

# The Charlotte News

August 22, 2024

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Vol. 67, No. 05

## Can you get us to the finish line?

John Quinney  
Board of Directors

To date, we've received more than 150 gifts in support of our Annual Fund campaign. We are so grateful.

We set an ambitious goal of \$25,000 for this campaign. Now, with just nine days to go, an additional 40 gifts will get us over the finish line. We are hopeful that you, our readers, will come though, once again, in support of your 66-year-old community newspaper.

Without financial gifts from this generous community, we could not keep delivering The Charlotte News free to every household in town.

But that's not the whole story.

The Charlotte News is produced by one full-time and one part-time employee, but each edition reflects the efforts of many more people.

Each year, more than 70 Charlottes write stories, submit photos, proofread every edition, deliver The Charlotte News around town and serve on our board and committees. Another 70 businesses, nonprofits, town organizations and individuals support the newspaper with their advertisements.

Together, this community of supporters — donors, advertisers and volunteers — keeps the presses rolling, our bills paid and our website up to date. All of you have our thanks.

If you've not yet made a gift to our Annual Fund campaign, now's the time to pop a check in the mail to P.O. Box 251, Charlotte VT 05445 or to take a couple of minutes to make your gift online at [charlottenewsvt.org](http://charlottenewsvt.org).

Together, we can do this.

*(John Quinney is a member of the board of directors of The Charlotte News and chair of the fundraising committee.)*

## Tending to memories



Alexandra Lehmann waters the flowers at the World War I monument outside the Old Brick Store.

Photo by Lee Krohn

## Regan steps up as chair of newspaper's board

Julia Russell  
Board of Directors

At a recent meeting of the board of directors of The Charlotte News, Bill Regan was selected as board chair, replacing Julia Russell whose term had expired.

Regan has been a member of the board since January 2022. He leads the work of our business development committee, which focuses on new business opportunities that strengthen the organization and are consistent with the paper's mission.

He has been an active volunteer in local organizations since he and his wife Nina moved to Charlotte in 2019. In addition to his membership on the paper's board, he was previously chair of the trails committee and remains a member of that group. He also serves as a board member of Local Motion, Vermont's leading cycling and pedestrian advocacy group, where he is treasurer and member of the finance and leadership committees.

"I started volunteering in high school at our local hospital and community theater in Pennsylvania," Bill Regan said. "Volunteering eventually took a back seat because of the demands of work and family."

Since moving to Vermont, volunteering, he said, "has been front and center." He feels a "strong moral obligation to contribute whatever time, energy and talents I have to the betterment of the world around me."

SEE **REGAN** PAGE 2

## Officials try to quench village planning project controversy

Scooter MacMillan  
Editor

The Charlotte Selectboard meeting on Monday was in the library, and the library end of the town parking lot was filled a half hour before the Aug. 12 meeting began.

The selectboard was squeezed into the adult reading room on the northern end of the building for its meeting. The space was snug, with just enough room for the town's business, but none to spare.

There was a fire and rescue meeting in the program room.

Library director Margaret Woodruff said, just before the selectboard started, a group had been playing canasta there. Canasta had been moved to the

library from the senior center because a pressure tank water pipe had broken there. The leak was discovered about 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 6. The cleaners happened to be there and discovered the early morning leak, which was a lucky thing. The folks from fire and rescue next door were able to get the water turned off before more significant damage.

The senior center was back up and running, albeit with an amended schedule, less than a week later, with any activities that required the conference room moved or canceled while repairs are made.

It appears that insurance will cover the senior center repairs.

Meeting space was at a premium at the library on

Monday, with the town hall unavailable for the selectboard meeting because it was set up for primary voting the next day.

During the town updates section of the selectboard meeting, town administrator Nate Bareham reported that a state engineer had visited the washed-out section of Spear Street near Carpenter Road caused by Hurricane Beryl flooding July 10-11. The town is working with the state to develop a comprehensive list of the damage, the repair costs and repair options.

Chair Jim Faulkner feels like work on getting the culvert that washed out replaced and the road repaired is going well, but "unfortunately, I think it's



The selectboard met at the library on Monday, Aug. 12, because the town hall was already set up for primary voting the next day.

Photo by Margaret Woodruff

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## VILLAGE

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going to take some time.”

Charlotte has three contractors “stepping up” to do the work, but the town needs to know if it can get funding from the federal government. Faulkner said, “It all looks like we’re going to, but there’s a difference between ‘going to’ and ‘got.’ We’re not there yet.”

Early on, during public comment, Charlie Pughe, chair of the planning commission, had been standing among the bookshelves since before the selectboard meeting started, possibly anxious to extinguish controversy concerning the consultants’ draft report on the East and West Village Planning project.

“That report was published long before it was ready for prime time. They did a terrible job, in my opinion, with what they produced,” Pughe said.

The preliminary plan shows buildings where there shouldn’t be buildings, like conserved lands, wetlands and steep slopes, he said.

“The plan that’s out there now is clearly not one that’s supported by the planning commission,” Pughe said. “I apologize we’ve kind of let it fester into this mess that it has, but we’re going to do hard work to get it back and make sure that people are comfortable with where we end up on it.”

He reiterated the planning commission’s goal of having as much public input on the village planning project as possible.

“We hear what people are saying. We understand the frustration,” Pughe said. “We were very frustrated ourselves, as the planning commission, with what we got.”

The planning commission’s original schedule was to have a plan ready for the town to vote on at this March’s Town Meeting Day. “That’s clearly not going to happen,” he said.

Pughe said they now are hoping to have something ready for resident approval by June 2025.

Faulkner said he had heard a lot of concern from people worried that they wouldn’t have an opportunity to vote on land-use regulation changes to the town plan, but that is not the case in Charlotte.

Much of this resident concern is probably due to the state changing the laws so that now a selectboard has the authority to change land-use regulations without a vote by residents, Pughe said.

But Charlotte town officials don’t seem to have any interest in changing land-use regulations without a vote by residents.

“I’m not comfortable at all with a

“I apologize we’ve kind of let it fester into this mess that it has, but we’re going to do hard work to get it back and make sure that people are comfortable with where we end up on it.”

— Charlie Pughe, chair of the planning commission



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

Lengths of culvert pipe wait on the side of Spear Street to repair damage from July 10-11 flooding.

selectboard accepting a town plan,” Faulkner said. “I don’t think the selectboard has any interest in voting on land-use regulations unless it’s just corrections. I think it’s important to have the taxpayer weigh in on those changes.”

In answer to a question about how the draft from the consultants, DuBois & King of South Burlington, ended up so “far off base” from the generally acknowledged consensus of resident visions for Charlotte, Pughe said he thought the company hadn’t done enough work and rushed to put something together by the deadline.

“Honestly, I think they were under a deadline and just put something in front of us without actually finishing it. So, like their paper was due at the end of the semester, they hadn’t done it,” Pughe said. “It was just sloppy workmanship.”

But, he said, the consultants will fix it, and the town will not pay extra for that.

Board member Frank Tenney confirmed there is a distinction between the “village plan,” which has become shorthand for the East and West Village Planning Project, and the “town plan,” which is a formal part of town statutes. Town planner Larry Lewack has described the village planning project as an attempt to develop a “picture of the community’s needs, preferences and hopes for the future.”

The village plan won’t be formally adopted by the planning commission, the selectboard or the residents, Pughe said. It’s just a guide to help “conceptualize” how residents want Charlotte to be and help guide the planning commission in proposing land-use regulation changes to achieve that vision.

## REGAN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

He is a senior fellow at the Energy Action Network, where his work focuses on objective and non-partisan analysis on clean energy and greenhouse gas emissions mitigation. He is a graduate seminar instructor at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and guest-lecturer at UVM. These activities follow a storied career in the federal government where Regan spent three-plus decades as a public servant in the field of foreign policy

and national security as a researcher, writer, editor and senior executive.

The Regans have two grown daughters and two granddaughters whom they enjoy visiting as much as they can. Bill Regan also enjoys outdoor sports like cycling, hiking, cross-country skiing and kayaking. One of the reasons they were drawn to Charlotte was the many



Bill Regan

outdoor offerings here.

“The Charlotte News is one of the reasons why Charlotte is a community and not just a place on the map,” Regan said.

His role on the paper is to help “ensure that Charlotters continue to have a source of rigorous information that elevates the important policy debates in town and brings us together as people.”

He said, “Given the polarization in our national politics and the disinformation and personal attacks that can degrade even our local conversations, it has never been more important to have The Charlotte News.”



### 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.

### Editorial independence

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.

### Code of Ethics

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.

### Disclaimer

Individuals associated with The Charlotte News may engage in public discussion on issues in Charlotte, including at selectboard and other Town meetings, and on Front Porch Forum. They may also work or volunteer for organizations in Charlotte, including private businesses, the Town government, and nonprofits. When engaging in public discussions, they are expressing personal or organizational views and not necessarily the views of The Charlotte News, its staff, board of directors, or volunteers. Individuals who write opinion pieces for the paper will have their role at The Charlotte News identified, and the piece will be clearly labeled as their personal commentary.

### Letters, Opinions and Obituaries

Consistent with our mission, The Charlotte News publishes letters to the editor, opinion pieces and obituaries submitted by our readers. All such materials are subject to review and approval by the editor in accordance with the standards and requirements listed on our website at [charlottenews.org](http://charlottenews.org).

**Send submissions, questions, photos, etc. to [scooter@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:scooter@thecharlottenews.org).**

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# Declaration of Inclusion proves controversial in Charlotte

Scooter MacMillan  
Editor

A handful of people spoke in favor of the town of Charlotte adopting a Declaration of Inclusion at the selectboard meeting on Aug. 12, while a handful of people were opposed to adopting it.

Al Wakefield and Barbara Noyes-Pulling are part of a group of five Rutland-area residents who have been pushing for towns around the state to adopt the declaration. They attended the Monday meeting via Zoom.

Wakefield and Noyes-Pulling's group have persuaded 152 towns to adopt the Declaration of Inclusion in the three and half years they have been working on it.

"This is very simple. There are no legal liabilities. This has been reviewed by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and the Vermont Chamber of Commerce supports this, and the governor has proclaimed this is important to Vermont," Wakefield said. "Our vision is that Vermont will become known as the most inclusive state in the country."

Noyes-Pulling said that the governor puts the worker shortage at 10,000 people now, and Vermont is predicted to lose 100,000 people to retirement over the next 10 years. She sees adopting the declaration as a way to attract workers.

Besides just being the right thing to do, she said, it's also the right thing to do for economic reasons.

Tanna Kelton is opposed to the town adopting the Declaration of Inclusion. She believes it isn't needed because there are other documents that cover the issue of inclusion like the state and U.S. constitutions.

Kelton said the town could create its own document and argued for slowing the process down. She argued the town shouldn't rush to endorse the inclusion declaration.

The issue was originally brought up about three years ago.

Kelton also alleged that, if one looks deeper into "their" website, "what 'they're' after is development in town, bringing in international and national people to live here, bringing in businesses and investors."

Wakefield said there was no financial support coming from other organizations to support the Declaration of Inclusion. It's just the five volunteers working to get towns to approve it.

Nina Regan announced her strong support for Charlotte to approve the Declaration of

**"Our vision is that Vermont will become known as the most inclusive state in the country."**

— Al Wakefield

Inclusion: "I can't think of any reason not to. If we were to vote against it, it would raise a lot of questions about who are we in Charlotte. Every other county, every other town and city in Chittenden County has approved this. The governor is on board. Other counties are doing it. Why not us?"

"I think at some point, as the country begins to change with religions and colors and races and all sorts of people, we should be aware of that. We should be accepting," Julia Gilbert said. She has been reading and thinking about the declaration for some years now and believes the town should be thinking about adopting it sooner rather than later.

Gilbert said she feels that interpreting the Declaration of Inclusion to mean suddenly Charlotte will have people moving in from all over the country is "fear mongering."

The declaration doesn't scare her because there's not another step the town has to take if it adopts it. Gilbert said, "I would rather be a town that stands for inclusion rather than saying 'no.'"

Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen of the Charlotte Congregational said he assumed everyone agreed with "the substance" of the declaration. He is interested in how the declaration would be implemented if it is passed by the town. He hopes it would be a tool to measure how the town is doing when it makes decisions.

"I guess the way to say it is: 'I support it, and I think it's a no brainer,'" Goldenbogen said.

In response to a question from board member Lewis Mudge about the organizers' response if Charlotte decided to put it to a town vote, Wakefield said several towns have

voted on the declaration at Town Meeting Day voting. The Declaration of Inclusion was passed overwhelmingly in all of those town votes, except one. The vote in the very small town where it didn't pass was 39 opposed and 33 in favor.

Nothing is mandated by the declaration, and no town needs to form a committee, Wakefield said.

