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Revived Hinesburg development raises downstream concerns

Brett Yates
Contributor

In Hinesburg, a major development proposal that failed to win an Act 250 permit last spring due to its anticipated impact on the local floodplain could soon move forward after modifications. Critics of the project say that the handful of Charlotte families who live on the banks of the LaPlatte River may have cause for apprehension.

Last year, municipal officials in Hinesburg threw their support behind developer Brett Grabowski's plan to build 73 homes, alongside new office and retail space, in the "village growth area" beside Route 116, behind Kinney Drugs. But the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources objected on the basis that adding fill near the Patrick Brook to raise the buildings above flood elevation would reduce the floodplain's capacity to store floodwater, yielding potential "downstream consequences."

The Vermont Natural Resources Board's District 4 Environmental Commission, which administers Act 250 in Chittenden County, consequently shot down Grabowski's application. He filed an appeal, but he also got to work on making changes. On Oct. 7, he told The Charlotte News that he had completed a revised proposal in compliance with state requirements.

The Agency of Natural Resources

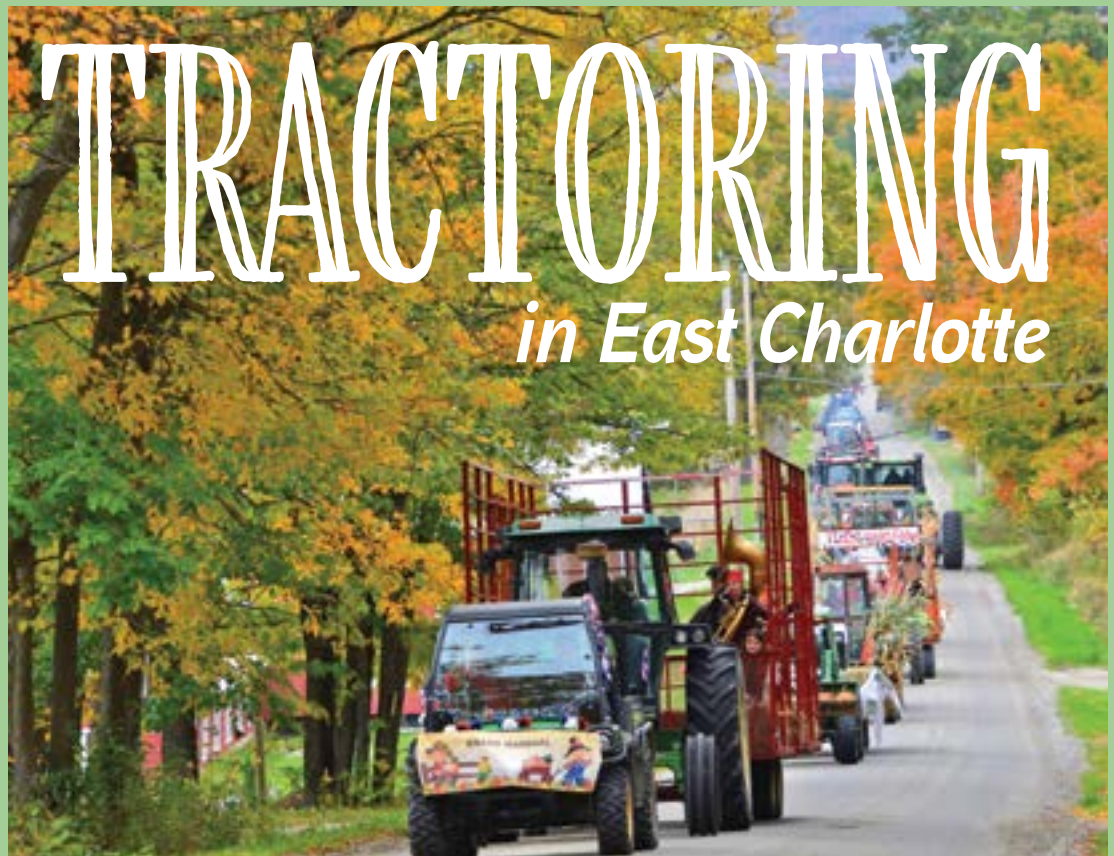
"has already reviewed the modification and given it their blessing," Grabowski said. If so, the proposal may or may not need to return to the Environmental Commission for a second review, depending on the significance of the changes. Grabowski expects to receive Act 250 permission "sometime in November" through a settlement in the Environmental Division of the Vermont Superior Court.

A spokesperson for the Agency of Natural Resources would not confirm or deny that an updated design for Hinesburg Center II had won its approval. "The agency is unable to comment on the proposal because there is a pending appeal," Kelly Hughes said.

Flood safety has become an especially pressing concern in Vermont since July of 2023, when rivers throughout the state overflowed into adjacent communities. Hinesburg, whose village sits beside the confluence of the LaPlatte and Patrick Brook, received little damage, but one year later, another rainstorm reportedly closed nine roads in the town.

West of downtown Hinesburg, the LaPlatte wanders through farmland before entering Charlotte, crossing Spear Street and heading north through a nature preserve in Shelburne, where it empties into Lake Champlain at Shelburne Bay.

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A view of the tractor parade as it makes its way up Prindle Road.

Photo by Janet Armell

Tractor parade returns with colorful splash

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

Although the October tractor parade is an iconic Charlotte event, it was enjoyed this past Sunday by newcomers to town, people from other Vermont towns and from other states.

After a hiatus of three years, the tractor parade may not have been as big as it was in its heyday, but it was a very encouraging turnout for the continuation of the event. (Yes, that is the correct spelling; although in this context, "hay day" may be more appropriate.)

Organizer Carrie Spear said there were almost

40 tractors in the parade. The last Charlotte Tractor Parade had at least 60 tractors.

Spear was confident that next year's parade will have twice as many tractors as this year. She dreams of turning the event into a weekend full of activities honoring farmers and farming, with events stretching into West Charlotte as well.

At least 300 people attended the fall farming festivities.

Everyone who volunteered to help with the Charlotte Tractor Parade gave 100 percent, Spear said.

As is usual, the celebration of Charlotte's

TRACTOR PARADE continued on page 3

Earthkeep Farmcommon reclaims Nordic Farms name

*New owners ink deal for
USDA to use two-thirds
of farm for research*

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

On an antique desk that belonged to Vermont Senator Justin Morrill, the father of the land-grant university system, representatives from the University of Vermont on Oct. 3 signed a 30-year lease for approximately 400 acres of farmland for long-term agricultural research use in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service.

"It is especially meaningful that this lease was signed on Senator Justin Morrill's desk, as this collaboration perfectly embodies the

University of Vermont's land-grant mission," said UVM Interim President Patricia Prelock. "This partnership will advance agricultural research that directly benefits Vermonters and will strengthen our state's food system."

Richard Cate, the university's vice president for finance and administration, pointed out the significance of using Morrill's desk for the occasion.

"I always tease that John Harvard got a lot of recognition for founding one college, but Justin Morrill founded 56 and counting," Cate said. "It's a pretty impressive record."

The Vermont senator originated the Morrill Act of 1862, which has become known as the Land-Grant College Act because it allowed the sale of lands to finance universities in every state to stimulate economic development. It was signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln on July 2, 1862.

Among universities that were funded by this initiative were Cornell, MIT, Iowa State, Michigan State, the entire University of California system and the University of Vermont, Cate said.

The research planned on about two-thirds of the 600 total acres that are the Nordic Farm will involve a collaborative effort between the university and the Agricultural Research Service.

Cates said leasing this farm land will enable "even more Vermont-based, expansive, impactful research, and that's really a big part of what we're about these days."

Christian Peters said that, as the Agricultural Research Service's research leader, his job is nurturing agricultural studies of ways to improve nutrition while also improving environmental, economic and

social sustainability.

"These are meant to be 30-year or more experiments, and the long-term lease agreements that we'll have here today give us the freedom to think long term," Peters said.

The lease for the Nordic Farms property is for 30 years with an option to renew for 30 additional years three more times, so this agreement could have an impact on the agricultural future of Charlotte for 120 years.

Nordic farm owner Ben Dobson said, one night six months ago, when he and Kaspar Meier saw the farm was for sale, they decided in about 10 minutes they were going to try to purchase it. They have owned the farm for about three months now and have been working to clean it up while they worked on their business plan.

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NORDIC FARMS

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“When we met the researchers at the University of Vermont, we felt it was a pretty obvious choice,” Dobson said.

The farm that was most recently known as Earthkeep Farmcommon has reverted to its previous name of Nordic Farms. All of the tenants of Earthkeep Farmcommon are gone.

Meier moved to the farm two weeks after they closed on the property and has been working on it since. When asked if he was staying, he replied, “This is home.”

For the time being, he said, he and Dobson plan to grow hay on the 150-200 acres they retained, but are open to other farming possibilities over time.

Vermont Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts said he thought the important thing about the arrangement is that it will be a working farm.

“So, the animals are going to come back, crops are going to be done,” Tebbetts said. As a working farm in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, he expects it will provide valuable research for not just Vermont farmers, but for farmers in other Northeastern states.

Tebbetts foresees the farm experimenting with practices in hopes that techniques will be adopted that really work and that other farmers will copy. Among possibilities he mentioned were research into grazing techniques, different grasses, various breeds of beef cattle “and maybe at some point there could be some sheep here as well.”

Peters said the Agricultural Research Service is required to do planning on a five-year cycle, and those plans are reviewed.



Photo by Joshua Defibaugh/University of Vermont

Front from left, Christian Peters of the USDA, Richard Cate of the University of Vermont and Nordic farm owner Ben Dobson sign an agreement for the farm to lease around 400 acres for agricultural research, while Vermont Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts and UVM Vice President for Research Kirk Dombrowski watch the historic agreement.

They have to respond to feedback before they can get an approved plan. The feedback comes from both the research community and farmers.

They plan to start with cattle research, he said, because with Nordic Farms they have enough land to do that.

“Eventually, we’re hoping to have a herd of

about 60 cows out here, but in the meantime, our plans for the next four years will be to study different breeds,” Peters said, “and see how they perform.”

He said initially they will work on how cattle do on different forages, but ultimately, they would like to work on both food crops and forages.

FLOODPLAIN

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Compared to the Winooski or the Lamoille, it has few houses along its banks.

Dave Speidel, a recent retiree who’s lived in Charlotte for 40 years, owns one of them. Built in the 1790s, his Spear Street home — less than a mile north of July’s washout at Mud Hollow Brook — originally served as an office for a sawmill that used the LaPlatte for mechanical power. In recent years, he’s watched its waters rise to new levels during wet weather.

“What happened in Western North Carolina kind of has me freaked out,” Speidel said, referring to the devastation wreaked last month by Hurricane Helene. “And I’m sure anybody that lives on a small stream is a little concerned these days.”

On the opposite side of the LaPlatte, Speidel’s neighbors include five families who live in newer houses constructed by Habitat for Humanity on Albert’s Way.

“Before they even did it,” Speidel recalled, “we went to Habitat and said, ‘Hey, in the spring meltdown when the ice breaks up, we’ve seen big chunks of ice where you’re building those houses. Is that a good idea?’ And they said, ‘Well, we can’t be picky. We get free land — we build on it.’ So, anyway, we have five houses totally in the flood zone.”

So far, the LaPlatte has claimed just a few lawn chairs from Speidel’s property, but he worries that inappropriate upstream development could contribute to bringing the water closer to his house. In September, a project called Haystack Crossing, the largest proposed development in Hinesburg’s

history, located just north of the planned site for Hinesburg Center II, received an Act 250 permit, almost two years after winning the town’s approval.

