Men's breakfast Friday, Aug. 9, 7:30 a.m.

On the second Friday of the month, men gather for breakfast and conversation. The doors open at 7 a.m. with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. The August guest speaker will be Chris Sabick from the maritime museum. Registration is required. Suggested donation: \$6. If you are planning to attend the men's breakfast, please register by email to lmorrison@gmavt.net by Tuesday, Aug. 6.

Beginner watercolor workshop Saturday, Aug. 17, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Let's explore the wonder of flower shapes and leaves by trying out a variety of unusual brushes. This is a beginner level workshop and if you've always wanted to try watercolor but were too intimidated, this is the class for you. Class limit 10 students. For more information about Ginny Joyner, please check

out her website: ginnyjoyner.com. Cost: \$40 plus \$6 supply fee. Registration and payment required by July 24. The supply fee is paid directly to the instructor.

Backgammon league Tuesdays, 6-8:30 p.m.

Backgammon is a tactical table game with a 5,000-year history. The group welcomes players at all levels. If you have questions, email jonathanhart1@gmail.com. Cost: \$3. No registration required.

Duplicate bridge Mondays, 12:30-4 p.m.

The group plays an intermediate level of duplicate bridge using the basic American Contract Bridge League conventions. Names are drawn for partners, and friendly games ensue. Those unfamiliar with duplicate bridge are welcome and paired with an experienced player to help for a few weeks of open-dialogue training. The group is always looking for new players who have basic bridge knowledge. Cost: \$3. No registration required.

German conversation Tuesdays, 3-4 p.m.

Möchtest du dein Deutsch üben? Come join this group to meet other German speakers and practice your German. No agenda, just a casual conversation. All experience levels are welcome. Questions? Contact Dan York at dyork@Lodestar2.com. Free. No registration required.

Pilates fitness Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

Join Phyllis Bartling in this pilates class for folks 55 and over. It includes upper-body strength work with hand weights and mat exercises. You will work core muscles to improve balance, strength and posture. Cost: \$10 a class. No registration required.

Play reading Thursday, Aug. 22, 1-3:30 p.m.

Join Sue Foley and Wally Gates for table-reading fun. No tryouts, no rehearsals, no critical reviews. The group meets monthly and is for people who enjoy reading plays aloud or listening to others. Each month a play is selected, parts are assigned and scripts are distributed. It is suggested that a good way to test the waters is to attend a session as a guest. If you have questions or would like to sit in, please contact Sue at ssnfoley@icloud.com. Free. Registration required.

Samba-canasta Tuesdays, noon, & Fridays, 12:30 p.m.

Samba is a new version of canasta that has quickly become very popular due to its variety of melds, which keeps the game interesting. If you are curious to learn how to play Samba, call Sandy Armell at 802-425-3248. Free. No registration required.

Shanghai mahjong Tuesdays, 12:45-3:45 p.m.

New to or experienced in the Shanghai style of mahjong, you are welcome to join this informal get-together. For questions email Nan Mason: anne.mason@uvm.edu. Free. No registration required.



Photos by Lori York

Tuesday afternoons are when folks gather to play Shanghai mahjong in the cafe at the senior center.



Intermediate bridge players gather on Monday afternoons to play duplicate bridge at the senior center.

Yoga strength-building practice Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-noon

Join Heidi Kvasnak for an integrative practice that builds strength and stability while maintaining a sense of ease and spaciousness in both body and mind. You will practice longer-held postures that strengthen muscles, bones and core, as well as breath-led flowing movement, including sun salutations. Prerequisite: Must be able to easily get down to and up from the floor with or without props. Cost: \$10 a class. No registration required.

Meals

Menus are posted on the website at charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday lunches

Served weekly. Lunch is served 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., or until the food runs out. Suggested lunch donation \$5. No registration required.

Weekly Age Well Grab & Go meals

Pick up on Wednesdays, 10-11 a.m., at the Charlotte Senior Center. Registration is required by Monday by 8 a.m. for the Wednesday meal. \$5 suggested donation but

not required. To register, call 802-425-6345 or email meals@charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Senior center info:

The senior center offers programs for adults 50 and older from Charlotte and surrounding communities. Priority is given to seniors, but programs are open to adults of all ages. Programs include weekly lunches, daily exercise classes and many opportunities to connect through board and card games and art and language programming. Interested in receiving a weekly reminder about what is happening? Sign up for the email newsletters at charlotteseniorcentervt.org. The "Week Ahead" email is sent out on Friday mornings with activities, lunch menus and special programs for the upcoming week.

Lori York, director,
lyork@charlotteseniorcentervt.org
Tracy Brown, coordinator,
tbrown@charlotteseniorcentervt.org
212 Ferry Road, Charlotte
802-425-6345
charlotteseniorcentervt.org

Follow the senior center on Facebook or Instagram at charlotteseniorcentervt.