"What we're talking about is an attitude," Wakefield said. "There's no legal jeopardy. It's something you should do because you feel like you want to welcome individuals of all kinds to Charlotte."

Both Faulkner and board member Kelly Devine said it should go to a town vote.

Former publisher of The Charlotte News, Vince Crockenberg said, Vermont is the least diverse state racially and socioeconomically in the country, except maybe Wyoming.

"It's timely for us to counter the impression that we are this kind of exclusive white enclave in New England," Crockenberg said. "I think we're not, not intentionally, but if you look around at who lives here, we're rich and we're white and we are old."

Mudge, who has supported the Declaration of Inclusion since it was first discussed, said,

"Just a personal note: I do support this, and I will be voting for it, and I would come out and advocate for that vote. But I do think it's important for people to have their say."

Board member Kelly Devine said there were several steps to be taken before the Declaration of Inclusion could be put on the town ballot as an item for voters to decide, although the selectboard "could sort of agree in principle" to move in that direction.

Mudge said, "I'm committed to putting it on the ballot."

## Speed lowered

The selectboard voted to lower the speed limit to 25 mph on Ferry Road west from its intersection with Greenbush Road approximately .4 of a mile to the railroad tracks and from the railroad tracks to Lake Road to 40 mph.

These speed limit changes will become effective on Oct. 3.

Mudge said he had heard for a lot of people who live in this area and "I've yet to hear from one person who lives on that road who says, 'I don't want it.'"

Frank Tenney cast the lone opposition vote to the speed change.

## Pollen sharing



Photo by Alexandra Lazar

A female bumblebee gathers pollen, even as she spreads it, while feasting at a pink anemone flower. Fun fact: You can tell this bee is female because of the yellow pollen basket on her back leg.



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# Charlotte Primary Election results



Four hundred fifty-three of Charlotte's 3,400 registered voters had voted in the Tuesday, Aug. 13, primary by the time polls at the town hall closed at 7 p.m. Here is how those residents who exercised their right to participate in the 2024 Vermont Primary Election cast their votes.

## Democratic Party ballot results: U.S. Senator

- Bernie Sanders — 334

## Representative to Congress

- Becca Balint — 329

## Governor

- Esther Charlestin — 171
- Peter K. Duval — 48

## Lieutenant Governor

- Thomas Renner — 163
- David Zuckerman — 181

## State Treasurer

- Mike Pieciak — 314

## Secretary of State

- Sarah Copeland Hanzas — 293

## Auditor of Accounts

- Doug Hoffer — 300

## Attorney General

- Charity R. Clark — 296

## State Senator

- Thomas Chittenden — 256
- Kesha Ram Hinsdale — 254
- Virginia "Ginny" Lyons — 276
- Louis Meyers — 122

## State Representative

- Chea Waters Evans — 255.

## Progressive Party results: Governor

- Marielle Blais — 2

## Lieutenant Governor

- Zoraya Hightower — 1

## State Treasurer

- Tim Maciel — 2

## Auditor of Accounts

- Linda Gravell — 2

## Attorney General

- Elijah Bergman — 2.

## Republican Party results: U.S. Senator

- Gerald Malloy — 64

## Representative to Congress

- Mark Coester — 65

## Governor

- Phil Scott — 75

## Lieutenant Governor

- John S. Rodgers — 44
- Gregory M. Thayer — 30

## State Treasurer

- Joshua Bechhoefer — 58

## Secretary of State

- H. Brooke Paige — 58

## Auditor of Accounts

- H. Brooke Paige — 57

## Attorney General

- H. Brooke Paige — 57

## State Senator

- Bruce Roy — 66.

# Around Town

## Congratulations

**Sophia Kehr** of Charlotte was named to Hartwick College's dean's list this spring. Kehr is majoring in psychology.

## Condolences

On Aug. 16, 2024, **Valerie Anne Quenneville Mullin** lost her courageous battle to ovarian cancer.

Valerie, born Jan. 9, 1959, at Mary Fletcher Hospital in Burlington, Vermont, entered the world quickly and with a spirited determination that would define her life. The daughter of Nancy Sabin and adopted by Nancy's husband, Robert Quenneville, at the age of 2, Valerie spent her early years in West Berlin, Germany.

Valerie's father served in the Air Force and was thought to be eavesdropping on Russian communications, as his work was cloaked in secrecy. The family later moved to Key West, Florida, but Vermont would always be her true home.

Valerie returned to Burlington from Key West in the first grade. Thanks to her family and early travels, she was already speaking English, Spanish and German. Valerie attended H.O. Wheeler, Lawrence Barnes and Champlain schools. She continued her education at Burlington High School until her senior year, forging lifelong friendships with Sherry and Bonnie Lafrance. She graduated from Mount Abraham Union High School where her sons would later attend.

Valerie's early life was characterized by an unwavering work ethic. Even as a young girl she showed remarkable drive, whether it was selling the most Girl Scout cookies in Vermont for two consecutive years or balancing multiple jobs like babysitting and a paper route. She later worked at Vantage Press, clocking in 100-hour weeks at \$1 an hour. This early determination to succeed, coupled with a deep sense of purpose, set the foundation for her life, dedicated to family, community and empowerment of others.

After graduating high school in 1978, Valerie married Chris Coombs and relocated to Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina. After four years on base, they moved back to the Sherman Family Farm in New Haven, Vermont.

Valerie dedicated herself to being a stay-at-home mom while also taking on factory jobs, including working at Harbor Industries. Prior to Valerie and Chris's separation, in 1980, they were blessed with their first son, Derek, and in 1982, their second son, Ryan.

A new chapter in Valerie's life began in 1981 when she co-founded

Needleworks Craft Supplies with her mother, Nancy. The business originated at a five-generation family property, the McNeil Homestead, in Charlotte, Vermont. It expanded into a successful 30-year venture, with multiple additional locations throughout Vermont and New York. It was during this time Valerie's entrepreneurial spirit shined, alongside the strong bond she shared with her mother.

Valerie's life took another meaningful turn when she met the love of her life, Rob Mullin, in 1996 at a University of Vermont hockey game in Gutterson Fieldhouse. Their romance blossomed, and in March of 1997 during a Burlington Fire Department fundraiser at the same hockey arena where they met, Rob proposed with friends and family in the crowd. Valerie's son Ryan helped Rob pick the engagement ring, making it a true family affair. In 1999, at the impressive age of 40, Valerie had her third son, Bryce. Valerie and Rob recently celebrated their 27th wedding anniversary on July 19.

Beyond love of family, Valerie's purpose extended to empowering other women and giving back to her community. Through the mentorship of Patti Sabin, Valerie became deeply involved in Mary Kay Cosmetics, where she rose to the top 3 percent of sales directors in the country. Valerie's dedication earned her five free cars, including the iconic pink Cadillac, along with trips, prizes and the joy of inspiring women along the way.

Valerie always loved animals and that love grew into a passion when she founded Winnie's Legacy Canine Rescue, a non-profit named in honor of her beloved dog, Winnie. Over the years, Winnie's Legacy saved more than 3,500 dogs from Southern states, finding them adopted fur-ever homes. Valerie now rests in heaven, taking care of all the puppies she could not save. Valerie's legacy continues through the stewardship of her dedicated volunteers.

Valerie's commitment to helping others was also evident with her financial acumen. Introduced to investing by her great uncle Wallace, Valerie took the lessons she learned and taught herself about prudent investing. This knowledge not only benefited her family but also allowed Valerie to share wisdom with others, ensuring they too could make informed financial decisions.

SEE **AROUND TOWN** PAGE 5



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# Letters to the Editor

## It would be appropriate to discuss tax bill with town officials

To the Editor:

We Charlotte taxpayers recently received property tax bills for 2024. The increase from the previous year is, I'd say, generous. It's appropriate, therefore, for the town's citizens to have opportunities, well warned, to ask questions and to discuss the current bill with those in town government responsible. Also invited and present should be members of state

government. Maybe the governor could step in. Let's remember, government, local and state, is there to serve its people. Not vice versa.

It was my privilege to serve Charlotte and Vermont in the state senate for a decade. Few things are as respected and carefully done as the appropriations process which designates the peoples resources for the public good.

J. Dennis Delaney

*(J. Dennis Delaney is a former state senator.)*



## NEXT PUBLICATION DATES

### SEPT. 5

Copy Deadline: Aug. 30

Ad Deadline: Aug. 30

### SEPT. 19

Copy Deadline: Sept. 13

Ad Deadline: Sept. 13

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## AROUND TOWN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

A devoted mother, Valerie instilled strong academics in her children with all three graduating college. She also taught self-confidence, independence and resilience to her children. She always made sure



Valerie Anne Quenneville Mullin

they were prepared for life's challenges and was their biggest cheerleader, providing guidance and celebrating their achievements. Valerie's involvement in their lives was unwavering, whether it was driving across the Northeast to support Derek's wrestling, traveling to New York City for Ryan's acting auditions, or driving cross-country multiple times for Bryce's young adult adventures. Valerie always made time for her family, no matter how busy life became.

Valerie's impact on those around her was profound, especially through her work with Mary Kay, her dog rescue and volunteer opportunities. Valerie empowered many women, giving them support to succeed and stand up for themselves. Her strong will, caring nature and loyalty to family and friends will be treasured by all who knew her.

Valerie shared a life rich with love, purpose and a deep commitment to

helping those in need. She cherished her family and is survived by her husband, Rob Mullin; her children, Derek and Chelsea Coombs and their children, Henry and Holden, Ryan Coombs and Bryce Mullin. She is also survived by her siblings Nina, Victor and Neil. Predeceased by her parents, Nancy Sabin and Robert Quenneville, Valerie leaves behind a legacy of strength, independence and compassion.

Valerie would like to extend her heartfelt thanks and appreciation to her husband Rob, sister Nina and dear friends, Sherry LaFrance and Theresa Carter for their dedicated love and care, particularly during her cancer battle. Valerie will be deeply missed, but her legacy of love, purpose and empowerment of others will continue to inspire all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Services:

- Wake: Friday, Aug. 23, 4-7 p.m., Ready Funeral Home, 261 Shelburne Road, Burlington, VT.

- Funeral: Saturday Aug. 24, noon, North Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church, 227 Old Hollow Road, North Ferrisburgh, VT.

- Burial: Immediately following service; at Charlotte Congregational Church, 403 Church Hill Road, Charlotte, VT, with reception to follow at the rectory.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to Winnie's Legacy Canine Rescue at Winnie's Legacy Canine Rescue, 91 Dart Hill Road, North Ferrisburgh, VT 05473. To send online condolences visit readyfuneral.com



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The Charlotte News

## Commentary

# Budgets for climate-change predicting unpredictable

Katrina Menard  
Contributor

As Vermont recovers from yet another round of flooding and braces for what's left of Tropical Storm Debby, it may come as no surprise that Vermont is ranked seventh in the nation for the most federal disaster declarations due to extreme weather since 2011.

And some parts are harder hit than others: Washington County is tied for second as the most disaster-prone county in the country, while Lamoille, Chittenden, Orange, Orleans and Essex are all tied for fourth.

In addition to the very real emotional toll, these disasters cost the state money. Damage estimates from last summer's flooding exceed \$600 million—and over \$90 million of that fell on state and local government. In other words: disasters are expensive, and the state needs to start accounting for unanticipated costs from flooding and other disasters.

While the hope is that the federal government continues to pick up most of the tab, the current funding structure of federal programs and increasingly localized flooding can leave communities stranded. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance program—which helps to rebuild public infrastructure—is one of the largest emergency relief programs, but these dollars are not guaranteed. To access this money, the state and each recovering county must hit a per-capita damage threshold set by FEMA. If the county does not hit the threshold, it cannot—except in limited circumstances—access FEMA dollars for disaster recovery. Likewise, if a county hits the threshold but the state does not, FEMA can choose not to provide federal recovery dollars.

Even with access to Public Assistance dollars, there are still costs that must be carried by state or local governments.

Larger projects are funded on a reimbursement basis, so the state or town must have funding on hand to receive federal dollars later. FEMA typically covers 75 percent of the funding for a project, leaving state and local funding to pick up a quarter of the tab, which can add up quickly.

Other resources can be brought to bear in the recovery — insurance payouts, private donations and property owners' pockets. But these are not dependable sources of relief available to all flood victims. For enrolled renters and homeowners, flood insurance typically covers more costs than the government. However, less than 1 percent of Vermont households have flood insurance despite the fact that many communities sit along rivers. Private donations and volunteering are another important source of assistance following flooding around the state, but they are typically just a fraction of what the government can provide. And these sources may dwindle as disasters increase in frequency and donors experience “flood fatigue”.

Climate change and its immediate effects are clear and present in the state, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars last year alone. These are new problems that the state didn't face 10, 20 or 30 years ago, and they require new resources. Vermont needs to budget for the damage caused by more frequent extreme weather events and for mitigation projects to protect Vermonters, their homes and other critical infrastructure. Even when a disaster is bad enough to warrant federal assistance, the state will face new, unanticipated costs. If the last two summers have taught us anything, it's that we need to be prepared for the unpredictable.