“Charlotte doesn’t have a say in what Hinesburg does,” Speidel said. But he hopes to see Charlotte’s state legislators “add to the chorus of people trying to get better rules up in Montpelier for these things.”

During the last legislative session, the Vermont General Assembly passed bills that aimed to improve flood safety and codify new standards for development. The legislation set in motion years-long planning and rulemaking processes.

2024’s Act 181 overhauls Act 250, the circa-1970 statewide land-use law. Ultimately, it will divide Vermont’s land into “tiers,” indicating its suitability for development. Proposals to alter Tier 3 areas will receive the highest level of scrutiny, with strict guidelines expected to protect “critical natural resources,” including river corridors and riparian areas.

Called the Flood Safety Act, Act 121 intends to conserve and restore Vermont’s wetlands. And, starting in 2028, it will require developments in river corridors to earn permits from the Department of Environmental Conservation, following more than a year of remapping work by the department and two years of public input that will inform “potential restrictions.”

The Vermont Natural Resources Council, a Montpelier-based advocacy nonprofit, helped shape both bills. Restoration ecologist Karina Dailey worked on Act 121.

The legislation particularly targets flood risks associated with fluvial erosion. According to Dailey, only 20 percent of flood-related damages in Vermont have occurred within

the FEMA-mapped flood hazard area, while the rest owes to “erosion flooding,” where the river is “shifting and jumping its bank or moving within that river corridor.”

A river corridor consists of the stream’s “meander belt” and a 50-foot buffer on either side. Rivers change course over time, and if Act 121 succeeds, it will prevent development that would interfere with that movement or place Vermonters at risk as a result of it. When human activity artificially straightens or confines a river, its current becomes more powerful and more dangerous.

“The goal of the Flood Safety Act is that it really provides a watershed-scale approach to public safety,” Dailey said. “For those downstream residents in Charlotte who might be impacted by what Hinesburg does, it’s thinking about it at that larger scale of where the water flows and giving the river the room it needs to move.”

But Andrea Morgante, a former member of the Hinesburg Selectboard, thinks the state needs to do more. In 1990, Morgante co-founded the Lewis Creek Association, a conservation organization, where she continues to sit on the board of directors. “There’s a big gap because the state does not have statewide floodplain regulations,” Morgante said of Act 121. “The floodplain can oftentimes be way outside the river corridor, so it’s not really addressing the flooding issue. It’s addressing development within the river corridor.”

And in Morgante’s analysis, the law’s new protections for wetlands will not necessarily work to preserve critical floodplains, either. “There can be floodplains that aren’t wetlands, and there’s wetlands that aren’t in



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- Reporting on how other towns have addressed challenges similar to our own.

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TRACTOR PARADE

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agrarian roots began with a farmers' appreciation lunch at a barn deep on the property of Green Mountain Hay at 3278 Spear Street in East Charlotte.

Around 1 p.m., when the tractors began their slow trek from that barn up to the parade route, they could be heard rumbling in the distance for a good bit before they broke out of the trees and could be seen in the distance, traveling north on a dirt road running along the horizon line before turning and heading east to Spear Street.

This view, with the tractors traveling in the distance and the brilliant autumn colors of the Adirondacks as a backdrop, was a sight most parade spectators have missed in the past. But, from the vantage of the newly introduced Field of Fun and the barns on Spear Street, it was a treat many got to see this year.

This year's tractor parade was such a success that next year's has already been announced on social media. Mark your calendars; it's scheduled for 11 a.m., Sunday, Oct. 12, 2025.



Photos by Scooter MacMillan

Just as the sign indicates, everything was about tractors, and nothing about cars, for about 30 minutes.



Photo by Nancy Wood



From left, Jack Unsworth, almost 2, and Colin Coyle, 4, found an old tractor near the Field of Fun to practice driving a tractor for a future parade.



Albee Christie rides his tractor and carries one, too.

Correction

A story about three generations of the Allard family's football legacy in the Oct. 3 edition of the newspaper contained an error. Dave Allard went to a football columbine to try out for the CFL.

Also in that edition, a caption for a photo of Paul Bourgeois riding a tractor in the 2022 Charlotte Tractor Parade had an error. The parade's center of activities shifted south from the Hinesburg Road and Spear Street intersection.



The tractors gathered deep in Green Mountain Hay for a farmers' appreciation lunch prior to the parade.

FLOOD PLAN

Continued from page 2

floodplains,” she said.

Act 181 mentions floodplains explicitly among the “significant natural resources” that “require special consideration” among regional planners. But although lawmakers included provisions to conserve these and other natural areas in their revision of Act 250, Morgante also pointed to the legislation’s other primary objective: ameliorating the state’s housing shortage by streamlining development in downtowns and village centers, which, in Vermont, tend to sit in river valleys.

By exempting many new housing projects from the Act 250 process in such locations, which have municipal zoning regulations of their own, Act 181 seeks to avoid duplicative review that slows and discourages much-needed development. But Morgante contended that local regulations on their own may not always offer enough protection. She cited Hinesburg as an example.

Hinesburg’s zoning bylaws prohibit new development that would have an “undue adverse impact” upon a floodplain. On the basis of that criterion, the local development review board approved the Hinesburg Center II project, which subsequently failed to meet the stricter “no adverse impact” standard of the Agency of Natural Resources, killing its Act 250 application.

The Lewis Creek Association, which submitted testimony against the project to the District 4 Environmental Commission, successfully requested “party status” during its review. Morgante related that she had seen

Grabowski’s revised plan, which seeks to reduce its contribution to flood risk by eliminating a planned road crossing over the Patrick Brook that would have connected Hinesburg Center II to Haystack Crossing.

Last year, town manager Todd Odit identified the crossing as a feature “of great importance” in a letter to the Vermont Natural Resource Board in support of the development. Hinesburg Development Review Coordinator Mitchel Cypes told the Charlotte News that, owing to traffic and safety impacts, its removal would pose “a real concern” and “would require an amendment” to the development review board’s prior approval. Grabowski argued that the project “fundamentally has not changed” and noted that a planned pedestrian crossing remains in place.

“I think that the developer is being premature in saying that it’s all finalized,” Morgante said. “I imagine that it will be resolved, but I don’t think it’s completely done.”

In her view, a resolution in the developer’s favor could play a role in threatening the stability of the lower LaPlatte, even if the new plan has satisfied the Agency of Natural Resources. It will still require adding fill to portions of Hinesburg’s floodplain.

“That means that the water is going to go somewhere,” Morgante said. “And houses downstream from this development — or anybody’s land downstream from this development — will be absorbing the additional water that would have been spreading out on this floodplain.”

(Disclosure: Dave Speidel is a member of the board of directors of The Charlotte News.)



Courtesy photo.

Spear Street, just north of Carpenter Road, after damage caused by tropical cyclone Beryl.

Charlotte Democrats holding meet-legislators event Wednesday

Mike Yantachka
Contributor

The Charlotte Democratic Committee is sponsoring a Meet Your State Legislators evening on Wednesday, Oct. 16, at 7 p.m. in the Charlotte Town Hall on Ferry Road. This event is free and open to all.

Our state Rep. Chea Waters-Evans and our senators Ginny Lyons, Tom Chitenden and Kesha Ram-Hinsdale will

be available to discuss the challenges, successes and disappointments of the last legislative session and the challenges and plans for the next biennium.

Bring your voice and your questions. Dessert refreshments will be provided, and there will be a door prize raffle of Harris-Walz bumper stickers and a Harris-Walz yard sign.

A virtual option is available via Zoom at the following link <https://tinyurl.com/yjb8m32n>.



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Charlotte employee union becomes official

Brett Yates
Contributor

On Oct. 11, the Vermont Labor Relations Board certified a new union consisting of 10 employees of the town of Charlotte, based on a secret-ballot election conducted on Sept. 25.

Nine out of 10 eligible workers had voted yes on joining the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. As part of AFSCME Council 93, the union will become a new chapter of Local 1343, which already represents municipal workers in Burlington, South Burlington, Colchester, Winooski, Shelburne and Hinesburg.

AFSCME petitioned the Vermont Labor Relations Board for an election in Charlotte in March. According to the board's executive director, Judith L. Dillon, the workers' signed authorization cards arrived too early for them to take advantage of the quicker "card-check" process offered by 2024's Act 117, which, as of July, allows public-sector employees to unionize on the basis of signatures alone, without a subsequent election.

The bargaining unit in Charlotte consists of the town planner, the zoning administrator, the planning and zoning assistant, the assistant town clerk, the volunteer coordinator at the Charlotte Senior Center and five librarians. In April, according to public documents, the selectboard disputed the inclusion of the librarians, citing their management by the board of trustees of the Charlotte Library ("a distinct and separate legislative body"), but the state board rejected the argument, identifying the town as their employer.

The town administrator, the director of the senior center, the director of the library,

the director of recreation and the town clerk remain non-union. The Vermont Municipal Labor Relations Act does not grant collective bargaining rights to supervisors (defined by their hiring, firing and disciplinary powers) or to elected officials.

Since the voters' rejection of the municipal budget on Town Meeting Day 2023, the Charlotte Selectboard has aimed to pacify local taxpayers by investigating potential savings on labor costs. The union formed amid months of discussion about possible ways to trim employee health benefits in particular.

"We are now gathering information and reviewing documents to identify specific proposals we may offer in the contract negotiations," town planner Larry Lewack said. "We look forward to a productive negotiation for a fair contract."

While nationwide union density fell to a record low of 10 percent in 2023, Vermont has lately trended in the opposite direction. As of last year, 14.4 percent of Vermonters were union members, compared to 10.9 percent a decade earlier, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"Workers who choose to form a union secure better wages and benefits for themselves and their families, as well as safer working conditions, a fair and balanced system for resolving disputes and opportunities to advance in their careers," AFSCME Council 93 Director of Legislation and Political Action Jim Durkin said. "The improved wages and benefits secured by a union also helps municipalities attract and retain qualified workers, and this workforce stability invariably leads to improved service to residents."

Remembering Lydia Clemmons



Photo by Mike Yantachka

A picture of Lydia Clemmons Sr. sits in honor at a celebration of her legacy at the Clemmons Family Farm while musician Mikahely plays a valiha, a stringed instrument from Madagascar made from bamboo.

Lydia Clemmons Sr. was celebrated at the Clemmons Family Farm on Oct. 5 in a memorial event called Looking Forward: A Celebration of Life and Legacy.

The gathering featured music,

artistry, food and reflections on her many and varied contributions. The Clemmons Family Farm provides live-in artists a venue to develop and express their art.

Selectboard pauses to celebrate town administrator's first year

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

The members of the Charlotte Selectboard recessed briefly in the middle of their meeting on Monday, Sept. 7, for chocolate cake.

The occasion for the variation in normal municipal procedure was to celebrate Nate Bareham's first year as town administrator. Appropriately, the cake came adorned with one candle in the shape of a number one.

Selectboard chair Jim Faulkner said that Bareham has a hard job at which he has performed excellently.

Board member Kelly Devine said, "Not only has Nate been an excellent employee, but he came in at a pretty difficult time, following somebody that was a really long-term employee."

Bareham's first year drew to a close with a tough summer that brought increased responsibilities stemming from July flooding and, in particular, dealing with the bureaucratic responsibilities necessary to get Spear Street reopened after Muddy Brook carved a canyon in the important Charlotte thoroughfare.

These responsibilities have meant he has been working 12-14 hour days and some on weekends.