Write Ingredients

No worries: Hawaiian rolls but no axe throwing at Monday Munch

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

When we think of Cape Cod, we often think “fish,” but during the early 20th century, as chicken became more accessible and affordable, cooks in the Northeast (and everywhere else) began pumping up chicken’s popularity. The addition of dried cranberries gives the Cape Cod chicken & pasta salad being served this Monday, July 29, at the senior center that special New England flavor. Add some nuts and celery and you get Cape Cod crunch.

Emigrants carried the recipe for Portuguese sweet rolls across the oceans, and the Hawaiian roll is a version created by Madeiran and Azorean emigrants in Hawaii. Put “Hawaiian rolls” into a search at The New York Times, and you will find an article featuring Mo’s House of Axe in Los Angeles, which features axe throwing along with squishy sliders in Hawaiian rolls and baskets of ribs. We’re told that axe throwing took off as an organized sport just over a decade ago, and leagues have since popped up around the country.

Not to worry: The senior center has Hawaiian rolls on the menu but no axe-throwing.

I don’t know of an idiom featuring “as old as lettuce,” but there should be one. Originally cultivated by ancient Egyptians for the production of oil from its seeds, lettuce was considered a sacred plant of the reproduction god Min. It spread to the Greeks and Romans, with the latter giving it the name lactuca. Lettuce appeared often in medieval writing, with the three basic modern lettuces — head lettuce, loose-leaf and romaine (or cos) — sharing this old history.

Christopher Columbus brought lettuce to the Americas in the late 15th century, and since then, various writers have offered opinions. Hard-boiled detective novelist and screen writer Dashiell Hammett wrote, “Feed the lettuce to the bunny and eat the bunny.”

I have two strong literary lettuce memories from my teaching days. When I was teaching seventh and eighth graders in a new program funded by the New York



Courtesy photo

The Hawaiian roll is a version created by Madeiran and Azorean emigrants in Hawaii.

State Department of Education to address the needs of children with serious reading difficulties, a state ed inspector came to learn why my students had performed so well on the state achievement test. She asked what commercial reading program I was using. I showed her Shel Silverstein’s extremely popular “Where the Sidewalk Ends.”

She wouldn’t accept this answer. I insisted it was all I had to offer, and that it was a big plenty. It was the book everybody read. For the rest of their reading, students chose individual titles. I used the curriculum budget to give each child a coupon every month, redeemable for a paperback of their choice at the local bookstore. In school, a group might choose something like “A Hero Ain’t Nothin’ But a Sandwich,” but Silverstein was the one thing they all read.

In a 1999 obituary, The New York Times wrote, “Shel Silverstein, whose goofy, gross and macabre yet always enchanting poetry for children sold more than 14 million books.” In August 2011, the New York Times was still writing editorials about him. “Shel Silverstein — art school dropout, Playboy magazine cartoonist, composer of Johnny Cash’s ‘Boy Named Sue,’ poet responsible for ‘Homework Machine’ and the line ‘I cannot go to

school today,’ / Said little Peggy Ann McKay’ — may not be the first person most parents think of as an authority on education. But Silverstein knew what parents also know deep down: school is about far more than A B C’s and 1 2 3’s. It is also, crucially, about how children figure out who they are and where they fit into the world — or don’t.”

The befuddled N.Y. State inspector could not grasp this, and I guess I keep subscribing to The New York Times because they did.

I offer what Shel said about lettuce as my excuse for mentioning him. Get ready for a groaner: “What did the carrot say to the wheat? Lettuce rest, I’m feeling beet.”

Need I point out that a reader needs to know quite a bit about language to “get” this?

My other school lettuce memory comes from a school that grouped kids into high, middle and low reading groups. My 22 third graders were identified as the “low readers.” I carefully and methodically helped children learn to choose what books to read, a critical skill. Jennifer asked for help with a troubling sentence in “Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies” by Beatrix Potter:

It is said that the effect of eating too much lettuce is soporific.

Quite a word for anyone, never mind an 8-year-old.

I probably remember that soporific lettuce because, after 15+ years in the city system, teaching older students, not able to abide that labeling of young children, I left teaching for another career. As Shakespeare noted, “Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners: so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up tyme, supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness, or manured with industry, why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills.”

Monday Munch
July 29, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Cape Cod chicken & pasta salad (chicken, pasta, cranberries, nuts, celery, mayo, greens), fruit skewers (grapes, melon, etc. on sticks), Hawaiian Rolls and

blueberry bars.

Monday Munch

Aug. 5, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

The menu will be announced at charlotteseniorcentervt.org/lunch/meals.

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