*(Katrina Menard is state policy fellow at Public Assets Institute (publicassets.org), a non-partisan, non-profit, people-centered, data-first organization based in Montpelier. She lives in Strafford.)*

# Emerge Vermont alums take big wins in August primary

Elaine Haney  
Contributor

Emerge Vermont, the state's premier organization that recruits and trains Democratic women to run for office, saw big wins up and down the ballot in this week's primary election.

The organization had 48 alums and trainees on the ballot with 46 wins and a 96-percent win rate. Along with all incumbents winning their races, several first-time candidates saw victory and one made history.

Alum Esther Charlestin became the first Black woman in Vermont history (and only the second in the country) to win a major party nomination for governor. Alums Congresswoman Becca Balint, Secretary

of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas and Attorney General Charity Clark all ran in uncontested primary races.

Alums and trainees of Emmerge Vermont were on the ballot for offices at every level, from the legislature to governor to congress.

“More women are winning when running for office in Vermont than ever before, thanks in part to Emmerge Vermont, which recruits and trains Democratic women to run,” said former Vermont Governor Madeleine M. Kunin, who founded Emmerge Vermont in 2013.

Emmerge Vermont has made a name for itself for the campaign training it provides

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## Just dessert



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

The Rokeby Museum held its annual pie and ice cream social on Sunday, Aug. 11, with over 80 pies. The museum has been holding this fundraiser since the 1980s.

## EMERGE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

and the close-knit support network maintained by the women who train in the program.

Incumbent Senator Martine Larocque Gulick ran in the hotly contested Chittenden-Central Senate district race. She came out as the top vote-getter and attributes her win to the campaign support she received: “It was what launched me onto a path of leadership and service, and I am ever grateful to this incredible organization.”

First-time candidate Leanne Harple of Glover won her primary race for the Orleans-4 seat being vacated by Rep. Katherine Sims, herself an alum who won her own primary race for the open Orleans Senate seat. Harple, who participated in an Emerge Vermont bootcamp earlier this summer, said, “Emerge alums helped me by offering me political contributions, providing me with volunteer hours canvassing in my district and cheering me

on throughout a tough campaign. When I won my primary, it felt like it was not only a win for me, but a win for women.”

Women who went through Emerge Vermont training also made up 43 percent of all women candidates from all parties on the primary ballot.

Since Emerge Vermont launched in 2013, the program has trained over 200 women in their Signature Training Program and dozens more in shorter trainings. Prior to the Tuesday, July 13, primary, 52 percent of alums have gone on to run for political office or been appointed to local boards or commissions, and of those who have gone on to run for an elected position, 39 percent have won.

Nationally, Emerge has trained more than 6,000 alums since 2002 — including Vice President Kamala Harris, the organization’s original alum — and currently has more than 1,200 alums in elected office across the country. For more information, please visit [emergevt.org](http://emergevt.org).

*(Elaine Haney is executive director of Emerge Vermont.)*

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## Hi Neighbor

# Hi Neighbor meets Hello Neighbor's Mike Jordan

Phyl Newbeck  
Contributor

For the last quarter century, Mike Jordan has been maintaining his own driveway. Sometimes neighbors would approach him and ask if he'd be willing to help them out. He'd drive over to their homes and greet them with a hearty "hello, neighbor," so when he decided to put his tractor skills to work on a commercial basis, Hello Neighbor is the name he chose for the business.

Jordan started Hello Neighbor last July. In 2023, he completed 34 projects over the course of 571 hours, working in seven towns from Cambridge to Duxbury and spreading 1,124 tons of gravel from six different quarries. He has two trucks, a skid steer and tractor with a Harley Power Rake, a roller-compactor, a box blade

and pallet forks, as well as a number of finishing tools. His work is all the more impressive when you learn that Jordan is also a full-time member of the Burlington Fire Department.

Jordan's original career was as a graphic designer. He got his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Hartford Art School, but while working as a designer, he got the urge for more physical work. He began volunteering for the Charlotte Fire Department in 2008 and a few years later applied for a job with the Burlington Fire Department. He is a firefighter and advanced emergency medical technician and continues to do design work for some long-time clients.

Jordan's firefighting schedule is two days on and four days off, so he looked for additional work to fill his schedule.

"I recognized that there was a shortage

of people in the trades," he said. "It's hard to get people to call you back for projects."

Jordan had always enjoyed doing tractor work, so he thought he'd give the driveway business a try.

Because he still works for the Burlington Fire Department, Jordan doesn't take emergency calls, but he prioritizes people who have impassible driveways. Otherwise, he bids on projects and coordinates scheduling for his days off. He works alone but sometimes gets help from his firefighting colleagues. He notes that there is already a degree of trust because he works, eats, cleans and sleeps with them at the station and knows that they have undergone background checks.

Jordan focuses on gravel driveways but crosses over into what he refers to as light or finished excavation work which is usually connected to a driveway. This includes tasks like leveling an area to build a gravel pad for a shed. His driveway work involves ditches, culverts, swales and other ways to address drainage issues.

Last year, several of Jordan's Charlotte customers said they were seeing greater volumes of water or water in new places around their houses.

"More and more people who have lived in their homes for decades are having problems they've never seen before," he said.

This year, he took jobs in Orwell, Lincoln and Middlebury. Jobs that far away have their challenges, including drive time and finding new suppliers, but Jordan enjoys going to new places and meeting new people. As his business grows, he has updated his equipment so he can do work faster and better.

Jordan's preference is doing finishing work like grading and making things neat and tidy, but he has been getting more and more requests for bigger projects that involve replacing and repairing driveways. Still, he enjoys the work.

"I think the feeling I get is similar to what most people get from mowing their lawn," he said. "You start something, and



Photo by Noah Jordan  
Mike Jordan enjoys helping others with their driveway issues.

you finish it, and it looks good when it's done."

Jordan hasn't left his graphic design background entirely behind. In the past he designed merchandise and websites for others, but they always made the final decision, so he relishes having the last word in designing his own T-shirts, hats and website.

Hello Neighbor has garnered 19 five-star Google reviews and Jordan noted that having people appreciate his work is an added benefit of his venture.

"This job checks a lot of boxes for me," he said. "I like running a small business. There are challenges and rewards, and there is obviously a need because the phone keeps ringing."



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## Food Shelf News

# Thanks to those who step up to combat food insecurity

Maj Eisinger  
Contributor

Eggplant, zinnias, blackberries, cash, dry goods, backpacks, bread and more; how are these related?

These are just some of the ways our Charlotte community continues to step up to assist our neighbors and combat food insecurity. Hunger affects too many Vermonters. Community contributions, both large and small, and of an impressive variety, provide and strengthen an important safety net.

Thanks to the Charlotte Grange for its Special Food and Funds Drive July 23-30, in honor of Karen Doris and her 31 years of food shelf volunteerism and leadership. We appreciate the shelf-stable food and financial donations given at the Veggie Share and Grange on the Green concert. We are grateful to all those who celebrate exceptional volunteerism and who donated to help mitigate food insecurity within our community this month, including Susan and Robbie Hall, M. Teena and Richard Flood, Nancy Pricer, Caleb “Deedle” Kiley, Anne and Edward Castle, Sharon Mount and Barry Finette, Lynn Fox, Andrew Milliken, Greg and Lynn Cluff, Jocelyn Schermerhorn, Janice Heilmann, Susan Hyde, Tim Hotaling, Katherine Arthaud, Frances Foster, Jane Lawlis, the Windham Foundation, Virginia Foster, Richard Mintzer, Daniel Raabe, Karen and Dean Tuininga, Susan and Hans Ohanian, and Michael and Janet Yantachka.

Thanks also to all those gardeners who were moved to plant with a plan to donate to the food shelf or who have cultivated a plethora of garden goodies too large for their families to consume. Donations from community gardeners of fresh produce

play an important role at the Food Shelf. We gratefully accept produce donations beginning at 3 p.m. on distribution Wednesday.

Thank you to the Haggis family for their Blackberry Fundraiser. We appreciate their support and their blackberries were delicious.

Jane MacLean of Sweet Roots, which is part of the Farmstead Together initiative, has been providing wonderful produce, including organic eggplant most recently, with the farmstead’s generous gift card to the food shelf. We are grateful for these healthful contributions.

Food for the body is important; food for the spirit is as well. Hillary Maharam has been providing beautiful floral bouquets to our families for every distribution. This is a special donation for which we and our families are grateful.

As the new school year beckons, the food shelf is happy to offer backpacks to our school-age kids in preparation for the school year.

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

Food is provided at 403 Church Hill Road, in the back of 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 needs or other questions call 802-425-2402.

Charlotte Food Shelf and Assistance also provides limited utility, rent, medical, 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



Photo by Peggy Sharpe

Floral bouquets for food shelf families created and donated by Hillary Maharam.

available during food shelf open hours, or on our website at [charlotteuucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf](http://charlotteuucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf).

Monetary donations are appreciated, tax



deductible and can be addressed to: Charlotte Food Shelf, Inc. PO Box 83, Charlotte VT 05445. An easy way to donate is through the PayPal button on the website address listed above, or via the QR code provided herein.

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The Charlotte News

# Diamond Island Regatta sails smoothly despite weather

Tim Etchells  
Contributor

The remnants of Hurricane Debby rampaged through the Champlain Valley on Friday, Aug. 9, bringing heavy rain and high winds, with gusts as high as 65 knots. At Point Bay Marina in Charlotte, a sailboat was blown off its mooring into the marsh, and another was dismasted. Tens of thousands of Vermonters, and the marina, were without power that night, the outage continued well into the weekend. Downed trees and flooding closed many roads.

But the weather had calmed down significantly, and the clean-up was well under way by Saturday morning. And the 12th annual Diamond Island Regatta, sponsored by the Diamond Island Yacht Club and Point Bay Marina to benefit the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, went ahead pretty much as scheduled. Boats that would have traveled south from the northern bays of Lake Champlain on Friday evening either moved up their trips to earlier in the day or decided to make the long trip down the lake on Saturday morning before the race.

“There was no way I was going to miss it,” said Julie Trotter, captain of Meridian, who left Malletts Bay Boat Club in Colchester at 4 a.m. “It’s one of my favorite events of the season. Plus, my crew and I enjoyed a beautiful sunrise from the middle of Lake Champlain, and on our return to Malletts Bay Sunday evening, sailed right into a rainbow.”

Event organizers and volunteers, unable to set up the venue Friday due to the winds, arrived at 6 a.m. Saturday to discover there was no power or running water at the marina. Yet they still managed to put on a great breakfast before the race with hot and cold items and hot coffee.

Despite the storm, 25 boats were on the starting line that morning. The regatta took boats on a course of about 11 miles, from Town Farm Bay, south to Diamond Island off Ferrisburgh, north to Sloop Island off Charlotte and back to the start line. The race started in a light breeze, but the wind picked up, then waned again, making for some challenging sailing.

The next day, 20 boats sailed in the fourth annual Split Rock Race in mostly steady winds, covering the same course. The start was in a brisk 15-knot southerly, providing a quick trip to Diamond Island, and the breeze held up until the last few boats made it to Thompson’s Point on the way to the finish line.

Boats came from all over the lake for the weekend of racing, including the Diamond Island Yacht Club in Charlotte, the Lake Champlain Yacht Club in Shelburne, the Malletts Bay Boat Club in Colchester, and even from as far as Mooney Bay, north of Plattsburgh, N.Y. Both races are part of the Lake Champlain Championship Series, a season-long competition that determines annual bragging rights in five classes: three Spinnaker classes and two jib-and-main classes. The races are scored with a system so boats with different speed potentials can compete against each other. Each boat’s elapsed time for the course is turned into a “corrected” time to determine the winners in each class.

The first boat to finish in the Diamond



Photo by Joe Gannon/Coyote Ridge Productions LLC

Foxy Lady, a J/105 sailed by Jeff Hill of LCYC, was the winner in the Spinnaker A class in the Split Rock Race and runner-up in the Diamond Island Regatta.

Island Regatta on Saturday, in 2:32:18, was Chris Duley’s Polar Express, a Henderson 30 from the Valcour Sailing Club competing in the Spinnaker A division. Winning Spinnaker A on corrected time was Rogue, a J/105 from Lake Champlain Yacht Club, owned by Gene Cloutier, Matt Fisher and Walt Marti. First place in the Spinnaker B class went to Muse, a J/37C sailed by Doug Friant, a member of both Diamond Island Yacht Club and Lake Champlain Yacht Club. Spinnaker C class was won again this year by Benedek Erdos of the host club, sailing his Santana 2320R, Lil’ Bot.