Speaking of town employees, after an executive session the board returned to open public meeting to approve a motion accepting the resignation of the town



Photo by Scooter MacMillan

From left, selectboard members Kelly Devine, town administrator Nate Bareham, Frank Tenney, Natalie Kanner and Jim Faulkner celebrate Bareham's first year on the job.

planner. Larry Lewack's last day on the job will be Dec. 1. The motion also contained a note that the selectboard does not intend

to enter a contract for work after his final day.

The board voted to open bids on

Tuesday, Oct. 22, at 5:30 p.m. for repairs to the Spear Street damage at Muddy Hollow Brook. If the board has questions or problems with the bids that are received, those will be addressed at a meeting the next day, Oct. 23, at 5:30 p.m., but that meeting will only be held if necessary.

The bids can't be opened at the next regular meeting of the selectboard on Oct. 21 because the town is required to post the request for proposals for a full two weeks, and that would be a day less than that requirement.

The bid document says the work is to be complete on or before April 6, 2025. The construction will include installing two 10-foot-diameter culverts with concrete headwalls and wingwalls. A debris deflector, which is a device just upstream of the culverts to keep out debris like limbs and trees, will also need to be installed as part of the project.

This work will not include fixing the road just south of where Spear Street crosses Muddy Hollow Brook. A section of road there sloughed off during the flooding because the ground was so saturated, Faulkner said.

That repair will require another request for a proposal to get bids for that work.

Faulkner said he hopes to see dirt being moved within three weeks.

Commentary

State government should commit to shelter and food for everyone

Anore Horton
Hunger Free Vermont

All people deserve access to the basic human needs of food and shelter. We know that the state of Vermont — our government and our people — can make the choice to shelter and feed everyone in Vermont.

For the past four years, the state has supported the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program in order to provide shelter to our most vulnerable neighbors. During the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, state agencies contracted with food-service companies to provide meals for people housed in hotels, and then established Vermont Everyone Eats, through which restaurant workers and owners proved themselves to be committed, essential and highly effective community food security partners.

The current unhousing crisis is the result of deliberate choices to change Vermont's policy of providing safe, non-congregate housing to vulnerable people experiencing homelessness. These harmful policy choices can and must be reversed. Government can make policy choices that ensure everyone has housing and food. Taking away the fundamental human rights to shelter and food is immoral and is creating a state emergency that was completely preventable.

When people are unsheltered, they have



Adobe stock image

no way to safely store food or cook for themselves, leaving food access severely limited. By unhousing people, the state is also creating a new hunger crisis and threatening people's health and lives. Municipalities and service providers across the state are heroically scrambling, yet again, to meet these needs, but many of

these entities were already stretched thin before this latest crisis.

We call upon Governor Scott to declare a state of emergency and immediately reinstate safe, accessible, non-congregate housing for all vulnerable people who have been evicted from hotel housing as a result of the changes made to the General

Assistance Emergency Housing Program in Act 113, consistent with the Provider Letter to Governor Scott that was released on Sept. 25.

State government has stripped people of safe shelter and access to food and must immediately reverse course and provide adequate resources to meet people's essential needs. Governor Scott and all state agencies must:

Provide immediate state funding to community action agencies and other community-based congregate and prepared meal programs so that they can increase their production and distribution of prepared meals to unhoused and marginally housed people.

Provide immediate state funding through the Vermont Everyone Eats framework to willing restaurants in communities bearing the brunt of the current state government-created unhousing crisis, so they can serve as another source of prepared and ready-to-eat meals to keep everyone fed wherever they are.

Implement the state option for the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) restaurant meals program in Vermont so that it can be in place to support unhoused people and others in need of access to prepared meals through restaurants in future times of crisis, including the everyday crises that keep people from being able to access the food they need.

Provide immediate state funding to Vermont Foodbank to support food shelves and meal sites who are being asked to meet the surge in demand in their local communities.

As we have seen in recent years, the state can choose to meet the basic needs of all of us living in Vermont. The lack of action by the administration is a failure to care for our most vulnerable neighbors.

We urge Governor Scott to immediately address this crisis and ensure access to safe, stable shelter and dignified access to food.

(Also supporting this commentary are Paul Dragon of the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity, Frank Knaack of the Housing and Homelessness Alliance of Vermont, Sue Minter of the Capstone Community Action, Grace Oedel of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, John Sayles of the Vermont Foodbank and Joshua Davis of the Southeastern Vermont Community Alliance.)

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The Charlotte News



Commentary



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Lots of justice of the peace candidates on the ballot

Mike Yantachka
Contributor

If you are a registered Charlotte voter, you have probably received your ballot in the mail by now. Be sure to look at both sides of the ballot. On the back side there are 21 names running for justice of the peace positions. Note that you can vote for no more than 12.

Why so many? And what is a justice of the peace, and what do they do?

I have been asked these questions recently, so I thought a little tutorial might be in order.

Justice of the peace is a position created and defined in the Vermont Constitution. Every town or city in Vermont elects justices of the peace to serve vital functions in the community. The number of justices of the peace in a municipality depends on the population. Since Charlotte's population is between 3,000 and 5,000, we can elect up to 12.

Justice of the peace candidates are nominated by the major political parties of Vermont, i.e. Democrat, Republican and Progressive, in an official local caucus meeting. Individuals may also become a candidate as an Independent by collecting signatures on a nominating petition. The term of a justice of the peace is two years beginning on Feb. 1 of the year after the election.

Justice of the peace candidates have several varied responsibilities from administering oaths to deciding property tax assessment appeals to delivering and counting ballots as elections officials. The responsibilities and rules governing these responsibilities are spelled out in a justice of the peace guide published by the Vermont secretary of state.

Justices of the peace help their town clerk administer elections, including reviewing and updating voter checklists, testing and verifying the operation of tabulating machines, checking voters off the checklist when they vote, delivering ballots to homebound voters and counting the ballots after the polls close.

Justices of the peace serve on the board

of civil authority and the board of tax abatement along with the town clerk and selectboard members. The board of civil authority hears appeals of property tax assessments when local property owners do not agree with the final decision of the listers. The board of tax abatement can determine whether a taxpayer's property tax obligation should be forgiven under certain circumstances, such as a loss due to fire or flooding.

One of the most recognizable authorities and privileges of a justice of the peace is solemnizing marriages. This is not a mandatory duty, but it is often a very enjoyable one.

Being a justice of the peace is a privilege and an opportunity to serve our community, and all the candidates who have stood for election are dedicated to serving our town and our citizens in a voluntary capacity. So, be sure to look over this important part of your ballot and cast your 12 votes.

Food Shelf News

Food shelves need lawmakers to pass bipartisan farm bill

Katherine Arthaud
Contributor

You've probably heard of the Farm Bill, the largest piece of federal legislation for food and farming. The Farm Bill greatly impacts access to nutritious food for the millions of people in our country facing food insecurity and hunger.

Every five years Congress is supposed to renew the bill, so that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (or SNAP) and foodbank programs can function. Yet the current Farm Bill was last authorized in 2018. Congress had until Oct. 1, 2023, to reauthorize it, but it didn't happen.

Instead, Congress passed a one-year extension, which ensured that the nutrition programs upon which millions of Americans depend would be funded through September 2024. But then, midnight of Sept. 30 came and went without a push from lawmakers to pass a new farm bill or grant an extension, all of which has a significant effect on how food banks are funded, as well as individual programs for school lunches and more.

As grocery prices rise and supply chain disruptions occur, it is of vital importance that lawmakers come together to pass a bipartisan farm bill that supports food banks and the many who depend on them.

Food insecurity and the need for assistance is a real thing — in our country, in our state and even in our little town. Thus, we are extra grateful to all those who have helped us in so many ways to support our community. A special thank you to this past month's donors: Deborah Cook, Rosemary Raszka, Andrea Landau, Jocelyn Schermerhorn and Cedar Beach Association and the Charlotte Coop ladies (Anne Castle, Liz Poulsen and Mary Fisher).

In case you haven't heard, over the next several months the food shelf will be undergoing some renovations in the basement of the Charlotte Congregational Church. Thanks to a grant from the Vermont Food Bank, we will be purchasing new shelving, new storage

containers and a new refrigerator. The goal is to create a more efficient and appealing space for our families and volunteers.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the generosity and support of the Charlotte Congregational Church, which has been working with us as we determine ways to better utilize the basement space. We thank them for their generous support.

We will keep you posted regarding this project and our need for manpower, as well as additional financial support.

The following donations of non-perishables are always helpful: snack foods, condiments, sugar, dish detergent and shampoo.

A big thank you to the Grange for the used clothing drive, now underway. Clothing will be distributed to families later this month.

Food is provided at 403 Church Hill Road, behind the Charlotte Congregational Church on the second and fourth Wednesday (4-6 p.m.) and second and fourth Saturday (9-11 a.m.) of each month. For all other inquiries, 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. Call 802-425-2402 or fill out a request form. Request forms are available during food shelf open hours, or on our website charlotteucc.org/charlotte-food-shelf.

As we transition into the colder months, monetary donations are much appreciated to help our families with heat and other utility bills. Tax-deductible donations can be addressed to: Charlotte Food Shelf, Inc. P.O. 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 here.



Photo by Peggy Sharpe

From left, Meaghin Kennedy, owner of Frog Song Farm, delivers fresh produce to volunteers Sis Capeless and Janet Landrigan. Frog Song Farm was the food shelf's partner for produce as part of a Vermonters Feeding Vermonters grant.

Letters to the Editor

Hoping for justice of peace votes

To the Editor:

My name is Elizabeth Langfeldt, and I'm running for justice of the peace in Charlotte. Having lived here with my family for nearly 16 years, I know many of you, and if we haven't met, I hope this note gives you a glimpse of who I am. What I cherish most about Charlotte is the commitment of its people to our community's success. I want to serve as a justice of the peace to contribute to our town's continued growth.

I moved to Charlotte in 2008, just before marrying my husband, Evan Langfeldt. Over the years, I've engaged with our community through various roles, from volunteering at the Charlotte Senior

Center and the Charlotte Food Shelf to managing ad sales and fundraising at the Charlotte News. Our daughter Louisa has participated in local sports and attended the Charlotte Children's Center and Charlotte Central School. We belong to the Charlotte Congregational Church and love exploring our beautiful trails and recreational areas. In December 2020, I helped organize Charlotte's first holiday light show to spread cheer during a tough time. I also owe a lighthearted apology regarding the disappearance of the library's copy of "The Sound of Music" during quarantine — I promise it was unintentional!

Professionally, I've worked in fundraising and community development with organizations like Burlington City Arts and the Kelly Brush Foundation. Since 2018, I've volunteered weekly for

Meals on Wheels, and our family supports Age Well.

Recently, I felt a strong call to deepen my civic engagement. I grew up in Lakewood, Ohio, where my family has lived for generations. Now, as the first generation of my family in Charlotte, I want to help create a place where our daughter can thrive as a second-generation Charlotter. If elected, I will engage with the boards of elections, civil authority and tax abatement to ensure our town operates smoothly, fairly and transparently.

This November, please vote for Elizabeth Langfeldt for Justice of the Peace. I look forward to serving you and our community. Thank you!

Elizabeth Langfeldt
Charlotte

John Rodgers supports Vermont's rural traditions

To the Editor:

There are sharp distinctions between the Progressive Democrat Lt. Gov. David Zuckerman and his challenger, a former longtime legislator, Republican John Rodgers.