In the jib-and-main classes, Shockwave, a J/29 sailed by Diamond Island Yacht Club’s Jim and Tom Moody, captured jib-and-main A. In the jib-and-main B class, Mackinac, a Pearson 32 sailed by Tim and Betsy Etchells, also of Diamond Island Yacht Club, came out on top.

In Sunday’s Split Rock Race, the win in the Spinnaker A class went to Foxy Lady, a J/105 sailed by Jeff Hill of Lake Champlain Yacht Club. Enki, a C&C 99 sailed by Cindy and Marc Turcotte of Lake Champlain Yacht Club, won the very competitive Spinnaker B class. Osprey, a C&C 33 Mark II sailed by Tom Porter of Diamond Island Yacht Club and Lake Champlain Yacht Club, got the win in Spinnaker C class.

In the Jib and Main classes on Sunday, Jim Lampman of Diamond Island Yacht Club sailed Hot Chocolate, a J/9, to the victory in jib-and-main A. And Mackinac, the Pearson 32 sailed by Diamond Island Yacht Club’s Tim and Betsy Etchells, won jib-and-main B, becoming the only double winner of the weekend.

And everyone had fun watching the lone multihull boat, Shoshin, owned by Tim McKegney, zip around the course in record time on Sunday.

Full results can be found at the Diamond Island Yacht Club website: [diamondislandyachtclub.org/dir-srr-results-for-2024](http://diamondislandyachtclub.org/dir-srr-results-for-2024).



Photo by Joe Gannon/Coyote Ridge Productions LLC

Polar Express, a Henderson 30 sailed by Chris Duley from the Valcour Sailing Club, was the first boat to finish in Saturday’s Diamond Island Regatta.

As is the case every year, perhaps the biggest winner was the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. The money raised by the regular benefit events — the pre-race breakfast, the Lobster Fest dinner, T-shirt and hat sales and a fundraising raffle — is still being tallied, but is on track to break records.

After the way the weekend started, it was lucky that both races saw only a few brief

showers, and the Lobster Fest and awards dinner — a sell-out, attended by more than 100 people — took place under clear skies. The post-race events on Saturday included live music from The Morning Dudes, Tom Van Sant and Jake Geppert, who saved the day with their battery-powered amp and mics.

## REGATTA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Power returned just in time for a presentation about Lake Champlain's most famous denizen, Champ, by Chris Sabick, executive director of Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. Next came the awards ceremony and Lobster Fest dinner, with winning raffle tickets being drawn throughout for prizes from the event's generous sponsors, all to benefit the museum.

### Top finishers

#### Diamond Island Regatta, Aug. 10

\* Finishes based on corrected time \*

##### Spinnaker A

1. Rogue, J/105, Marti/Fisher/Cloutier, Lake Champlain Yacht Club
2. Foxy Lady, J/105, Jeff Hill, Lake Champlain Yacht Club
3. Souvenir, C&C 115, Craig Meyerson, Mooney Bay

##### Spinnaker B

1. Muse, J/37C, Doug Friant, Diamond Island Yacht Club/Lake Champlain Yacht Club
2. Lift Ticket, J/92S, Sam Pratt, Malletts Bay Boat Club
3. Enki, C&C 99, Cindy & Marc Turcotte, Lake Champlain Yacht Club

##### Spinnaker C

1. Lil' Bot, Santana 2023R, Benedek Erdos, Diamond Island Yacht Club
2. Osprey, C&C 33 MK II, Thomas Porter, Diamond Island Yacht Club



Photo by Julie Trottier

On the way back to Malletts Bay on Aug. 11, after the Diamond Island Regatta and Split Rock Race, Julie Trottier on Meridian sailed right into the middle of a rainbow.

Diamond Island Yacht Club/Lake Champlain Yacht Club

3. Pas de Deux, Pearson Flyer, John Beal, Diamond Island Yacht Club

##### Jib & main A

1. Shockwave, J/29, Jim & Tom Moody, Diamond Island Yacht Club
2. Schuss, J/30, Cameron Giezendanner, Malletts Bay Boat Club
3. Neelima, M35, Michael Lestage

##### Jib & main B

1. Mackinac, Pearson 32, Tim & Betsy Etchells, Diamond Island Yacht Club
2. Meridian, O'Day 28, Julie Trottier, Malletts Bay Boat Club
3. Salsa, Ericson 34, Sean Linskey, Diamond Island Yacht Club

##### Split Rock Race, Aug. 11

##### Spinnaker A

1. Foxy Lady, J/105, Jeff Hill, Lake

Champlain Yacht Club

2. Lisa J, Mumm 30, Lake Champlain Yacht Club/Malletts Bay Boat Club
3. Souvenir, C&C 115, Craig Meyerson, Mooney Bay

##### Spinnaker B

1. Enki, C&C 99, Cindy & Marc Turcotte, Lake Champlain Yacht Club
2. Lift Ticket, J/92S, Sam Pratt, Malletts Bay Boat Club
3. Muse, J/37C, Doug Friant, Diamond Island Yacht Club/Lake Champlain Yacht Club

##### Spinnaker C

1. Osprey, C&C 33 MK II, Thomas Porter, Diamond Island Yacht Club/Lake Champlain Yacht Club
2. Lil' Bot, Santana 2023R, Benedek Erdos, Diamond Island Yacht Club

##### Jib & main A

1. Hot Chocolate, J/9, Jim Lampman, Diamond Island Yacht Club
2. Pas de Deux, Pearson Flyer, John Beal, Diamond Island Yacht Club
3. Morning Star ... Again, Catalina 320, Stephen Unsworth, Lake Champlain Yacht Club

##### Jib & main B

1. Mackinac, Pearson 32, Tim & Betsy Etchells, Diamond Island Yacht Club
2. Meridian, O'Day 28, Julie Trottier, Malletts Bay Boat Club
3. Salsa, Ericson 34, Sean Linskey, Diamond Island Yacht Club

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# Health

## What seniors need to know about changes to Medicare Part D

Kenneth Thorpe  
Contributor

Congress recently made a number of changes to Medicare’s “Part D” prescription drug benefit. The changes were part of President Biden’s signature legislation, the Inflation Reduction Act. The legislation was intended to make it easier for seniors to afford their medicines.

Some of the changes will indeed help seniors. But other changes could inadvertently raise seniors’ costs, reduce their access to medicines and stifle the development of new treatments.

With open enrollment season just around the corner — it’ll run from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7 this year — every senior should know about the Inflation Reduction Act and how it has impacted Medicare.

First, the good news. Seniors using insulin now have their costs capped at \$35 each month. This has already made a huge

difference for those living with diabetes.

Starting next year, seniors’ yearly out-of-pocket Part D drug costs will be capped at \$2,000. Seniors will also have the option to spread these costs out over the entire year through a new program called the “Medicare Prescription Payment Plan.” Both of these changes can help seniors who rely on multiple brand-name medicines and those on fixed incomes.

But right now, very few enrollees are aware of this new program. Medicare could do more to alert seniors to this new feature, especially since seniors interested in this benefit will need to opt in. During open enrollment season, seniors should consider contacting their Part D insurers if they’d benefit from spreading out their pharmacy costs.

Because of the Inflation Reduction Act, Medicare can now set prices on some covered drugs for the first time ever. Unfortunately, this policy has had some



unintended effects on the development of new medicines. Thus far, it has already resulted in the discontinuation of at least 36 research programs and 22 experimental drugs.

The Inflation Reduction Act has also resulted in higher premiums for seniors. This year, standalone Part D plans were on track to cost 21 percent more than they did last year, on average. As a result, many seniors switched to lower-cost options. The number of plans available has also dropped, down about 25 percent since 2020.

Because of the law, many insurers have also shifted some medications to “non-preferred” or “specialty” tiers that require higher out-of-pocket costs, restricting

beneficiaries’ access to previously covered drugs. Some insurers have also created rules that make it harder to get the drugs your doctor recommends, like making patients first try cheaper options. It is important that seniors learn about these changes — and the impact they’re having on their access to medicines — before Medicare’s open enrollment begins in October.

*(Kenneth E. Thorpe is chairman of the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University. He is chairman of the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease.)*



### The Town of Charlotte TOWN MEETINGS AND AGENDAS

Visit [charlottevt.org](http://charlottevt.org)  
for more information

**Planning Commission Meeting**  
Thursday, Aug. 22, 7 p.m.

**Regular Selectboard Meeting**  
Monday, Aug. 26, 6:30 p.m.

**Charlotte Conservation Meeting**  
Tuesday, Aug. 27, 7 p.m.

**Development Review Board**  
Wednesday, Aug. 28, 7 p.m.

**Labor Day Holiday — Town Hall Closed**  
Sept. 2, all day

**Trails Committee Monthly Meeting**  
Tuesday, Sept. 3, 6:30 p.m.

**Charlotte Energy Committee Meeting**  
Wednesday, Sept. 4, 7 p.m.

**Library Board Meeting**  
Thursday, Sept. 5, 6 p.m.

**Planning Commission Meeting**  
Thursday, Sept. 5, 7 p.m.

**Recreation Commission Meeting**  
Monday, Sept. 9, 5:30 p.m.

**Development Review Board**  
Wednesday, Sept. 11, 7 p.m.

**Planning Commission Meeting**  
Thursday, Sept. 19, 7 p.m.

**Charlotte Conservation Commission Meeting**  
Tuesday, Sept. 24, 7 p.m.

**Development Review Board**  
Wednesday, Sept. 25, 7 p.m.

# College Essay Coach

## Double majors buck not being a one-trick pony

Margo Bartsch  
Contributor

One-trick pony personifies being limited to a single talent, capability or quality according to Dictionary.com. With back-to-school upon us, it can be easy to gravitate toward academic topics that come easy to us and avoid challenging subjects. This is the opposite strategy to pursue when planning for future job stability and earnings.

This May's Wall Street Journal article, "Why It Pays to Be a Double Major in College" reports that having a more diverse set of skills can help make a student more prepared in landing that first job and in building their professional career.

Many colleges encourage students to consider adding a minor to their major or having a double major. Broadening their education exposes students to new ways of thinking and different team processes.

Currently, Northwestern University reports that 60 percent of students double-major across different curricula. For example, having a double major across the McCormick School of Engineering and the Medill School of Journalism can help the student become a more effective communicator about technology. This increases their skills for future jobs.

An Ohio State University 2024 research study tracked 1.4 million college-educated workers in the U.S. from 2009 to 2019. The analysis reports: "Graduates with double majors seem to experience much more protection from market shocks. They have a wider funnel, a broader set of opportunities to select from, and this seemed to affect their earnings years later."

The study reveals that students who double major in complementary academic majors, such as history and psychology that are both in the social sciences, had one-third less earning fluctuations than those with a single major in that field.

Students who majored in two unconnected majors, such as chemistry in the natural sciences and political science in the social sciences, had their earnings fluctuate nearly two-thirds less than workers in their same field with just one major.

These correlations between earning potential and varied academic studies are like having a "diversified financial portfolio that can help investors withstand shocks in the financial market and seem to be the case with human capital as well," according to the 2024 research.

In considering double majors, students can meet with academic advisers and career counseling to discuss options that match their intellectual interests and can build useful skills. Since majors in different academic departments have unique course requirements, it is helpful to identify if there are any overlapping classes that can satisfy each major.

For example, a student pursuing international business and studying Spanish for fluency in the liberal arts could potentially share the foreign language requirements across both

majors. The February 2023 U.S. News article, "Double Majors in College: What to Know," explains that combining the technical training of engineering or business with liberal arts improves critical thinking and communication skills.

This May, Fortune.com reports that BlackRock, the world's largest asset management firm, was recruiting beyond the usual STEM major. "Looking at different ways to solve a problem really fuels innovation," said Robert Goldstein, chief operating officer.

The Fortune article also interviewed George Lee, the co-head of Goldman Sachs Global Institute, who said, "Some of the skills that are really salient to cooperate with this new intelligence in the world are critical thinking, understanding logic and rhetoric, the ability to be creative."

Lee said artificial intelligence will replace some jobs and create new ones.

Identifying a mentor can guide students into considering double majors that fit with their academic strengths. They can provide insight into how classes and leadership roles can bridge into real-world job opportunities. Mentors can discuss different career paths and identify internships.

Gallup reports that long-term success after graduation includes "experiential and deep learning." This includes internships that apply classroom learning, extracurricular involvement and classroom projects that take a semester or longer to complete.

Mentors can arrange informational interviews for the student to meet with professionals and alumni. Participating in networking opportunities can influence

job pathways. Students should update their resumes and LinkedIn profiles to highlight qualifications as conversational talking points.

College is a journey with lots of twists and turns along the way. With increasing college costs, it is important to be qualified for the evolving job market. Students should plan ahead to identify an academic major as a core focus, while expanding their overall educational coursework.

Pursuing a double major can make a student much more interesting than a one-trick pony.