Rodgers left the Democratic Party this year and joined the Republican Party, because of runaway tax and spending passed by the Progressive Democratic supermajority of legislators and their disregard for those of us who think differently than them. Recent supermajority tax and spend laws include a \$100 million payroll tax, a property tax increase of 14 percent, increases on a wide assortment of taxes and fees and pending huge taxes on Vermonters who heat with oil or propane, up to \$4 per gallon. Sharp tax increases are likely not far behind for gasoline as part of the supermajority's march toward phasing out gas, oil and propane.

Republican Gov. Phil Scott issued a series of vetoes against these taxes and fees, but the Progressive Democrats defeated all the vetoes. Rodgers wholeheartedly supports the Scott vetoes, and the governor's ongoing crusade against more and more taxation.

Gov. Scott has endorsed John Rodgers for lieutenant governor.

While Vermont's traditional rural-land uses such as farming, timber harvesting, hunting, fishing and trapping are under attack by well-funded extremist organizations, we don't know for certain where many legislators stand.

Rodgers not only supports Vermont's traditional rural way of life, he lives it. He farms the family's 200-year-old farm in the Northeast Kingdom. He harvests timber off the land and trucks it to local timber mills.

He hunts, fishes, snowmobiles and owns an ATV. John's perspective is under-represented among today's elected state officials. If you want a lieutenant governor who understands and values this traditional way of life, vote Rodgers.

I am 74 years old and a former Democratic Party legislator and have been involved in state government in other capacities over the years. I am a native of Barre and currently live in Bolton. I have known John Rodgers for more than 25 years.

Steve McLeod
Bolton

045058 CHARLOTTE CHITTENDEN-5			OFFICIAL VERMONT GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT NOVEMBER 5, 2024		
INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use BLACK Pen to fill in the oval. DO NOT USE PENCIL. To vote for a person whose name is printed on the ballot, fill in the oval to the right of the name of that person. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the person's name in the blank space provided and fill in the oval to the right of the write-in line. Please use BLOCK letters and stay within the box provided for write-ins. Do not vote for more candidates than the "VOTE for NOT MORE THAN #" for an office. If you make a mistake, tear, or deface the ballot, return it to an election official and obtain another ballot. DO NOT ERASE. 					
FOR U.S. PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT Vote for not more than ONE		FOR GOVERNOR Vote for not more than ONE		FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL Vote for not more than ONE	
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and KARINA GARCIA, NEW YORK <input type="radio"/>		JUNE GOODBAND, SPRINGFIELD, PEACE AND JUSTICE <input type="radio"/>		KEVIN GUSTAFSON, RUTLAND TOWN, PEACE AND JUSTICE <input type="radio"/>	
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RACHELE FRUIT, FLORIDA <input type="radio"/>		ELI "POA" MUTINO, BARRE CITY, INDEPENDENT <input type="radio"/>		FOR STATE SENATOR Vote for not more than THREE	
and DENNIS RICHTER, TEXAS <input type="radio"/>		PHIL SCOTT, BERLIN, REPUBLICAN <input type="radio"/>			
KAMALA D. HARRIS, CALIFORNIA <input type="radio"/>		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>		THOMAS CHITTENDEN, SOUTH BURLINGTON, DEMOCRATIC <input type="radio"/>	
and TIM WALZ, MINNESOTA <input type="radio"/>		FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR Vote for not more than ONE		TAYLOR CRAVEN, SHELburne, INDEPENDENT <input type="radio"/>	
ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR., NEW YORK <input type="radio"/>		IAN DIAMONDSTONE, PUTNEY, PEACE AND JUSTICE <input type="radio"/>		KESHA RAM HINS DALE, SHELburne, DEMOCRATIC <input type="radio"/>	
and NICOLE SHANAHAN, CALIFORNIA <input type="radio"/>		JOHN S. RODGERS, GLOVER, REPUBLICAN <input type="radio"/>		VIRGINIA "GINNY" LYONS, WILLISTON, DEMOCRATIC <input type="radio"/>	
WE THE PEOPLE <input type="radio"/>		DAVID ZUCKERMAN, HINESBURG, PROG/DEM <input type="radio"/>		BRUCE ROY, WILLISTON, REPUBLICAN <input type="radio"/>	
CHASE OLIVER, GEORGIA <input type="radio"/>		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>		ROHAN ST MARTHE, JERICHO, REPUBLICAN <input type="radio"/>	
and MIKE TER MAAT, VIRGINIA <input type="radio"/>		FOR STATE TREASURER Vote for not more than ONE		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	
DONALD J. TRUMP, FLORIDA <input type="radio"/>		JOSHUA BECHHOEFER, CORNWALL, REPUBLICAN <input type="radio"/>		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	
and JD VANCE, OHIO <input type="radio"/>		MIKE PIECIAK, WINOOSKI, DEMOCRATIC <input type="radio"/>		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	
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and MELINA ABDULLAH, CALIFORNIA <input type="radio"/>		SARAH COPELAND HANZAS, BRADFORD, DEMOCRATIC <input type="radio"/>		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	
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FOR U.S. SENATOR Vote for not more than ONE		FOR AUDITOR OF ACCOUNTS Vote for not more than ONE		JOHNNY TRUTOR, COLCHESTER, DEMOCRATIC <input type="radio"/>	
STEVE BERRY, MANCHESTER, INDEPENDENT <input type="radio"/>		DOUG HOFFER, BURLINGTON, DEM/PROG <input type="radio"/>		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	
MARK STEWART GREENSTEIN, BRATTLEBORO, EPIC <input type="radio"/>		H. BROOKE PAIGE, WASHINGTON, REPUBLICAN <input type="radio"/>		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	
MATT HILL, BURKE, LIBERTARIAN <input type="radio"/>		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>		(Write-in) <input type="radio"/>	
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Undefeated Redhawks end regular-season at Seawolves

Scooter MacMillan
Editor

With one regular season game remaining, Champlain Valley is in the driver's seat as the only undefeated team in Division 1 football.

The Redhawks travel to South Burlington High to face the No. 5 ranked Burlington/South Burlington Seawolves (6-1) at 7 p.m., this Friday, Oct. 18, to finish the regular season and see if they can keep their record unmarred.

Here's how CVU's antepenultimate and penultimate games went, setting up this Friday's finale.

Champlain Valley 41, Middlebury 7

CVU kept its win streak alive on Oct. 5, in a game that began at 10:30 a.m. for a rare morning start. The time of the game was changed to accommodate a memorial service remembering a longtime Middlebury coach and teacher, who died unexpectedly.

The day of the contest was born in a steady rain, but by the time the sun had reached the toddler stage, it was blue skies and friendly white clouds.

However, the field was still wet at game time, which may have contributed to the Redhawks' slow start. It took the team a bit longer than has been usual this year to get the offense rolling.

Initially, it looked like there wasn't going to be anything to slow down the Redhawks when Dylan Frere took the opening kickoff to the Middlebury 30-yard line, but the team



Photo by Calvin Morse

Nolan Walpole runs over Burr & Burton's Owen Cassan en route to a Redhawk's 41-3 home win last Thursday, Oct 10. Champlain Valley closes its regular season at South Burlington this Friday at 7 p.m.

stalled out for several downs. Then, Nolan Walpole warmed things up offensively with some punishing rushes to get the ball closer to the goal line.

Finally, on a busted play, CVU sophomore quarterback Orion Yates rolled out of the pocket and found senior Jacob Armstrong open. After making the catch, Armstrong avoided a tackler for a 28-yard touchdown.

It was almost four minutes into the game, a longer time than had been customary for CVU to start lighting up the scoreboard.

Things seemed to stay in low gear with Yates missing more passes than he has been wont to do. He could be heard calling for a dry ball at one point, possibly a sign the wet field was contributing to his misfires.

After the game, coach Rahn Fleming pointed to some divots in the field, naming which of his players had slipped at each torn-up chunk of grass, evidence of playing on a slippery field.

As the game progressed and things dried up relatively quickly, CVU's offense got fired up.

"Our defense saved our bacon until our offense remembered who we are," said Fleming after the game.

Just after the beginning of the second quarter, the unthinkable happened — Middlebury quarterback hit Tucker Morter for a 66-yard touchdown catch. The Tigers' tying score was the first time this season a team had pulled that close to the Redhawks.

However, that was it for scoring by the Tigers as CVU rolled on to put up 34 unanswered points for the final 41-7 tally.

The turning point may have been about four minutes into the second quarter. With their backs against their own goal line, the Tigers opted for some ill-conceived trickery. Trying multiple handoffs at a precarious position on the field ended up yielding a fumble in the Middlebury endzone.

Junior Dylan Terricciano fell on the ball to put CVU up 14-7. Seeming inspired, CVU was back to its scoring ways and from that point, pretty much rolling on to the win.

Senior receiver Billy Bates had a 17-yard touchdown catch to keep his one TD-per-game average intact. He conceded that the Redhawks offense may have been suffering from a case of nerves.

"There was a little nerves. We knew who we were playing. Middlebury — there's some history," Bates said. "We're confident in our team, confident in our offense, so our defense played very well. That helped us a lot, especially in the first half."

CVU's defense forced five turnovers and scored on four of them.

Senior receiver Jacob Armstrong had another strong game with three TD receptions for a second straight game.

Although he didn't score in this game, Walpole had another strong game, mixing up runs around the ends for sizeable gains with rushes up the middle where he often carried a handful of players before being brought down. The way he carries opposing players trying to tackle him, Walpole might consider charging bus fare.

Sophomore quarterback Orion Yates also admitted that the team, but him specifically, had been nervous to start. Still, he finished with four touchdown passes.

"From the second quarter on, we did what we needed to do, but had to get the jitters out first," Yates said.

He was missing more throws than usual with a number of balls sailing high, but he declined to blame the wet field, saying, "It's on me."

Yates did give credit to Middlebury's rush that was getting to him fast in the early going, making it harder to make his throws.

Being the only undefeated team left means that CVU has a target on its back, Fleming said. "That means we have to get better every game. Our mission hasn't changed. The boys will tell you this. We want to win the last game."

Winning the last game will mean winning the state title.

Champlain Valley 41, Burr & Burton 3

Just five days later at home, Champlain Valley played another game at an unusual time. Because of Yom Kippur this game was scheduled for 3 p.m. on Thursday. This game was the one the Redhawks had been waiting for since last season.

Fleming said they have a whiteboard in the weight room with two lists of how many days are left until two pivotal moments this year. One was an accounting of how many days until the beginning of camp when practices began.

"We had a second list. It was this many days until Burr & Burton, because it's been on our minds all year long," he said.

The Bulldogs have been on the Redhawks' minds because CVU only lost two games last year. The first and the last games of the season. Both of those losses came against Burr & Burton.

George Taylor said he felt he was playing with more motivation for this game.

"I came out here with a little more fire under me, so I was ready," he said. Taylor was ready enough to nab three touchdown passes. The senior said it was the most he's ever had, and it happened in a game where he really wanted it to happen, against the team that knocked the Redhawks out of the playoffs in the semifinals of the playoffs last year.

Taylor finished with a total of six catches for 111 yards.

The game was an even slower start than the previous weekend's game with Middlebury. The Bulldogs kicked a field goal with 2:40 left in the first quarter to go up 3-0. The Redhawks were behind in a game for the first time this season.

Education

Working on safety at Charlotte Central School this month

Naomi Strada
(Summarized by Tom Scatchard)

During the first week of October, members of the Charlotte Central School and Champlain Valley School District leadership and safety teams attended the Governor's Safety Conference. They learned about trends in school safety and reviewed the most up-to-date recommendations for practices and procedures.

The school district uses an interagency model to collaborate, standardize procedures and learn from the partners. Throughout October the school will practice these important protocols and share successes and learning opportunities.

During the week of Oct. 7, Charlotte Central School practiced a school lockdown. This process included scripts for classroom teachers to use at a developmentally appropriate level for students. Students heard prompts that it was a practice and to give their full attention to the adult they are with.

During the week of Oct. 14, students had the opportunity to learn about bus safety.

During the week of Oct. 21, the staff will practice using procedures for evacuating the school and relocating.

During the week of Oct. 28, the school will collaborate with the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department. Kindergarten-fourth grade students will learn about fire safety, and

the whole school will practice a fire drill.

The school district website (<https://tinyurl.com/ycktpvre>) has resources to help understand all that is going on behind the scenes.

Hazing, harassment and bullying roadshows for fifth-eighth grades

Charlotte Central School is committed to fostering a safe and supportive learning environment where every student is treated with respect. As part of this mission, for the next few weeks the school will instruct middle-level students on understanding bullying and harassment.

The staff proactively works with students to understand examples of the behavior and strategies for responding to and reporting incidents of alleged misconduct. The goal is empowering students with knowledge and tools for becoming allies and upstanders to build a strong, safe community at Charlotte Central School and beyond.

Rock paper scissors

On Friday, Oct. 4, Charlotte Central School started the day with the sixth-grade students leading the all-school meeting. Sixth graders participated on a committee and managed one portion of the production — the greeting, sharing of a short activity, a cooldown and displaying their art.

The game for that day was a school rock paper scissors game. Each grade level competed for a winner, and each grade level winner competed against the other winners to declare a school winner.

Friday also was the day for the Folino's staff appreciation luncheon. It was a chance for staff to spend a little time with the parents who helped coordinate.

Red-y and waiting



Photo by Alexandra Z. Lazar

This time of year, many trees are turning red. But Japanese maple leaves are red to begin with, then fade to yellow-orange when fall arrives.

CVU FOOTBALL

Continued from page 10

Once again it was Walpole who seemed to jump-start the CVU offense, but in this game he didn't just rush the ball to the vicinity of the goal. Twice he carried the ball into "the promised land," as his coach is fond of referring to the endzone.

A minute and a half into the second quarter, Walpole waltzed across the goal line untouched to finally put his team ahead 7-3. With 2:05 left in the first half, he scored another rushing touchdown for a 14-3 lead.

Taylor scored one of his TDs to give his Redhawks a 21-3 advantage just seconds before halftime.

After Taylor nabbed two more scoring passes in the third quarter, senior Daniel

Tuiqere rushed across the goal line from 12 yards out to put CVU up 41-3 with seven minutes left in the game.

Yates finished with 175 yards passing for three touchdowns. Walpole had 16 runs for 100 yards.

Although CVU handled Burr & Burton much better than it did in both chances last year, Fleming said his Redhawks faced a much different, much younger team than the team they faced last year and that won the state title.

Last year's Bulldogs were helmed at quarterback by Jack McCoy, who was named the Division I athlete of the year by the Free Press.

McCoy is the last of Middlebury coach Tom McCoy's three sons, all of whom played quarterback for the Bulldogs.



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Hi! Neighbor

Suzan White thrives at helping others find peace of mind

Phyl Newbeck
Contributor

After opening a box of Post-it notes which featured a design she had created, Suzan White had an epiphany. “I realized I could do better,” she said.

It was then that she decided to put aside her career in art for one in medicine. Today you can find her at the Howard Center where she is medical director for Howard’s Northern Vermont Outpatient and Spoke Services or at her personal practice, Tamarack Psychiatry.

White describes her career path as a meandering route.

“Those are always the best kind,” she said.

She went to college for art and worked for a time as a designer for the gift industry, creating artwork for posters, mailbox wraps and the aforementioned Post-it notes. She also worked as a snowboard instructor at Smugglers’ Notch.

After a car accident in the 1990s, White went to see an osteopath. The osteopath improved her back but told her that there was more healing that needed to be done.

“She could read something,” White said. “I’d had some adverse experiences growing up.”

White has become fascinated by the interface between mind and body. “I got



Photo by Finest Image Photography

Suzan White helps her clients better their mental health.

to a place where I was pretty darn healthy after a rough start,” she said, “and I thought I could help other people.”

At the age of 40, White headed to medical school for a degree in osteopathy. She was pleased to be able to keep up with the technology after spending decades in her art studio. Her initial plan had been to do hands-on, manual manipulation work, but she fell in love with psychiatry.

White was fascinated by the healing process and worked with shamans and South American curanderas. She has a close friendship with a Yaqui elder who lives in Arizona and taught her about indigenous ways of healing and relating to the planet. She also studied with an Australian aboriginal grandmother, spending three weeks in the Outback sleeping outside, singing, dancing and exploring sacred sites.

Before medical school, White lived on the Champlain Islands, but she moved to Charlotte in 2016.

“Years ago, we’d been driving on the road where our house is,” she said, “and joked that this was where we wanted to live.”

White relishes her views of the Adirondacks, the ability to road and gravel bike near her house and neighbors who she joins while walking their dogs.

Since 2016, White has specialized in addiction. She was a medical director for clinics in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties at the Northwest Medical Center where she started the Hope and Recovery Program. She subsequently moved to the Howard Center and opened a private practice in Shelburne. White said she chose the name Tamarack Psychiatry because trees are considered a bridge between two worlds.

“I act as a fulcrum for healing,” she said. “I’m partnering with my clients. It’s like I’m holding the light, and they have the map. I work to help people find their own authenticity and find the way to a better place.”

The osteopath who helped White has retired, and White just purchased her old office on the Milton-Georgia border where she plans to open a second branch of Tamarack Psychiatry.

“I’m really interested in creating a place that will be supportive of people who are caring for others in a behavioral health sense,” she said. “I’m excited about building a space where providers and clinicians can come together and discuss what they’re leaning and how to support one another.”

White enjoys painting and practices a variety of martial arts, but she continues to thrive in her work.

“I feel fortunate to be doing work I really care about, helping people lighten their load and change their stories,” she said. “One of my mentors told me that patients would want to tell me how sick they were, but it was my job to make them see how well they were.”

White believes that everyone wants to feel safe on the planet, and it’s her job to help them find that sense of safety.

In the Outdoors

Good places to get a smile, a bite to eat in Woodstock

Elizabeth Bassett
Contributor

Each time I visit Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park in Woodstock, I come away smiling.

About 90 minutes from Charlotte, the park is a fine destination for a day trip even as the season winds down. Twenty-five miles of walking trails, carriage roads and equestrian trails weave across the 550-acre forest and are open year-round. The Carriage Barn Visitor Center and Mansion are open only from Memorial Day through Oct. 31. Admission is free.

The over-arching theme of Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller is conservation and land stewardship. Woodstock native George Perkins Marsh, for whom the Marsh Life Science Building at the University of Vermont is named, was a pioneer environmentalist. Born in the mansion in 1801, he came of age in an era of great destruction on the New England landscape. Forests were being clear-cut for lumber and pasture. Resulting silt runoff polluted streams and rivers and suffocated fish. Sheep devoured grasses and ripped up roots, resulting in loss of the thin soils on hilltops. Marsh represented Vermont in Congress and served the U.S. government overseas, where he witnessed even more destruction on the land.

After more than a decade of public service, Marsh moved back to Woodstock to think and write. In 1864, he published “Man and Nature.” Its thesis is that civilizations decline when populations destroy their environments. The book was widely read and ultimately inspired the conservation movement, the



Courtesy photo

The beautiful and historical Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park is the only national park in Vermont.

creation of Arbor Day and the establishment of the national forest service.

After Marsh’s death, the mansion was sold to lawyer and railroad magnate Frederick Billings who had been deeply influenced by Marsh’s thinking. Billings established a progressive dairy farm and a professionally managed forest on the property. Because of Marsh, Billings and Rockefeller stewardship, a grove of 400-year-old hemlocks remains.

After Billings’ death, the mansion remained in the family until Frederick’s granddaughter, Mary French, married Laurence Spelman Rockefeller. The Rockefellers sustained Billings’ practices until the latter half of the 20th century when they created the adjacent

Billings Farms and Museum and later donated their home and land to the National Park Service.

Tours of the mansion, in season, are limited to 12 participants. Reservations can be made 60 days in advance at recreation.gov. If you would like a quick peak, the first floor of the mansion is open for limited viewings throughout the season. Admission to the park is always free and pets are allowed on a leash. A treasure trove of information and history is at nps.gov/mabi.

Billings Farm and Museum is an operating dairy farm and living museum of Vermont’s rural past. Billings Farm and the National Park share public parking and visitor

information space. At its visitor center, the farm shows a 30-minute orientation film, “A Place in the Land,” which introduces guests to the people and history of this shared estate.

Since you have driven this far, consider a side trip to Eshqua Bog Natural Area in Hartland. It is owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy and the Native Plant Trust.

“Eshqua Bog is a botanical wonderland of cold-climate holdovers, small packets of bog and a 2-acre fen from the post-glacial era 10,000 years ago,” The Nature Conservancy says.

Eshqua is about a 15-minute drive from the national park. The 40-acre sanctuary preserves bog plants like Labrador tea, cotton grass and pitcher plants. A number of orchids grow at Eshqua, including showy lady’s slippers blooming around June 20, yellow lady’s slippers blooming about two weeks prior to the showys, Northern bog orchids and green orchids.

Eshqua is definitely worth a detour, if not the journey, when hundreds of showys are in bloom. A 460-foot accessible boardwalk was recently added to the property. Good information as well as driving directions are at <https://tinyurl.com/mrysbaay>.

Before you head back to Charlotte, have a bite to eat. I’m a fan of Worthy Kitchen in Woodstock and its sibling Worthy Burger in South Royalton. Both source ingredients locally, as their website frames it, from “friends, families, neighbors, local farms and local breweries.” Their food is delicious. Trust me on this. Both Worthys are closed Monday through Wednesday (worthyvermont.com).



Silage homage

Photo by Lee Krohn

Mt. Philo gives a great perspective of a farmer harvesting corn for winter silage, a timeless agrarian autumn duty.

Sacred Hunter

Preparing for duck hunting in a cold, dark wind before dawn

Bradley Carleton
Contributor

The north wind is whistling through the tiny crack in the window frame in my bedroom. My eyes are still open. I am trying to fall asleep.

The tiny breeze from the crack caresses the curtains, making them dance a tender ballet. The whisper of the breeze comforts me. Before long I am asleep and dream of driving my duck boat across the bay in the dark with my longtime duck-hunting partner.

The sounds of hundreds of Canada geese can be heard lifting off the water, honking their displeasure at our intrusion. The waves lap at the sides of the boat, occasionally sending cold spray onto our faces, like tiny pellets of ice.

I am navigating by the stars and using land masses as my waypoints. A shooting star flames out toward the southern horizon. The fingernail moon hangs over the mountains to the west, outlining their silhouette.

My hunting partner is on the bow, swinging the spotlight from port to starboard, seeking definition from the shoreline. Minutes later we can make out the rocky ledges that line the entrance to the mouth of the river. As we cruise toward the ledges, we both know it is important to remember that we must make a sharp 270-degree U-turn around the tall



Photo by Bradley Carlton

Tossing duck decoys at dawn.

grasses, and then a sharp right into the first branch of the river.

Having traveled this route in the darkness many times, he will still remind me of the

submerged tree as we bear toward the second branch of the river. We hug the shoreline, mere yards away. Finally, at the last “Y,” we bear right again and winnow our way through the trees that have fallen over in the river, still attached to their root balls.