*(Margo Bartsch founded College Essay Coach, a full-service college admission business, and has been an adjunct professor in business at Champlain College and at Middlebury College.)*

### Reunion picnic



Courtesy photo

On Aug. 10, the Champlain Valley Union High class of 1969 celebrated its 55th reunion at the home of Anne Russell Donegan at her home in Hinesburg with a picnic.



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[www.CharlotteNewsVT.org](http://www.CharlotteNewsVT.org)

# Budding Vermont textile artist debuts first exhibition

Olivia Conti  
Community News Service

Thrifted garments woven with plant fibers, carefully sculpted patchworks that look like mossy growths creeping out of the wall.

Such is the work created by Sienna Martz, whose first solo exhibition, “Echoes of Earth,” is running at the Soapbox Arts gallery in Burlington through the end of September.

Martz describes her exhibition as an exploration of nature’s adaptability and how, over time, it asserts its dominance to erase human imprints and restore equilibrium.

“Echoes of Earth,” made up of 26 pieces, took Martz 13 months to complete from conception to creation. She designed the pieces to fit on five walls in the gallery.

Martz has been a practicing artist for 10 years but just this past year was able to take the leap and work as an artist full time. Her style centers on vegan, textile-based wall art that can be found in dozens of countries. Her Instagram following of almost 80,000 has helped Martz gain even more exposure.

It’s fitting that Martz’ first solo exhibition arrived in a state that melds well with her artistic vision.

“Vermont is such a beautiful state,” said Martz, a Readsboro resident. “You know, it’s a small population. A lot of the land is protected. There are no billboards. It’s just so green and lush. It brings me a lot of artistic and spiritual energy. When I’m super fried or stressed in my art studio, I will stop and I will go take a hike with

my dog on a property and go swim in the river.”

Martz made her way to Vermont four years ago after growing up in Los Angeles and the suburbs of New York City, then attending art school at Temple University in Philadelphia. Her work is inspired by the natural world, which she has been able to immerse herself in since moving to Vermont.

In recent years her art has evolved to hold an activist stance. The aim is “inviting viewers to reimagine the role of art in society and positioning my work not just as an object of beauty but as a catalyst for cultural transformation and sustainable thinking,” Martz said.

She is an eco-conscious artist and uses plant fibers and vegan, recycled or secondhand materials. The textile industry glamorizes animal-derived materials like wool, leather and cashmere, Martz said. Since becoming vegan eight years ago, she said she’s strived to avoid using animal products in her artwork.

Along with using vegan materials, Martz said she stays conscious of waste. In 2015, the global textile and clothing industry produced an estimated 92 million tons of waste and over 1.7 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions, according to a widely cited report by the Global Fashion Agenda and Boston Consulting Group. Both those estimates were projected to increase by over 60 percent by 2030.

So, Martz thrifts old clothing as materials for a lot of her artwork to help lessen her waste footprint.

She thinks it is special to bring into her art “garments that have a history



Photo courtesy Sienna Martz  
Sienna Martz’ exhibition is at the Soapbox Arts gallery at The Soda Plant on Pine Street in Burlington through the end of September.

of previous users and physically and spiritually weaving together the history of these individuals into an art piece.”

She recalls always having creativity in her life. Her father is also a sculptor, painter and musician, and her mother worked within the fashion magazine industry, she said.

“They nurtured my creative side and really encouraged me,” she said. “So, I think it’s something that I’ve wanted to do since I was very young.”

Recently, Martz watched a home video

taken when she was around 5 years old.

“It was my sister’s birthday party, and they were going around to each kid saying, ‘What do you want to be when you grow up?’ And I said, ‘artist,’” she said, “I hadn’t seen this footage in a very long time, and it really surprised me. I was like, ‘Oh, my goodness.’”

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

# Psychic Expo — convention where ‘mediums’ not rare

Camryn Brauns  
Community News Service

When it comes to the supernatural, couple Frank Chodl and Betz McKeown say they’ve got everybody covered.

“I work with the dead, and she works with the living,” said Chodl. He and his wife travel nationwide offering psychic

medium sessions, spiritual touch healing and intuitive readings to customers looking for answers outside traditional means.

The two joined some of New England’s most experienced psychics, mediums and more for the second-annual Vermont Psychic Expo at the Champlain Valley Exposition Aug. 9-10.

Blue-curtained booths lined the event

center’s walls, harboring mediums, tarot readers, crystal aficionados and others ready to sell mystical services to guests that weekend. Supernatural senses, and well-running AC, filled the air, occasionally pierced by drumbeats and the echoes of singing bowls. Visitors walked along rows of vendors selling crystals, handmade jewelry, incense and, of course, personalized readings.

Next to a station where you could get a photo showing colorful clouds around your body — said to capture your aura — sat Dianne Rockwell, a spirit medium based in Lancaster, Massachusetts. She’s dedicated the past nine years of her life to re-connecting clients with their “dead-not-dead” loved ones, she said.

“To me, it feels like sacred work to give a voice to those who can’t pick up the phone, put a birthday card in the mail, stop by for a hug after work,” Rockwell said. “But the love and relationship is just as strong as it ever was.”

Prior to mediumship, Rockwell made a career in wedding cake design. It wasn’t until 2015 when she reluctantly attended a workshop recommended by the late Mavis Pittilla, sometimes called the grande dame of British mediumship, where Rockwell said she uncovered the depth of her lifelong intuitive abilities.

“We’ve been using way too much logic instead of listening to our hearts and doing what feels right — because that won’t lead you wrong,” she said.

On the opposite flank of the photo booth were Chodl and McKeown. Chodl said he was just 8 years old when he first encountered a spiritual entity.

“It didn’t scare me or worry me, and actually, I felt comfort,” he said, “and ever since then, I’ve been aware of contact with entities.”

He taught art photography and digital media for 34 years before, about three years ago, he and his wife sold their North Carolina house, moved into their RV and began following “energy” across the country, he said. Vermont gave off the strongest pull, something the couple felt immediately when they crossed out of New Hampshire and into the Green Mountain State, he said.

Chodl’s mother also had hyper-intuitive abilities, he said, and supported him in becoming who he is today. He was teaching at a public school in “the buckle of the Bible Belt” when he published his first book, “Connections: A Journey to Understanding,” he said. He was surprised

## On Books

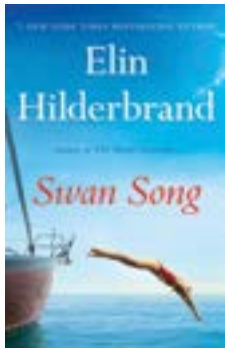
# Two books, one island, great reading, enjoy

Katherine Arthaud  
Contributor

Vermont is not a place one typically wants to leave in the summer, and there isn't much that can tempt me to head out of town between June and September, but there is one thing, and that is the ocean. Every year, I try to spend some time at the beach, where I can be very, very happy doing nothing, except reading of course, and eating the occasional meal ... and taking a dip every now and then in the cooling sea, the wavier the better.

This year, in mid-July, I headed out on my yearly pilgrimage, bathing suit, beach umbrella and assortment of books in hand, to Nantucket, which (I know, I know) is very crowded during the season but, really, you just can't beat the beaches. I love it there. And something that made it extra special this year was my discovery that in fact I had not yet read Elin Hilderbrand's most recent novel, "Swan Song." I thought I had — assumed I had (as I tend to buy her books the minute they hit stores) — but while browsing with my son at one of the two locally owned bookstores on the island — realized with glee that I had not. And, truly, what could be better than reading one of Elin Hilderbrand's novels on Nantucket?

And so, as soon as I could, with shark-like appetite I sunk my teeth in and began devouring what turned out to be yet another immensely satisfying read. I don't think you have to have ever set foot on the island to appreciate Hilderbrand's books, all but one or two of which take place there, but there is something extra special about reading about her characters living their lives, raising their kids, driving their jeeps, romancing their love interests, frequenting eateries, having



affairs with their gardeners, etc. in the very setting that you are enjoying one lovely, sunlit, carefree day after another. The Club Car piano bar, the Boarding House, Kru, Nobadeer Beach, Monomoy, Sconset, the Nantucket Atheneum, the Handlebar coffee shop, Bartlett's Farm ... it's enough to send one right over the moon.

In this latest novel, we find dedicated, hard-working, long-time police chief Ed Kapenash poised on the brink of retirement after 35 years on the job, only to be sucked into a frothing whirlpool of drama when the uber-wealthy Richardsons' 22-million-dollar Monomoy summer home goes up in flames. And to add to the crisis, a young female employee, last seen on the stern of the Richardsons' boat, has gone mysteriously and inexplicably missing. It's quite a romp.

I highly recommend this book, whether you are a fan of Nantucket or not. Filled with wonderful characters and non-stop goings on that will keep the pages turning fast till the very end. Delightful. Transporting. Light as sea foam, yet rich, warm and fun.

Oh, and did I mention that this is Hilderbrand's last novel of the series? This is hard news for those of us who love these great summer reads. But, yes, after writing 27 books set in Nantucket, she's stepping away. "I never want anybody to pick up my book and say, 'It just wasn't as good as the last one,'" she recently told People Magazine. "That is not going to happen. I've been watching a lot of people's careers and it's so important how you dismount."

Hilderbrand, who grew up in Pennsylvania, first encountered Nantucket in the summer of 1993. She says that the first time she rode in on the ferry, she looked out over the water and saw the island's two church steeples and the sailboats bobbing in the harbor, and "it was infatuation at first sight." "I was like, 'I love it here. I love it here and I'm never leaving.'"

Hilderbrand is not untrained as an author; she's a graduate of the prestigious Iowa Writers' Workshop. Her first published

piece was in Seventeen Magazine — a short story called "Misdirection" that earned her a whopping 800 dollars back in the day. She moved to Nantucket in 1994 and has lived there ever since. She writes her books longhand by the ocean.

Happily, though, Hilderbrand hasn't put down her pen for good. A mother of three, she is working on a book series with her daughter, Shelby, based on the boarding school that Shelby attended. Says Hilderbrand, "At some point in her second semester of her first year, I'm like, 'We are writing a book about this.'" Hilderbrand recently finished a first draft of book number one and has sent it on to Shelby to tinker with the dialogue.

I have never met Ms. Hilderbrand, but I have come close. One of her many books listed, in the Acknowledgements section, a woman named Renee whose home we were renting that year. And this year, I came really close. My son and I had walked up Main Street to Mitchell's Book Corner (after iced lattes at the Handlebar) and were informed by the bookseller that we had missed the author by five minutes. Five minutes! Arghh! Apparently, she does weekly signings there. Who knew? Drat.

Towards the end of my trip, I made yet another trip to Nantucket Bookworks and picked up a copy of Nathaniel Philbrick's "Away Off Shore: Nantucket Island and Its People, 1602-1800."

Philbrick is the author of the popular "In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex," which tells the story of the 240-ton whaleship Essex (inspiration for "Moby-Dick") that set sail from Nantucket in 1819 and was sunk just over a year later by a giant bull sperm whale. It's quite a tale, and well worth reading.

As is "Away Off Shore," which begins way back in time, when "a giant glacier stretching across what is now Nantucket Sound bulldozed Saul's Hills into a rough approximation of their present form," and stopped, dumping the boulder which is now

Altar Rock, one of the highest points on Nantucket, "the best seat in the house when it comes to imagining how the island originally came into being."

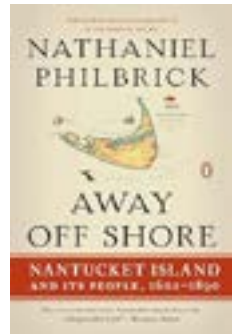
In his first book of history, Philbrick tells the whole story of Nantucket, or as much as one can tell in 254 pages. He tells about how the original human residents first came to the area approximately 8,000 years ago, long before the island was an island; how these native inhabitants were a hunting culture, "pursuing the caribou and other large game that followed in the wake of the glacier."

Like Hilderbrand, Philbrick is a resident of Nantucket. A freelance sailing journalist, he moved there in 1986, knowing virtually nothing about the place save what he had picked up in "Moby-Dick." But, being a journalist, he poked around and "with each passing year ... delved ever deeper into the island's history."

The main aim of this book, he says, "is not to discredit the mythic men of Nantucket's heyday; instead, it is to bring to life the island's history by focusing on the individual men and women — in all their flawed and fascinating glory — who helped to make Nantucket the whaling capital of the world." He adds that though "the story of the island's subsequent rise as a summer colony is an important one that needs to be told, it is beyond the scope of this work."

That's OK. We have Elin Hilderbrand for that.

History can be a little dry and grueling to read, but not this one. For me, the pages of "Away Off Shore" turned just as fast as they did for "Swan Song." I learned a great deal about this magical place and will never idealize Quakers again. Highly recommend.