Finally, as we reach the mouth of the east branch, open water and a strong wind slaps our faces. This is where, in a low-water year, we must prepare to jump out of the shallow-draft duck boat and walk it over the sandbar.

Looking north over the bay, we can see the lights of the Canadian border towns. The wind is stronger here, as it has no landmass to break it up for over 3 miles. The water is cold and an occasional whitecap will lift us up as we hang on to the gunwales of the hull.

My partner is pulling the bow into the wind and I am pushing from the stern. When we reach deeper water, I tell him to jump in while I do a “water start,” which means that I am pulling the starter cord of the old engine while still standing in the water. The engine fires on the third pull, but the boat has already swung around to the starboard quarter, which now puts us sideways to the north wind.

Without hesitation, my partner jumps back out of the cockpit and steadies the bow while

I climb back in the stern. He then jumps in with an acrobatic leg swing akin to a pommel horse mount. I grab the handle of the motor and slam the transmission into gear, spinning the boat hard to port, back into the wind.

We work our way cautiously around the edge of the weed bed and then the corner of the eastern delta. The waves are now at our back. Aligning ourselves with the constellation, Orion’s Belt, my eyes drop down diagonally to Sirius, still bright over the eastern shore of the bay. To our west, we follow the twisting weed line of the refuge, where the hidden sloughs and abandoned oxbows of the old river once flowed.

Heading south by southwest, we spotlight the small opening in the distant weed bed where we have planned to set out our spread of decoys. Mallards, black ducks, wood ducks, a few green-winged teal and a small family of Canada geese off to one side.

We are now working against time. Legal shooting is in just 30 minutes, and we need to hide the boat. With the low-slung design of the Barnegat Bay Sneakboat of the early 1900s, our boat is covered in grass. Bow, sides, stern and cockpit. Lifting the camouflaged motor, we pull the boat into the nearby grasses and place a few large sticks and branches in random patterns across and around the bow, the stern and the decoy facing side.

His dog, a handsome, large-headed yellow Lab, is shaking in excitement as we hear whistling wings over our heads. Climbing into the cockpit, we load our guns and hunker down, waiting for the alarm on my phone to signal us that legal shooting time has arrived.

My alarm is set to a duck-call tone. Before it clicks into the last minute, once again, I hear the whistling wings above us. Then the raucous “quack, quack, quack” of the alarm. I sit up and look for the birds.

But it is the wind in the crack of the window frame. I am still in bed. The “ducks” that I hear are my phone’s alarm telling me it’s time to get up and get dressed for another great duck-hunting adventure with my buddy.

(Bradley Carleton is the founder of sacredhunter.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 at sacredhunter.substack.com.)



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Gardening

Studies show gardening helps physical, mental health

Nadie VanZandt
University of Vermont Extension

Research shows that spending time in nature enhances our physical and mental well-being, so it's no surprise that gardening offers similar benefits, including reducing stress, anxiety and negative thoughts. Gardening is an all-around wonderful activity for the body and soul.

Gardening offers access to sunlight, nature, physical activity and social interaction — each a key contributor to a healthy lifestyle.

Sunlight activates the formation of vitamin D, a vitamin essential for bone health and support of your immune system. At the same time, digging, raking, lifting and walking improve your physical strength and aerobic fitness. In addition, the fresh homegrown fruits and vegetables you harvest offer nutritious, clean food that further supports your overall health.

Gardening is a natural icebreaker, bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and walks of life. By sharing your garden's bounty, whether flowers or vegetables, you connect with others. This act of generosity promotes a sense of purpose and can lift your spirits.

Gardening teaches many life lessons in humility, patience, hard work, appreciation of nature and its life cycle and much more. British horticulturist Gertrude Jekyll said it best, noting that "A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust."

When taking a stroll around your neighborhood, do you stop to admire a well-tended front yard? Can you feel yourself relax? To garden is to make the world more beautiful, and beauty can be a powerful remedy against anger and stress.

For many years, therapeutic gardens have been incorporated in hospitals, to enhance the environment for patients, visitors and staff. Interestingly, Benjamin Rush, a

physician known as the "Father of American Psychiatry" and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was the first to record the positive effect of gardening on patients suffering from mental illness.

Since then, many studies have supported the beneficial role of gardening on well-being and general health. A recent Japanese study concluded that "viewing plants altered EEG recordings and reduced stress, fear, anger and sadness, as well as reducing blood pressure, pulse rate and muscle tension." In addition, an Australian study remarked that gardening was more effective than walking in reducing the risk of dementia, mental health problems, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers.

Not everyone has access to a plot of land, especially those living in apartment buildings or those confined in their homes. However, you are not limited to growing plants outdoors. Indoor gardening and growing plants in containers offer similar benefits. If you've ever grown an amaryllis for the holidays, you experienced the same exhilaration as watching a plant grow outside.

Fall is a great season to explore the health benefits of gardening. There is still time to plant bulbs, decorate your home with gourds and pumpkins, and plant shrubs, trees and perennials.

If you live alone, consider joining a garden club or community garden to make new friends. In Vermont, you can also visit the Vermont Garden Network at vtgardens.org where maps will help you locate a community garden near you.

As another option, think about volunteering to help the home-bound who cannot tend to their garden. You will both share a common interest and form a new relationship. The University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener program provides training on gardening for those interested in volunteering in their communities. Learn more at go.uvm.edu/mastergardener.

Gardening is a peaceful, meditative escape



Photo by Nadie VanZandt

Spending time in a garden can evoke peaceful feelings that nurture the mind and body and deepen one's connection with nature.

that nurtures mind and body while deepening your connection with nature. Why not give it a try?

(Nadie VanZandt is a University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener from Panton.)



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<p>Regular Selectboard Meeting Monday, Oct. 21, 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Conservation Commission Meeting Tuesday, Oct. 22, 7 p.m.</p> <p>Meeting of the Town's Elected Auditors Wednesday, Oct. 23, 4:30 p.m.</p> <p>Development Review Board Wednesday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m.</p>	<p>Special Planning Commission Meeting Thursday, Oct. 24, 7 p.m.</p> <p>Recreation Commission Meeting Monday, Nov. 4, 5:30 p.m.</p> <p>Regular Selectboard Meeting Monday, Nov. 4, 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Trails Committee Monthly Meeting Tuesday, Nov. 5, 6:30 p.m.</p>
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Gardening

Garlic from garden hard to beat, now's the time to plant

Jim Corven
University of Vermont Extension

Fresh garlic from your garden is hard to beat, and now is the time to get it started for next year. Let's look at a few tips for a successful garlic crop using science and some practical gardening knowledge.

We should always try to get the best variety for local conditions. Garlic includes two major groups, "hardneck" and "softneck." Both are good and can be grown in Vermont, but most people favor hardneck for its hardiness and great flavor. Softneck garlic stores well and is easy to grow.

Garlic is propagated from the cloves, so once you have a variety that does well, you can stay with it by keeping some of your biggest bulbs to plant for the next year. A good rule of thumb is that a pound of garlic bulbs (about 10) will have about 50 cloves.

Bigger cloves produce bigger, more vigorous plants. Unfortunately, most supermarket garlic has been treated with an anti-growth chemical so isn't good for planting. Source your seed garlic locally and then save your own each year.

Whether you purchased seed garlic or saved some of your own, mid-October until late-November is the time to plant,

depending on the weather. You can plant garlic until the soil starts to freeze or is covered with snow.

What's important is that the bulbs get just enough time to begin growing roots but not enough time to send up a shoot that gets frozen and dies back. This gives the garlic a necessary head start in early spring.

Garlic and other plants that are part of the Allium family (like onions and leeks) are heavy feeders so need deep, fertile, well-drained soils. A soil pH of 6-7 is ideal.

Since garlic is an early grower, it's best to put essential nutrients in the soil when planting. My practice is to apply a layer of compost (1 to 2 inches deep) over the bed surface if fertility is needed. A soil test should give you a sense of what nutrients may be needed. No need to work the compost in as nature will take care of that over the winter and create rich organic matter that garlic needs.

I plant a double row spaced a foot apart in raised beds by digging two parallel trenches to a depth of 4-5 inches. Plant your cloves, pointy end up and the flat, root end down (yes, it matters) spaced 6 inches apart. Cover the planted trench with soil and gently tamp it down. The top of each clove should be about 1-2 inches

below the surface when covered.

Be sure you mark the ends of each row. Finally, cover your garlic bed with about 4-6 inches of straw mulch, very gently tamped down so fall winds don't blow it away. The straw is very important to prevent freezing and heaving of the cloves during winter plus it will suppress spring weeds and keep the young plants moist during early summer growth.

There is great personal satisfaction in getting your garlic planted. It's a wonderful feeling knowing that your first garden crop of the next year is sown and already started when the first snows are falling!

(Jim Corven is a University of Vermont Extension master gardener from Mount Holly.)



Photos by Jim Corven

After planting garlic, cover the garlic bed with about 4-6 inches of straw mulch, which prevents freezing and heaving of the cloves during winter and suppresses spring weeds and keeps the young plants moist during early summer growth.



Garlic cloves should be planted, pointy end up and the flat, root end down, and spaced 6 inches apart with the top of each clove about 1-2 inches below the surface when covered with soil.

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The Charlotte News

Gardening

Don't put up green thumb — ways to extend the season

Deborah J. Benoit
University of Vermont Extension

We've probably all run out to the garden on a fall evening as the temperature drops and a frost warning is issued. We throw a sheet over our fruit-covered tomato plants to eek just a little more growing time from the rapidly evaporating season. Ghostly visions of sheet-covered tomato plants aside, there are other ways to prolong the harvest.

Knowing the average first frost date in fall for your location can help you decide when to put your garden to bed or make preparations to extend the growing season. You can find the average first frost date for your location at garden.org/apps/frost-dates.

Once you've determined your average first frost date, look around your garden. What plants are still productive? Those growing in pots can be moved inside a greenhouse or into an enclosed porch for protection from the cold.

For in-ground plants, there are several alternatives to extend the growing season. There is, of course, the tried-and-true covering of plants like tomatoes with old sheets or blankets when frost is forecast. Be sure to cover completely to prevent damage to foliage and fruit. Remove the covering in the morning to allow access to the sun's warmth and light.

A convenient alternative, if you have one handy, is to invert a cardboard box over smaller plants, completely covering them, with the open end of the box resting on the ground. This creates a protective structure around the plant that is easily removed in the morning.

Tomato cages can be encircled with clear plastic. Drive stakes into the ground just outside the plant's perimeter and wrap plastic around the stakes and over the top, enclosing



Photo by University of Vermont Extension community horticulture

When cold temperatures and frost are in the forecast, low tunnels are one option for gardeners to consider for protecting plants and extending the growing season.

the plant without touching the foliage. Allow a place that can be opened during the day to vent excess heat.

If you'd rather not build a tomato cover, there are pop-up plastic plant covers available for purchase online or at garden supply stores.

To protect multiple low-growing plants, try floating row covers. Place a length of garden fabric over plants to protect against the cold. Hold edges in place with garden staples or weights. Remove the cover during warm days.

Garden fabric is made of spun-bonded polyester. It allows light and water to penetrate and comes in various weights.

Choose a heavier weight to insulate against the cold. As temperatures drop further, plastic sheeting can be added on top of the garden fabric, adding additional insulation.

For taller plants, consider using low tunnels. They function like floating row covers, but with a series of inverted u-shaped supports raising the fabric above the plants. At the end of the row, the fabric drapes to the ground, closing the tunnel. To prevent over-heating on warm days, the ends can be opened, and then closed again as the temperature drops.