## PSYCHIC EXPO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

one day when his school's principal requested a signed copy to display in the library.

"People are starting to open up, but at the same time, because of our openness and awareness, we're seeing a lot more of the resistance," Chodl said. "Change scares the hell out of us."

Most people he meets are surprised to learn of his Roman Catholic upbringing, preparation for priesthood at seminary and ability to cite full Bible chapters, he said. But Chodl thinks his religious background may be a path to changing people's minds about the psychic realm.

"It's that fear-based mentality that keeps them from even exploring other possibilities. God forbid, that they could grow," Chodl said. "They want the status quo, even if the status quo never really existed."

But not all are reluctant to seek out the

spiritual. Clients seek out hypnoterapist and astrologer Megan Parker to work through repressed emotions. Specifically: anger, fear, sadness, guilt and hurt.

"I use a guided hypnosis-based visualization process with my clients to release those major emotions and then to work on any limiting beliefs that they have," Parker said. "And we look at the blocks and triggers that are keeping them from pursuing what they really want in life."

Parker said she uses astrology to help clients understand their soul's purpose, karma and life path, a method she would demonstrate in a "Basics of Astrology" workshop at the event.

Parker used Lady Gaga's natal chart — a snapshot of the stars in relation to where and when someone is born — to assist her audience in following the zodiac signs and charts, which participants seemed to enjoy.

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



Photo by Camryn Brauns

Attendees around a table at the Vermont Psychic Expo, Aug. 9-10, in Essex.

## Sacred Hunter

# Autumn sparks the flame of our primal instincts

Bradley Carleton  
Contributor

As summer winds to its close and the second year of extraordinarily powerful storms spins chaotically toward its denouement, the evening breezes bring with them the solace of lower humidity.

Autumn sparks the flame of our primal instincts. The fragrance of a neighbor's woodsmoke from the last firepit of the season where young and old partake of s'mores carries into our bedroom window. The wind blows in off the lake and carries the bouquet of dying lily pads and arrowroot from the shallow bays and swamps.

The abundant crop of white acorns can be heard dropping with a thousand thuds, providing our whitetails with their favorite nutrition. From across the dirt road, the sweet smell of the neighbors' fresh-cut lawn embraces the senses.

Gardens are overflowing with tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and the ubiquitous zucchini. It is said that if you leave your windows open when parked at the town hall, local gardeners often dump their excess harvest in your back seat.

Evening features the stellar displays of autumn sunsets of which few painters have ever captured the majestic cerulean blues, salmon pinks and sage greens layered over the mountains. Soon September will arrive and the lonely haunting call of Canada geese will be heard flying against the darkening sky headed toward their roost in the bay. Hunters will become impassioned with the urge to wake up early and set out a large decoy spread in the hayfields before first light. All these reoccurring themes drive us to participate in the harvest, be it vegetables, chanterelles, hen-of-the-woods mushrooms or taking home a large honker to put on the smoker.

And so, these primitive traditions are ritually called up by our ancient spirit to live and breathe as did our ancient predecessors. We will load up the trailer full of full-body goose decoys, layout blinds that, when camouflaged, will

blend into the dew-laden grass with total invisibility.

After breaking a heart-thumping sweat from hauling all the equipment into the field, we will crawl in our blinds, which are no more than a 10-inch mound of green, and prepare our calls. Guns will be checked for safety. I have been known to throw hunting guests out of the field for playing with the safety on their gun. Click. Click. Click will get you out of the field and headed home before the first shot is fired. Safety is not a debate.

As we lie in the darkness, with the swinging doors of the blind partially open and calls around our necks, we pass the ceremonial cup of coffee and watch the horizon to the east. The eastern horizon gradually blends the dark blue to purples, then to pastel green with a layer of citrus orange. Our ears are tuned to listen for the roosting flock to awaken in the bay.

As the colors of the eastern sky begin blending into the new day, we can feel adrenaline coursing through our bodies. Guns are loaded and a second safety check is ordered. As the flock begins to awaken with an increasing tempo and tone, we all know that is the cacophony of the breakfast bell.

"Get ready gentlemen!" I whisper. "Get those doors shut and check your safety one last time. Remember, we do not shoot outside of our assigned zones and do not sit up to shoot until I give the queue."

Minutes later the crescendo of honking rings throughout the valley followed by the powerful beating of wing pinions. I am on watch. Each of us has a job. One is a "flagger" giving motion to the flock. Two of us are callers. We alternate a sequence of vocalizations. A loud simple greeting call, followed by a simple single cluck, then a double cluck (which should not be used by anyone who is not well practiced). Finally, the feeding chuckle — a deep gravelly murmur imitating birds on the ground fighting over feed.

As the flock of 20 birds begin to set their wings in front of us, their black shoe-polished boots drop down. As the first bird



Courtesy photo

Successful goose hunting may provide the meal for opening weekend of rifle season at deer camp.

touches the ground in the landing zone, I call the shot: "Take 'em!" What appears to be organized chaos erupts and the goose closest to me folds his wings and drops beside me.

"Well done, boys!" I call out. "Now let us get out there and pay our respects."

I reach over the side of my blind and lay my hand on the beautiful bird. Quietly, I say "thank you" to the bird and say a short prayer of gratitude and forgiveness. We are all One. We need each other to live. We need each other to maintain the connection to our food and the earth. This bird, the first of the season, will be served on the most elegant platter on opening weekend of rifle season at deer camp. And again, we will pray for the spirit of the wild goose.

Resident Canada goose season is Sept. 1-25. Hunters must have passed the hunter education course and purchased a 2024 license along with the federal waterfowl stamp and the state tag.

Remember to always get permission for any field you wish to hunt in advance of the day you'd like to be there. And respect that others may have already asked.

*(Bradley Carleton is the founder 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. For more of his writings, please subscribe to sacredhunter.substack.com.)*



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## Gardening

# Help prevent erosion by sowing into exposed soil

Bonnie Kirn Donahue  
University of Vermont Extension

Did you know that the condition of your yard can have an impact on regional water quality?

Areas where soil is left open and unvegetated are spots that are susceptible to erosion. Erosion happens when unprotected earth is moved by water from one place to another.

Sediment from eroding soil can end up in rivers and eventually in larger water bodies, impacting water quality and aquatic health. Nutrients like phosphorus can travel with sediment and may accumulate and encourage the growth of algae and bacteria in water bodies.

Luckily, everyone can play a role in reducing the impacts of erosion.

One significant thing you can do is to vegetate any exposed soil that you aren't actively working on. This could include patches of lawn that just aren't growing well, ditches, hillsides, large driveways or dirt parking areas that aren't often used. A simple way to do this is to use a seed mix.

If you have exposed soil in your vegetable garden, you could use a cover crop like buckwheat, oats, vetch or annual rye. These crops will only survive one growing season. If you are able to till or cut the crop back at

the end of the season, the plant matter can add nutrients back into the soil.

If you have a patch of lawn that is open, and you need permanent cover, you could use a lawn mix with fine fescues and clover. For meadow areas, try a mix with native grasses and perennials. For steep slopes, mixes that include clover can help to stabilize banks.

If possible, try to use seed mixes that have native plants or are pollinator-friendly. This will not only help stabilize the soil but provide food and habitat for beneficial insects and pollinators.

Make sure to add mulch like hay or straw to open areas that you seed. If you want to avoid introducing weed species into the area, just use straw mulch instead.

This will help hold moisture in the soil and help prevent the area from eroding while turf is establishing. For slopes steeper than 30 percent (3:1), erosion-control blankets can be used for more protection.

Prioritize these improvements on exposed slopes or open soil near rivers or water bodies as these areas are most likely to have the most direct impact on water quality.

We all can help prevent sediment and phosphorus from ending up in larger water bodies. Sowing into exposed soil is a great start and one small technique that can make a big difference.



Photos by Bonnie Kirn Donahue

To help reduce erosion, barren sloping areas can be seeded with a mix of fine fescues and clover and then mulched with hay.

*(Bonnie Kirn Donahue is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener and landscape architect from central Vermont.)*

# History of tomatoes — a 'berry' different plant

Deborah J. Benoit  
University of Vermont Extension

We purchase them at the market. We dine on them in salads and sauces. Some of us indulge in the joy of growing our own at home, but how much do you really know about tomatoes?

To begin, the botanical name for the tomato is *Solanum lycopersicum*. Throughout the centuries, tomatoes have been called by many names: "xitomatl" (by the Aztecs), "tomatl" (by the Mayans), "pomme d'amour," meaning "love apple" (by the French) and "poison apple" by many Europeans.

Tomatoes originated in Central and South America. They were domesticated by Indigenous peoples and "discovered" in Mexico by Spanish explorers in the early 1500s.

When introduced to Europeans, the fruit was thought to be poisonous. The tomato was considered simply an ornamental plant. It took another 200 years for it to be accepted as a delicious addition to people's diets.

Tomatoes are related to potatoes (*S. tuberosum*), eggplants (*S. melongena*), and peppers (*capsicum*). All belong to the Solanaceae family of plants, which are commonly referred to as nightshades. Non-food nightshades include tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*), petunias (*Petunia*) and the beautiful but deadly angel's trumpet (*Brugmansia*).

Have you ever wondered why we eat the fruit but not the foliage of a tomato plant?

Nightshade plants contain an alkaloid called solanine. It acts as a natural defense to discourage nibbling animals through its bitter taste and intestinal side effects when consumed in large quantities, making all parts

of the tomato plant — except the fruit — toxic.

The highest amounts of solanine are found in the leaves and stem. The green, not-yet-ripe fruit contains a small amount, which decreases as the tomato ripens.

Nutritionally speaking, tomatoes contain vitamin C, potassium, folate, beta-carotene and vitamin K. While they're mostly comprised of water, they're a good source of fiber. Did you know tomatoes also contain lycopene?

Lycopene, an antioxidant, gives tomatoes their red color. In fact, food products made from tomatoes and the fruit itself are the principal source of lycopene in our diets, providing numerous health benefits.

Today, there are over 10,000 varieties of tomatoes. There are heirlooms dating back over 100 years and new hybrids being introduced. They range in size from beefsteak tomatoes to dime-sized cherry tomatoes and can be round, oblong or pear-shaped. Colors include pink, yellow, orange, purple, white, striped and even green in addition to the traditional red varieties.

Did you know some tomatoes are annuals (determinate) and some are perennials (indeterminate)?

Determinate varieties set fruit for harvest all at the same time. They tend to be more compact in size. On the other hand, indeterminate tomatoes produce fruit throughout the growing season. They're larger, vining plants, requiring solid stakes or cages and continue to grow until killed by frost.

Even though we think of them as a vegetable due to their use in savory rather than sweet dishes, you've likely heard that



Photo by Deborah J. Benoit

The green, not-yet-ripe fruit of the tomato contains a small amount of solanine, an alkaloid found in the leaves, stems and unripe fruit that has a bitter taste that discourages nibbling animals.

tomatoes are a fruit, botanically speaking. What may surprise you is that the tomato is actually a berry.

On the other hand, legally speaking, a tomato is a vegetable for taxation purposes, according to the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling back in 1893 in the case of *Nix v. Hedden*, declaring tomatoes to be vegetables under the Tariff Act of March 3, 1883.

And finally, here are a few more fun facts for your consideration: April 6 is World

Tomato Day. The tomato is the official state vegetable of New Jersey, and tomato juice is the official state beverage in Ohio.

As you head out to your garden or the local farmers market, don't underestimate those very familiar tomatoes.

*(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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## Gardening

# Problems that can make lilacs look worn out

Ann Hazelrigg  
University of Vermont Extension

Lilacs (*Syringa vulgaris*) can be stunning in early summer when in full bloom, but this time of year they tend to look a bit worn out. There are three common problems that can impact the health of these shrubs: lilac leaf miner (*Gracillaria syringella*), powdery mildew (*Erysiphe syringae*) and a fungal leaf disease called lilac leaf blight (*Pseudocercospora* sp.).

The lilac leafminer adult moths are yellow and about a 1/2-inch long and live throughout the Northeast. In the summer, eggs are laid along the veins on the undersides of lilac or privet leaves.

After hatching, the larvae enter the leaf and create a linear mine easily seen from the leaf underside. As the larvae grow and feed protected within the leaf, the mines become larger and more blotch-shaped.

The larvae emerge from the mine, then fold and skeletonize the leaf. They then form a narrow white cocoon within the fold where they overwinter on the dropped leaves. With heavy infestations, the browned leaves may drop prematurely. At least two generations of this species can occur each year.

You can remove and destroy infested leaves to kill the mining larvae throughout the season. Raking and destroying the fallen leaves at the end of the season may help reduce the overwintering populations. Insecticide control is rarely warranted.

Powdery mildew is a common fungal disease that attacks a lot of plants including common lilacs. Although you may see powdery mildew on many different plants at the same time, this pathogen is very specific to its host, so the powdery mildew on your squash is not the same pathogen as that attacking the lilac.

All powdery mildews are favored by the same conditions: high humidity, cool nights and warm days, so it tends to show up on several different hosts at the same time. The powdery white spots typically occur on the lower or inner leaves and quickly move through the plant until most of the leaves are covered in white fungal growth by late summer. Fortunately, powdery mildew on lilacs is usually only an aesthetic issue.

If planting new lilacs, consider resistant cultivars to avoid the disease. Be sure to plant lilacs in a sunny location, and prune and thin the plant regularly to help improve air circulation and minimize disease. Rake and destroy leaves in the fall to help reduce infection next year.

Lilac fungal leaf blight symptoms start as brown spots on the leaves that begin at the edges. As the infection progresses, the spots can coalesce and cause leaves to curl and eventually drop. The fungus is favored by rainy or humid weather.

Although it may look like your lilacs are dying, if you scratch just under the bark near the end of a twig and still



Photo by Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University  
After hatching, the larvae of the lilac leaf miner enter the leaf and create linear mines, which become larger and more blotch-shaped as the larvae grow



Photo by Ann Hazelrigg, University of Vermont  
Although lilacs may appear to be dying from lilac fungal leaf blight, as indicated by brown spots and curled and dropped leaves, the presence of healthy terminal buds is an indication that the lilac will be healthy next spring.



Photo by Ward Upham, Kansas State University  
Powdery mildew, a fungal disease of lilacs and other plants, occurs when there is high humidity combined with cool nights and warm days.

see green, and if the terminal buds for next year are obvious, the plant will be fine in the spring. Over several years of defoliation, however, the plant may be weakened. Thin the plant during winter to improve air circulation, and rake and destroy infected leaves in the fall to reduce the infection next year.

*(Ann Hazelrigg is the University of Vermont Extension plant pathologist and director of the university's plant diagnostic clinic.)*

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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Excellent References

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# Calendar

Send your events two weeks in advance to [news@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:news@thecharlottenews.org).

## Plant walk

**Friday, Aug. 23, 4:30-5:30 p.m.**  
The Richmond Farmers Market is holding a special event series for those who want to expand their knowledge of local plants. Local herbalist and the market's assistant manager Sophie Cassel will be leading plant walks on Aug. 23 and Sept. 20 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Cassel, who runs Patchwork Plant Medicine, will help locals learn more about the medicinal plants growing right in their backyards.

## Museum on Main Street

**Friday, Aug. 23**  
The Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street exhibit *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* (Crossroads) opens on Friday, Aug. 23, at the Saint Albans Museum, with an opening reception on Saturday, 5-8:30 p.m. Crossroads explores how rural American communities changed in the 20th century. Since 1900, the percentage of Americans living in rural areas dropped from 60 percent to 17 percent. See some ways that rural Americans responded to this remarkable societal change.

## 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](http://vergennesday.com).

## Dead Creek craft event

**Saturday, Aug. 24, 10 a.m.-noon**  
Young kids are invited to crafting at the Dead Creek Visitor Center in Addison from 10 a.m.-noon. Crafts include bird-centered illustrations and art with a variety of materials. Learn about bird anatomy and birds of Vermont while making colorful bird crafts. Complete a scavenger hunt to enter a drawing for a pair of binoculars or an LED microscope.

## Music at Charlotte Museum

**Sunday, Aug. 25, 1-2 p.m.**  
The Steph Pappas Experience will be performing music 1-2 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 25, on the lawn at the Charlotte Museum, 215 Museum Road, Charlotte. Free.

## Veggie Share

**Tuesday, Aug. 27, 5:30-6:30 p.m.**  
Bring surplus garden harvest to share and swap with neighbors to the Charlotte Grange. And enjoy a short canning and food preservation demonstration by Tai Dinnan. No money is exchanged, and all are welcome to select vegetables. Participants in the swap can pick



Photo by Lee Krohn

The Tour de Farms, a celebration of local food via a meandering bike tour, is one of Vermont's oldest and most cherished cycling farm tours.

whatever they'd like for their families during the event. If you want produce for your family and do not have anything to donate, you are welcome to just "shop." Any remaining items will be distributed by the Charlotte Food Shelf.

## August bird monitoring walk

**Saturday, Aug. 31, 7:30 a.m.**  
The Birds of Vermont's monthly monitoring walk to record birds on the museum property is Saturday, Aug. 31. Please bring your own binoculars and dress for the weather. Free. Register at [sevendaystickets.com/organizations/birds-of-vermont-museum](http://sevendaystickets.com/organizations/birds-of-vermont-museum).

## Mad River Valley Craft Fair

**Saturday & Sunday, Aug. 31-Sept. 1, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.**  
The 53rd Mad River Valley Craft Fair will be held rain or shine on Labor Day weekend, Saturday Aug. 31 & Sunday Sept. 1, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Kenyon's Field, (Rt. 100), Waitsfield, Vermont. Kris Joppe-Mercure of KJM Pottery will share her work from her Shelburne studio; Jonathan Hart of Jonathan Hart Photography in Charlotte will bring his fine art photography which captures images of water: its various forms, colors, beauty, and impacts on natural environments. There will be four bands, a food court and winery, door prizes and free facepainting and the Dinoman Science Show at noon each day, which will use magic, clever explanations and incredible props to present a dynamic program of dinosaurs, science and fun for the whole family.

## '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.

## Vulture Awareness Day

**Saturday, Sept. 7, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.**  
Discover how many vulture species live in Vermont (and where) at Vulture Awareness Day at the Birds of Vermont Museum. Can you find all the museum's vulture carvings? More info about the international celebration of vultures at [vultureday.org](http://vultureday.org).

## Shelburne Age Well Grab & Go Meal

**Tuesday, Sept. 10, 11 a.m.-noon**  
Age Well and St. Catherine's of Siena Parish in Shelburne are providing a meal to go for anyone age 60 and older on Tuesday, Sept. 10. The meal will be available for pick up in the parking lot at 72 Church Street. A \$5 donation is suggested. The menu is stuffed chicken breast with gravy, mashed potatoes, glazed beets, wheat roll and vanilla pudding parfait. Order a meal by Wednesday, Sept. 4, by email ([agewellstcath@gmail.com](mailto:agewellstcath@gmail.com)) or phone (802-503-1107). More info at [agewellvt.org](http://agewellvt.org).

## Black ash

**Friday, Sept. 13, 5-6:30 p.m.**  
The black ash, a culturally significant tree species to the Indigenous peoples of the Northeast, is also important to regional ecosystems. On Sept. 13, the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program is hosting a talk at the North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier (713 Elm St.) from 5-6:30 p.m. about the black ash tree and its role in Vermont ecosystems, the threats it is facing from the emerald ash borer and what is being done to save it. Although free, registration at [go.uvm.edu/blackash](http://go.uvm.edu/blackash) is required. Following the presentation, attendees can take a guided walk to a small ash stand. To learn more go to [go.uvm.edu/blackashproject](http://go.uvm.edu/blackashproject).

## Tour de Farms

**Sunday, Sept. 15, 8:30 a.m.**  
The Tour de Farms, a celebration of local food via a meandering bike tour, is one of Vermont's oldest and most cherished cycling farm tours. The Tour de Farms visits local farms and tasty treats along the route. The tour returns to Shoreham this year, the town where it began in 2008. Riders will explore two to eight different farm stops, as well as 16 additional local food vendors. The tasty day finishes at 4:30 p.m. at the Shoreham Apple Fest. The tour includes a challenging 30-mile route and an alternative, shorter, family-friendly, 10-mile route. Riders will set out in the morning from the Shoreham Green, located about 40 minutes south of Charlotte, off Route 22A. The terrain includes rolling hills with a mix of paved and dirt roads, so a mountain bike or road bike with wide tires is recommended. E-bikes are encouraged for folks not used to Vermont's rolling hills. Register at [runsignup.com/Race/VT/Shoreham/TourdeFarms](http://runsignup.com/Race/VT/Shoreham/TourdeFarms).

## Shelburne Age Well luncheon

**Wednesday, Sept. 18, 11:30 a.m.**  
St. Catherine of Siena and Age Well are offering a luncheon for anyone 60 or older in the St Catherine of Siena Parish Hall at 72 Church Street in Shelburne. The meal will be served at noon. There is a \$5 suggested donation. The menu is chicken cordon bleu, mashed sweet potatoes, broccoli florets, wheat roll, blueberry crumble, applesauce and milk. Gerry Ortego will entertain diners on guitar. Register by Thursday, Sept. 12, by emailing [kbatres@agewellvt.org](mailto:kbatres@agewellvt.org) or calling 802-662-5283.

## 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

# Community Roundup

## NAMI Vermont offers free mental health support to flood-affected residents

In light of the recent flooding in Vermont, the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Vermont (NAMI Vermont) is reminding residents of their free connection recovery support groups available in Burlington, St. Johnsbury, and Barre.

These peer-led support groups are open to anyone, including those whose mental health has been impacted by the flooding. They offer a safe and supportive environment for individuals to share their experiences and gain emotional support.

These connection recovery support groups are unique groups that follow a structured model to ensure all participants have an opportunity to be heard and supported. Led by trained individuals with lived experience, these groups provide a safe space that fosters respect, understanding and hope.

The support groups are free, confidential, and facilitated by individuals who are in recovery themselves. They meet weekly or bi-monthly for 90 minutes and do not endorse any medications or medical therapies. No registration is required. Anyone, regardless of their comfort level, is encouraged to join.

Support groups are held in these locations:

- Burlington — every Thursday, 3-4:30 p.m. at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul.

- St. Johnsbury — every Wednesday from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Universalist Unitarian Meeting House.

- Barre — every Thursday from 6-7:30 p.m. at the People's Health and Wellness Clinic and online via Zoom; details are available at [namivt.org/csg](http://namivt.org/csg).

Note that these support group meetings may change during holiday seasons if the facilitator is unavailable, or they may potentially switch to a hybrid format due to unforeseen circumstances. It is important to always check the calendar, which is updated immediately.

For more information, visit [namivt.org](http://namivt.org), call Kristina Petter, program coordinator, at 802-876-7949 ext. 102 or [program@namivt.org](mailto:program@namivt.org).

## United Way volunteer connections

United Way's Volunteer Connection site at [unitedwaynwvt.galaxydigital.com](http://unitedwaynwvt.galaxydigital.com) helps connect agencies and volunteers and has more information about these and other opportunities:

- Feeding Champlain Valley needs volunteers to stock shelves and freezers with fresh food for the Grocery Distribution Program; prep and serve breakfast and lunch for the Hot Meal Program, help clients sign in to receive groceries, pick up donations, unload, weigh and record food donations, and much more. Monday-Friday between 6:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Contact Ansley Laev at 802-829-5797 or email [alae@cvoeo.org](mailto:alae@cvoeo.org).

- Spectrum Youth Services needs volunteers to donate a meal, lunch or dinner, at one of the Drop-In Centers in Burlington or St. Albans. Prepare a meal for 25-30 guests and bring it in for them to serve. Contact them at [dropin@spectrumvt.org](mailto:dropin@spectrumvt.org).

- Intervale Center is looking for volunteer individuals and groups to improve food access by gleaning and helping to distribute fresh vegetables, improving Lake Champlain water quality by tending to native tree stocks, and helping to keep the Intervale maintained for free public use. Contact Chelsea Somerville at 802-660-0440 or email [chelsea@intervale.org](mailto:chelsea@intervale.org).

- Healthy Roots Collaborative help glean local farm-fresh food from fields and orchards and deliver produce to food shelves. For these and other volunteering opportunities, visit [healthyrootsvt.org](http://healthyrootsvt.org).

The return to school is just a few weeks away, and AmeriCorps Seniors School-Based Mentors is looking for volunteer mentors for children with critical needs. Mentors provide attention, comfort and nurturing to help set a child on the path toward a successful future. This unique program provides individuals, ages 55+, the opportunity to remain engaged in the community by guiding youngsters to higher academic and social achievement. Make a difference in the life of a child. Contact Trezanra Robertson at 802-861-7823 or [trezanra@unitedwaynwvt.org](mailto:trezanra@unitedwaynwvt.org).

## Green is gold



Photographer Lee Krohn captured some moments of green serendipity at Mount Philo — a frog on a milkweed and a monarch caterpillar prepping for its polychromatic incarnation.

## CALENDAR

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

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 on Sept. 28, 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.

### Walk to Defeat ALS Saturday, Sept. 28, 11:30 a.m.

People living with ALS, family members, friends, caregivers and others affected by the disease will come together for the 2024 Walk to Defeat ALS Vermont at Oakledge Park on Saturday, Sept. 28. All funds raised will go to help those living with ALS by supporting patient care, advocacy and cutting-edge research to find treatments and a cure for this debilitating, always fatal disease. ALS, often referred to as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a progressive motor neuron disease that gradually robs people of their ability to walk, talk, swallow ... and eventually breathe. Info: email [helen.ng@als.org](mailto:helen.ng@als.org).