If you're growing cold-hardy varieties of salad greens (kale, Swiss chard, spinach) or root crops (carrots, beets) in a raised bed, you can add a cold frame to extend the harvest season further into the fall.

A cold frame is a box with a transparent cover, hinged so that it can be opened as needed to vent excess heat. At night, the closed cover protects plants. For best results, it should be in a south-facing location in direct sunlight.

Even cold-hardy varieties won't continue to grow once temperatures drop. They'll eventually go dormant, but you can still harvest leaves and roots for a time.

These techniques can be used again in the spring to jump-start your gardening year.

For more information on extending the growing season, see go.uvm.edu/season.

(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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Community Roundup

Two free grant workshops for dairy producers planned

Several funding opportunities are available to Vermont dairy producers to improve infrastructure, purchase equipment and make on-farm improvements for long-term farm viability and climate and economic resilience.



To help producers learn about grants and other types of funding, the University of Vermont Extension dairy team will sponsor free workshops at two locations. The Oct. 28 workshop will take place at the Peoples Trust Company, 59 Franklin Park West, St. Albans. It will be repeated at the University of Vermont Extension office, 23 Pond Lane, Suite. 300, Middlebury, on Oct. 30.

Both workshops will run 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. with lunch included. At the Middlebury site, lunch is courtesy of the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition.

Registration is required by Oct. 27 at go.uvm.edu/dairy-funding.

Each workshop will begin with an overview of grants and funding opportunities available through Vermont

agencies, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the New England Dairy Business Innovation Center. Presenters will review the different avenues to apply for funding, the 2024-25 schedule and the types of projects eligible for funding with a special focus on climate-smart agriculture.

They also will share tips for navigating the application process, recommend resources for technical assistance and discuss how to collect supporting data and documentation for projects. In addition, they will provide guidance for participants to help them develop an effective mission and purpose statement for their business for use on any application.

Southeast blood collection disrupted; hurricane threat persists

The American Red Cross continues to work to restock critically needed blood products uncollected due to the ongoing impact of Hurricane Helene's devastation in the Southeast. Donors outside of affected areas are encouraged to make



an appointment to give now and help keep the blood supply stable in the weeks to come.

Since making landfall, the storm and its aftermath have led to the cancellation of more than 100 blood drives, causing thousands of blood and platelet donations to go uncollected. For so many people living with urgent medical care needs, blood transfusions are essential, and donations in the Southeast are key to keeping our nationwide network stocked. The Red Cross operates through a national inventory with the ability to move blood wherever and whenever it is needed most.

As a thank-you, all who come to give through Oct. 31 will receive a \$10 Amazon.com gift card by email, plus be automatically entered for a chance to win one of three \$5,000 gift cards. For full details, visit RedCrossBlood.org/Treat.

Upcoming blood donation opportunities in Chittenden County:

• Charlotte

Oct. 17, 1:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m., Charlotte Senior Center, 212 Ferry Road

• Essex Junction

Oct. 23, 12:30 p.m.-5 p.m., Essex Alliance Church Community Building, 37 Old Stage Road

Oct. 26, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., The Essex Resort

& Spa, The Mansion, 70 Essex Way
• Milton

Oct. 31, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Milton High School, 17 Rebecca Lander Drive.

Champlain Orchards unveils initiative to combat hunger in the Northeast

Champlain Orchards, an eco-certified apple orchard, has launched Cider for Good, a mission to tackle hunger in local communities. For every 4-pack of Champlain Orchards hard cider sold, the orchard will donate a quarter pound of its ecologically grown apples to regional food banks, ensuring fresh, nutritious support for those in need.



Champlain Orchards cultivates over 175 fruit varieties using regenerative practices.

Cider for Good will run year-round across Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey and Delaware.

Calendar

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

Ski area plane crashes talk Thursday, Oct. 17, 6:30 p.m.

Vermont Ski and Snowboard Museum presents Tragedy in the Green Mountains; a History of Plane Crashes within Ski Area Boundaries at the Vermont Ski and Snowboard Museum in Stowe. There are 13 known aircraft crashes inside Vermont ski area boundaries, including Jay Peak, Pico, Magic Mountain, Mt. Snow, Stowe and Killington. The stories of these crashes will be told by Stowe Mountain Resort historian Brian Lindner using photographs and information pulled from official government files. Doors will open at 6 p.m. and guests are invited to enjoy the exhibits and socialize. The discussion begins at 6:30 p.m. Admission is \$10.

Matching short story to art Friday, Oct. 18, 6-7 p.m.

A lecture, The Celestial Railroad: Nathaniel Hawthorne and American Art, at the Shelburne Museum will look at Hawthorne's short story "The Celestial Railroad." Published in 1843, the story offers a skeptical view of the era's new means of transport. With a demon manning the engine, and a reassuring conductor named Mr. Smooth-It-Away describing the sights, the train sets out from the City of Destruction, across the Valley of Despond, on its way to the Celestial City. In this illustrated lecture by Alexander Nemerov, one of America's leading art historians, learn how Hawthorne's views match — and do not match — the visions of the railroad in the paintings of American artists of his era. Nemerov is a professor at Stanford University.

Craft fair & raffle

Saturday, Oct. 19, 9 a.m.

St. Peter's Church in Vergennes will host a craft fair, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at the Parish Hall (85 South Maple St.). The craft fair will also include a raffle, bake sale and luncheon. Crafters will sell a variety of handcrafted items including jams, jellies, hats, mittens, sweaters, soaps, candles, jewelry, knitted and quilted items, wood toys and ornaments. The bake sale will include appetizers, pies, breads and a variety of treats that will tempt your taste buds. Enjoy a lunch while visiting with friends. This is a fundraiser is to support the St. Peter's Cemetery Association's quest to repair stones and do other work in the cemetery.

Sneaker Soiree

Saturday, Oct. 19, 6-10 p.m.

Girls on the Run Vermont will



Photo by Nina Lesser Goldsmith

The Women's Rally is 10 a.m., Nov. 2, in Montpelier. Nikkie Kent is pregnant with her third child at the event in 2017.

celebrate its 25th anniversary with a Sneaker Soiree, which should be the most comfortable cocktail party in town. Suggested attire is semi-formal and, of course, your favorite sneakers. This 18-and-older event will be held in Burlington Beer Company's new event space at 180 Flynn Avenue in Burlington. There will be a silent auction including getaways, lift tickets, spa treatments, yoga packages, custom artwork and hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, an anniversary dessert bar and music spun by DJ Love Doctor. For information and tickets, visit gotrvt.org/sneaker-soiree. Girls on the Run Vermont strives to help the social, emotional and physical wellbeing of third-eighth girls facing societal pressures at a particularly vulnerable part of childhood.

Battle of Cedar Creek talk

Sunday, Oct. 20, 2 p.m.

On Oct. 19, 1864, a surprise attack by Confederate troops in the Shenandoah Valley at Cedar Creek

appeared to be a solid victory for the South. Thanks to the heroic efforts of the Vermont's 8th Regiment, the Union reclaimed the battlefield. In a talk entitled Vermont and the Battle of Cedar Creek at the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum, Mike Soules will describe the role of Vermonters in the battle, the consequences of the battle, as well as the significance of the Cedar Creek Room in our state capitol.

'Groomed'

Tuesday, Oct. 22, 7 p.m.

The play "Groomed" will be performed in the Shelburne Town Hall 7 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 22. Actor and playwright Patrick Sandford has performed this play over 90 times in Britain and elsewhere. Three narratives of a betrayed schoolboy, a Japanese soldier and the inventor of the saxophone show how a story can save your life. "Groomed" won three Outstanding Theatre awards at the Brighton Festival Fringe, was

performed at the Vatican in 2023 and for a month at the Soho Theatre in London.

Spirits of Rokeby

Friday & Saturday, Oct. 25 & 26

Rokeby Museum is presenting a new production inspired by the spiritualist history at the museum. Ticket holders will gather for a drink and a short talk on Victorian Spiritualism before entering the historic home, where actors will guide them through participatory dramatization, recreating séances based on historical transcripts and other accounts. Friday performances are every 45 minutes starting at 5 p.m. and Saturday's start at 4 p.m. The production imagines a visit to Rokeby by Achsa Sprague, Vermont native and nationally known medium. \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members. Available at <https://tinyurl.com/59vpcr75>.

October bird monitoring walk

Saturday, Oct. 26, 8-9 a.m.

All birders (current, experienced, newbie and would-be) are welcome. Join the Birds of Vermont Museum's monthly monitoring walk outdoors on the museum's trails in forest and meadow. Most fun for adults and older children. Bring your own binoculars and dress for the weather. Tick repellent and water bottles are recommended. Suggested donation \$10-\$15. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/pxxvux58>.

Bach concerts

Saturday & Sunday, Oct. 26 & 27

Capital City Concerts presents two concerts of instrumental works of J.S. Bach on Saturday, Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Church of Montpelier and on Sunday, Oct. 27, 4 p.m. in Burlington at the Cathedral of Saint Paul. Pianist Jeewon Park, violinist Jeffrey Multer, cellist Edward Arron, and flutist Karen Kevra will perform J.S. Bach's Trio Sonata from the Musical Offering, the Italian Concerto and the Cello Suite No. 1 in G major and flutist Jillian Reed will perform with her former teacher Karen Kevra the Trio Sonata in G major for two flutes and continuo. Tickets (\$15 students, \$30 adults) for both concerts will be available at the door or in advance at capitalcityconcerts.org.

Tree ID for birders

Sunday, Oct. 27, 10 a.m.-noon

Have you ever noticed a bird, then wondered what kind of tree it was in, or why it was there? Take a walk at the Birds of Vermont Museum to explore tree identification with forester

CALENDAR Continued from page 20

Kathleen Stutzman. Open to folks with any and all levels of familiarity with trees or birds. Suggested donation \$10-\$30. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/ytwuhmmb>.

Hinesburg Artist Series Sunday, Oct. 27, 4 p.m.

The Hinesburg Artist Series will present a concert featuring the Hinesburg Community Band and the South County Chorus at Champlain Valley Union High School. The South County Chorus will perform selections by Pinkzebra, Victor Johnson, the spiritual "Elijah Rock" and an arrangement of "Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll. The Hinesburg Community Band will perform music by Brian Balmage, Carol Chambers, Jon Bubber and Gustav Holst's "First Suite in E-flat." While the concert is free, donations are gratefully accepted. For more info visit hinesburgartistseries.org.

Coffee & muffins happy hour Friday, Nov. 1, 8:30-10 a.m.

Free coffee and muffins happy hour on Friday, Nov. 1, 8:30-10 a.m. Free iced coffee, hot coffee, tea and homemade muffins at the Charlotte Grange, 2858 Spear St. All are welcome.

Vermont women's rally Saturday, Nov. 2, 10 a.m.

A Vermont women's rally will be held on the Statehouse lawn in Montpelier on Nov. 2, 10 a.m. This event will be a sister event to the National Women's March in Washington, D.C., on that day. State parking lots will be open and free for public parking. Musicians Patti Casey and Dwight and Nicole will perform. Melinda Moulton will emcee the event. Beverly Little Thunder and her daughter Lushanya Echeverria, Kiah Morris, Bianca Stone, Kennedy Jansen and



Photo by Tasha Hurley

Flutist Jillian Reed will perform in concerts of instrumental works of J.S. Bach on Saturday, Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m., at the Unitarian Church of Montpelier and on Sunday, Oct. 27, 4 p.m., in Burlington at the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

Jayna Ahsaf will speak. This event highlights the power of women to fight against discrimination and to support women's human rights. Vermont was one of the first states to ratify in its Constitution reproductive freedom and liberty and support gay marriage. Vermont has been a leader in the equal rights movement for decades.