**September bird monitoring walk Saturday, Sept. 31, 7:30 a.m.**  
Join the monthly monitoring walk to

record birds on the Birds of Vermont Museum property. Bring your own binoculars and dress for the weather. Free, suggested donation \$5-\$15. Register for museum events at <https://tinyurl.com/ytmwfk5>.

### 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. More at [addisoncounty.com/middleburycarfest](http://addisoncounty.com/middleburycarfest).

## Send us your photos!

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



The Charlotte News

# Library wants to know what you want at library

Margaret Woodruff  
Director

From story times to cooking book clubs, from book discussions to selectboard meetings, the Charlotte Library is here as a community resource, meeting place and activity center. Let us know if there are programs and events you'd like to see here; we welcome the opportunity to work with you.

## 'Just Getting By' film Thursday, Sept. 26, 7 p.m.

A sweeping, and yet intimate look at the lives of Vermonters who are struggling with food and housing insecurity. These are big issues for a small state. "Just Getting By" focuses on these issues in the lives of everyday people. This is the first in a series of events related to Kenneth Cadow's "Gather" and its themes of rural life, resilience, class differences, addiction and recovery, housing and food insecurity, a deep relationship to the land and the power of community. Copies are available; stop in to pick one up.

## Programs for kids

### Wildcard Wednesdays Wednesdays, Sept. 11-Nov. 20, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Who knows what Wednesday will bring? Science sessions? Crafts and games? Charlie Cart cooking? Sign up and show up on Wednesdays to join in the fun activities from kids grades 5 to 8. If you're a Charlotte Central School student, you can take the bus to the library with a parent's note. For more information and registration details, email [margaret@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:margaret@charlottepubliclibrary.org).

### Read & Win Aug. 23-Sept. 1

After reading three books, students in grades K-8 can simply fill out a voucher at the Charlotte Library and trade it for a

Read and Win Ribbon at the Champlain Valley Fair.

### 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 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

### Tech help Tuesday-Thursday, 30-minute sessions

Meet tech librarian Susanna Kahn for a half-hour of personalized tech help. The library has devices to use in the building and to check out and take home. Sign up for a session: 802-425-3864 or [susanna@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto:susanna@charlottepubliclibrary.org).

### Better Together book club Thursday, Aug. 22, 7:30 p.m.

This magisterial and highly inventive novel from Pulitzer Prize finalist Daniel Mason brims with love and madness, humor and hope. Following the cycles of history, nature and even language, "North Woods" shows the myriad magical ways in which we're connected to our environment, to history and to one another. It is not just an unforgettable novel about secrets and destinies, but a way of looking at the world that asks the timeless question: How do we live on, even after we're gone? Copies available at the circulation desk. Join on Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/49awjb8j>.

### 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.



Photo by Margaret Woodruff

On an August morning, Chris Gribnau and Lisa Henry entertain as part of Music on the Porch.

### Music on the Porch Saturday, Aug. 24, 1 p.m.

Enjoy old-time and Irish music performed by Zachary DeFranco. He'll take time to discuss the instrument history as well as the history of the tunes being played.

### Love your lake like a book Monday, Aug. 26, 5:30 p.m.

From the depths to the surface, Lake Champlain has many parts and like in a good book these "chapters" come together as one body. Join experts from the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds and the Agency of Natural Resources for an enlightening and informative panel and conversation. Learn what you can do on shore and at home to help our lake, its tributaries and our surrounding landscape.

## 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.

Join in 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. Come every time or as often as you can. Sign up at [seeds@charlottepubliclibrary.org](mailto: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](mailto: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. except the month of August unless otherwise rescheduled following the Opening Meeting Law. The next scheduled board meeting is Thursday, Sept. 5, at 6 p.m. Contact the library or visit the library website ([charlottepubliclibrary.org](http://charlottepubliclibrary.org)) for more information.

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your photos!



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

The Charlotte News

# Senior Center News

## Pressure tank water pipe break dealt with quickly

Lori York  
Director

The Charlotte Senior Center experienced severe water damage when the water well pressure tank failed.

Although the fire and rescue department responded quickly and the damage could have been much worse, there was 2 inches of water in the meeting room and senior center library.

A group of contractors rearranged their schedules so that the senior center was closed for a minimal amount of time. A shout-out to Skylar Bessett with Savage Restoration, Hammond Electric Inc., Samuel Fortin Master Plumber, Thomas Fortin with Bear Ridge Home Improvement and Jacob with Monty Mechanical.

### Community

#### Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group Wednesday, Sept. 11, 4-5 p.m.

Are you caring for someone with Alzheimer's? Please join this group for the monthly Caregivers Support Group on the second Wednesday of each month from 4:00-5:00 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.

#### Death Café

##### Wednesday, Sept. 25, 4-5 p.m.

New to Charlotte. We are now offering a monthly Death Café. Join us on the fourth Wednesday of the month as we come together in human fellowship to celebrate life by voicing concerns, sharing questions, ideas and stories around death and dying. These are not always easy conversations. But when we share, heart to heart, we build community and experience a special joy that enhances our lives. Free, but registration required. For more info: ppolly62@ymail.com.

#### September artist exhibit

Visit the senior center and view the September senior art show with a wide range of artwork produced by local artists of all skill levels, ages 50 and older. An artist reception will be held on Friday, Sept. 27, from 1-2 p.m.

### Outdoors

#### Pickleball for seniors

##### Saturday, Aug. 24, 10a.m.-noon

Are you curious about this sport called pickleball? Playing pickleball allows you to work on your balance, agility, reflexes and hand-eye coordination without putting excessive strains on your body. Bring folding chairs to the Charlotte Beach pickleball courts to watch how pickleball is played. Afterwards, there will be the opportunity to try out pickleball. Wear comfortable clothing and sneakers. Paddles provided. Questions? Call or text David at 802-425-4567. Cost: Free. Registration required. Consider carpooling with friends. You will need a Charlotte Beach season or day pass to park. (Rain date Aug. 31.)

#### 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.

### Exercise

#### Gentle yoga

##### Mondays, 11 a.m.-noon

This gentle yoga class led by Heidi Kvasnak focuses on breath-led movement, building bone strength and improving mobility, balance and flexibility. Suggestions are given for adapting the practice. Please bring a blanket or pillow to sit on. Suitable for all levels. Cost: \$10 a class. 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.

#### Tai Chi for arthritis

##### Thursdays (starting Sept. 26)

##### 9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m.

The benefits of a tai chi practice include reduced pain and stiffness and improved muscle strength and joint flexibility. Through learning the tai chi movements and practicing regularly, many have found significant relief from arthritis symptoms. For more info: belizahammer@hotmail.com. \$10 per class. No registration required.

#### 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. \$10 a class. No registration required.

### Programs

#### Arts group

##### Fridays, 10 a.m.-noon

This weekly group includes a wide range of artists looking to socialize and make new friendships. You are invited to bring whatever you are working on and enjoy the ideas and encouragement that this friendly and relaxed group has to offer. Free. No registration required.

#### 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.

#### Beginner watercolor workshop

##### Friday, Sept. 20, 1-2:30 p.m.

If you've always wanted to try watercolor but were too intimidated, this is the class for you. In this workshop you will learn how to paint a Lake Champlain Sunset in watercolor



Photo by Lori York

Evaluating the water damage when the pressure tank had a leak which closed the senior center for a week.

without everything turning green. For more information about Ginny Joyner, check out her website: ginnyjoyner.com. \$40 plus \$6 supply fee required by Sept. 17.

#### Duplicate bridge

##### Mondays, 12:30-4 p.m.

We play an intermediate level of duplicate bridge using the basic American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) 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. We are always looking for new players who have basic bridge knowledge. \$3. 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.

#### Watercolor class

##### Tuesdays, Sept. 17, 24 & Oct. 1, 9 a.m.-noon

Join artist and instructor Lynn Cummings in painting some fall blooms, landscapes and more. Some experience in watercolor is helpful, but open to all. \$125. Registration and payment by Tuesday, Sept. 10.

### Meals

Menus are posted on the website: charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

#### Monday lunches

Served weekly at 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, 10-11a.m., at the Charlotte Senior Center. Registration is required by Monday by 8 a.m. for the Wednesday meal. \$5 suggested meal 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 menu 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

# Enjoy the ‘virtuous’ cabbage with Asian crunch salad

Susan Ohanian  
Contributor

Even though there’s no zucchini on the menu at the next Charlotte Senior Center Monday Munch, this seems an apt time to give a tip of the hat to zucchini, the vegetable described by “The Almanac” as “staggeringly productive.”

Louise Penny offers evidence of zucchini abundance in “Still Life,” the first book in her series featuring Chief Inspector Armand Gamache of the Surêté du Québec, just south of Montreal: The only reason doors were locked was to prevent neighbors from dropping off baskets of zucchini.

On Aug. 26, instead of zucchini, volunteer cooks at the Charlotte Senior Center will offer Asian crunch salad, along with chicken thighs and brownies with whipped cream.

Part of the crunch in that salad comes from two kinds of cabbage. Note the title of Wall Street Journal writer Judith Valente’s column: “The Virtuous Cabbage.” Valente pointed out that this virtuous vegetable was “particularly friendless.” The Department of Agriculture collected information on everything from asparagus to zucchini — but didn’t bother with cabbage.

A department statistician told her there was “just no lobby” for cabbage.

Valente then quoted the American



Photo by Arina Krasnikova pexels.com

Cancer Society’s recommendation of all the good things cabbage contains — rich in vitamin C, fiber and vitamin K. Current research suggests that cabbage also supports digestion and heart health. So, enjoy a “virtuous” salad at Monday Munch.

Clearly, Thomas Jefferson was onto something. Although he did not retire

from political life until 1809, in 1792 he anticipated leaving, writing his daughter Martha Jefferson Randolph, “The ensuing year will be the longest of my life and the last of such hateful labors; the next we will sow our cabbages together.”

Valente noted many ways cabbage “tries so hard to please” — it’s cheap, it isn’t as prone to wilt as lettuce. She concludes, “Score one for a head of cabbage in the hands of a good cook.”

The very good volunteer cooks at the Charlotte Senior Center will bring you Asian crunch salad, which contains both green and purple cabbages, along with carrots, green onions, endame, toasted almonds and sesame seeds, dressed with a soy and honey vinaigrette.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest just sent out its Good Foods Calendar 2025, and January starts the year with an eye-catching, full-page picture of a red cabbage with the notation: “a simple but stunning addition to your next salad.”

The first entry in The New York Times brownies “search” starts out, “There are many kinds.” Then, after a recipe for Katherine Hepburn’s brownies appeared, various letter writers argued over whether she would have approved of using “an ingredient as anemic as cocoa” in her brownies recipe. In our current political season, certainly it would be a great relief to argue about what is a suitable brownie ingredient.

The newspaper of record gives instructions for baking brownies with chocolate or cocoa and then moves on to Nutella, coffee, cardamon, pecan pie filling, coconut, peppermint, red beets, salted pretzels, crème de menthe, peanut butter, stout beer, tahini, gingerbread, caramel, marshmallows, Oreos and lots more. I don’t claim to have gone through all 5,270 entries on brownies.

A widely accepted brownie origin story credits its invention with the chefs at Chicago’s Palmer House Hotel for the 1893 World Columbian Exhibition, site of considerable culinary innovation. Hotel owner Potter Palmer’s wife Bertha was asked to design a dessert for the ladies

attending the exhibition. She asked the hotel’s pastry chefs to create a dessert smaller than a cake and more convenient to eat than slice of pie. They came up with a dessert made of chocolate, walnuts and apricot sauce they named brownies.

In 1897, the Sears and Roebuck catalog included brownies.

A popular American bakery in Kreuzberg, Germany was credited with bringing “der brauny” to the city, but the baker said that the frustrating thing about serving brownies to Germans is that “they insist on eating them with a fork.” I would note that we carry a fork in the car.

On brownies, Augusten Burroughs, who describes his horrific childhood in “Running with Scissors,” observes, “You would be amazed by what you can give up, lose, or break, and yet still be a person who gets happy over brownies.”

Charles M. Schulz of Charlie Brown fame concluded, “All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn’t hurt.”

### Aug. 26 Monday Munch, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Marinated chicken thighs, Asian crunch salad and brownies with whipped cream.

Reminder: There will be no Monday Munch on Sept. 2. The senior center is closed for Labor Day.

Reminder 2: The Little Free Library for Kids at the Grange (2858 Spear Street), sponsored by the Charlotte Senior Center board and the Flying Pig Book Store, with help from Cindi Robinson, whose son built the structure, is bulging with books. Every child can find something special in this wide selection. Take a child you care about over there to choose one.

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