Clothing for migrant farmworkers Saturday-Wednesday, Nov. 2-6

The Charlotte Grange is holding a clothing drive for local migrant farmworkers. Some specific clothes being sought for donation include machine-washable hoodie sweatshirts, pants (denim, canvas), work clothes, vests (fleece or heavy cloth), jackets, thermal underwear. Please: No button-down shirts, polo shirts or wool items of any kind. For information call 802-355-1478.

Library Talk**Finding both-and solutions talk at Charlotte Library**

Margaret Woodruff
Contributor

Author and educator Susan Clark will lead a discussion at the Charlotte Library on Tuesday, Oct. 29, at 7 p.m. on Finding Both-And Solutions to Communities' Hard Questions. All are invited to enjoy this presentation, including an informal activity to explore ideas, time for discussion, plus cookies.

At a time when political polarization is high, Americans are increasingly struggling to solve problems together and keep conversations constructive, whether at the community level, with neighbors or even with family and friends.

"What is it about human nature that makes us tend to take sides? There's a lot of interesting research on why humans prefer 'either-or' thinking," said Clark. "And what's really exciting is what we can do to get beyond it."

This presentation will review recent research on why well-intended problem solving often goes wrong. Participants will explore a powerful tool that can help groups work toward outcomes that honor diverging viewpoints.

"Understanding the patterns at work really helps," said Clark. "It can make our interactions more productive, creative, and even more fun."

Sally Kerschner of the Charlotte Congregational Church said she had heard Clark present at a recent conference given by the Vermont Council on Rural Development, and was impressed. "Susan will be ideal for this workshop on effective participation in community decisions, a strong Vermont tradition that is critical to



Courtesy photo

Susan Clark will lead a discussion on Tuesday, Oct. 29, 7 p.m., on getting past 'either-or' thinking on difficult issues.

our future."

The event is co-sponsored by the Charlotte Library and the Social Justice Ministry of the Charlotte Congregational Church in an effort to support meaningful conversations about community, governance and improving the lives of those in Charlotte and surrounding towns.

Clark is a facilitator, educator and the co-author of books, including "Slow Democracy: Rediscovering Community, Bringing Decision Making Back Home." She also serves as town moderator of Middlesex.

To Advertise in

The Charlotte News

Contact ads@TheCharlotteNews.org

For a fifth year the library is looking for pumpkin artists

Margaret Woodruff
Director

Join Jessica Sriver and other jack-o-lantern fans for pumpkin carving on the library porch Saturday, Oct. 26, 10 a.m.-noon.

The carved pumpkins will be part of the fifth annual jack-o-lantern display on the town green.

Already have a carved pumpkin you would like to be a part of the display?

Drop it off by Wednesday, Oct. 30, to be included. Jack-o-lanterns will be lit at dusk on Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 30 and 31.

When the display comes down, the jack-o'-lanterns are fed to the pigs at Golden Apple Farm.

Trick or treat

Thursday, Oct. 31, 5-7 p.m.

On Halloween, stop by the library porch for a treat.

Wildcard Wednesdays

Wednesdays, thru Nov. 20, 2-3:30 p.m.

Who knows what Wednesday will bring? Science sessions? Crafts and games? Sign up and show up on Wednesdays to join in the fun activities for kids fourth grade and up. For registration information, contact the library at info@charlottepubliclibrary.org. Wednesday, Oct. 30, first responders celebration — help bake treats and make cards to thank Charlotte's first responders; Oct. 30, Halloween happening — pumpkin carving for Halloween with Jessica Sriver; and Nov. 6 & 13, get messy — join artist and art therapist Megan McSwain Mann for some art-making fun.

'Gather,' Charlotte Senior Center

Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1 p.m.

There will be a discussion of the book "Gather" at the senior center as part of Vermont Reads. See the Charlotte Senior Center calendar for more.

Programs for kids

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

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.

Cooking book club

Monday, Oct. 21, 5:30-7 p.m.

In Japanese, the adage "shokuyoku no aki" (食欲の秋), or "autumn is the season for eating," means that our taste buds anticipate the foods and flavors of fall. Join the autumn appetite cooking book club session, bring your appetite and a favorite fall dish to share. If you need ideas, the library has a selection of cookbooks featuring fall recipes to inspire you. Please RSVP to margaret@charlottepubliclibrary.org, to let us know you're coming.

Men's book group

Wednesday, Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m.

In "The Elegance of the Hedgehog," readers are in the center of Paris in an elegant apartment building inhabited by bourgeois families. Renée, the concierge, is witness to the lavish but vacuous lives of her numerous employers. Outwardly she conforms to every stereotype of the concierge: fat, cantankerous,



Courtesy photo

The carved pumpkins will be part of the fifth annual jack-o-lantern display on the town green.

addicted to television. Yet, unbeknownst to her employers, Renée is a cultured autodidact who adores art, philosophy, music and Japanese culture. With humor and intelligence, she scrutinizes the lives of the building's tenants, who for their part are barely aware of her existence. Copies available the library circulation desk. Join the conversation at the library or on Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/bde3bktn>.

Thursday night book club

Thursday, Oct. 24, 7:30 p.m.

It's Maine, 1789, in "Frozen River." When the Kennebec River freezes, entombing a man in the ice, Martha Ballard is summoned to examine the body and determine cause of death. As a midwife and healer, she is privy to much of what goes on behind closed doors in Hallowell. Her diary is a record of every birth and death, crime and debacle that unfolds in the close-knit community. Martha is forced to investigate the shocking murder on her own. Copies available at the circulation desk. Join on Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/49awjb8j>.

Mystery book group

Monday, Oct. 28, 10 a.m.

It's Sept. 29, 1913, and the steamship Dresden is halfway between Belgium and England in "The Mysterious Case of Rudolf Diesel." On board is one of the most famous men in the world, Rudolf Diesel, whose new internal combustion engine is on the verge of revolutionizing global industry forever. But Diesel never arrives at his destination. He vanishes during the night and headlines around the world wonder if it was an accident, suicide or murder. Copies available at the library circulation desk.

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

Wednesday, Nov. 20, 1 p.m.

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

Library contact information:

Margaret Woodruff, director
Cheryl Sloan, youth services librarian
Susanna Kahn, tech librarian
Phone: 802-425-3864
Email: info@charlottepubliclibrary.org
For the latest information about programs, books and activity kits, sign up for the library's newsletter at <https://tinyurl.com/n5usd25r>.

The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets the first Thursday of each month at 6 p.m., unless otherwise rescheduled following the opening meeting law. Contact the library or visit the library website (charlottepubliclibrary.org) for more information.

Senior Center News

Rotary bike racks: That's the way senior center rolls

Lori York
Director

Check out the new bike rack at the senior center. The senior center is grateful to the Charlotte-Shelburne-Hinesburg Rotary club for their recent donation of this bike rack.

Many seniors bike to the senior center to attend programming. This bike rack has larger spacing to allow e-bikes to also be locked in the rack.

Community

October art exhibit

For the month of October, the Essex Art League will exhibit their artwork at the Senior Center. The Essex Art League's mission is to have an exchange of ideas among Vermont visual artists and to educate and encourage each other through monthly speakers, weekly plein air sessions, exhibitions and social events.

'Gather' book discussion

Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1 p.m.

Ron Miller leads an informal discussion of "Gather" by Kenneth M. Cadow at the Charlotte Senior Center. This program is open to all ages and focuses on the connections across generations. Copies of the book are available at the Charlotte Library. Miller is a historian and educator at the University of Vermont. Free. To register, call 802-425-6345.

Red Cross Blood Drive

Thursday, Oct. 17, 1:30-6:30 p.m.

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

Death Café

Wednesday, Oct. 23, 4-5 p.m.

Join this group on the fourth Wednesday of the month as they come together in human fellowship to celebrate life by voicing concerns, share 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. Looking forward to sharing the journey and building community together. Free, but registration required by calling (802) 425-6345.

Exercise

Bone Builders

**Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.,
Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. &
Fridays, 11 a.m.-noon**

RSVP Bone Builders, a program of United Way of Northwest Vermont, is a no-impact, weight-training program designed to prevent and even reverse the negative effects of osteoporosis in older adults. Bone Builders consists of a warm-up, balance exercises, arm and leg exercises and a cool down with stretching. Free. No registration required, but there is

paperwork to complete for the RSVP Bone Builders program.

Pilates fitness

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

Join Phyllis Bartling in this pilates class, geared to folks 55+. This class is challenging and includes upper-body strength work with hand weights and mat exercises while working on core muscles to improve balance, strength and posture. \$10 a class. No registration required.

Tai chi

Thursdays, 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. Questions? Contact belizahammer@hotmail.com. \$10 a class. No registration required.

Walking group

Thursday, Oct. 24, 9 a.m.

Enjoy the beauty of nature. Come walk at a gentle pace with other seniors. The group will meet each month for a congenial non-strenuous walk. Location to be determined based on conditions of the local walks. Meet at 9 a.m. in the foyer at the Charlotte Senior Center. Free. For questions or to register, contact Penny Burman at 916-753-7279.

Yoga strength-building practice

Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-noon

Heidi Kvasnak leads an integrative practice that builds strength and stability while maintaining a sense of ease and spaciousness in both body and mind. The group 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 and up from the floor with or without props. \$10 a class. No registration required.

Languages

French conversation

Mondays, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Parlez-vous français? This is an intermediate group of French speakers who meet weekly for French conversation. As the group grows, there may be opportunities to split according to skill levels. Questions? Contact Roberta Whitmore at robertawhitmore27@gmail.com. Free. No registration required.

German conversation

Tuesdays, 3-4 p.m.

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

Spanish conversation

Tuesdays, 10-11 a.m.

?Hablas español? This group meets



Photo by Lori York

Members of the Charlotte-Shelburne-Hinesburg Rotary celebrate the installation of the new bike rack at the Charlotte Senior Center.

weekly. At each session one member of the group will announce the topic of conversation for the following week. Come join our group for conversation in Spanish. Questions? Contact Bernice Wesseling at bernice.wesseling@uvm.edu. Free. No registration required.

Programs

Brain games

Fridays, 2-4 p.m.

There are many ways adults can stimulate their brains to increase mental health, improve memory skills and contribute to overall well-being. Research finds that positive interaction with others and engagement in stimulating group activities sharpens cognition and increases memory ability. Come play various games, share laughter and enjoy one another's company. Some games are available, but also feel free to bring your own games. Free. No registration required.

Duplicate bridge

Mondays, 12:30-4 p.m.

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

Shape-note singing

Sunday, Oct. 27, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Traditional a capella, four-part harmony sung for the joy of singing, not as a practice for performance. Search "sacred harp" on YouTube for examples, then come and sing. Introduction to shape notes and scales is recommended and offered 30 minutes before each fourth Sunday

singing. The first hour will be sacred-harp singing and the second hour will be singing from an alternate shape-note book. Books will be provided. For questions or to schedule your introduction to shape-notes and scales, contact Kerry Cullinan at kclynxvt@gmail.com.

Shanghai mahjong

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

New 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.

Meals

Menus are posted on the website: charlotteseniorcentervt.org.

Monday lunches

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

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. Interested in receiving a weekly reminder about what is happening? Sign up for the email newsletters at charlotteseniorcentervt.org. The "Week Ahead" email is sent out on Friday mornings with activities, lunch menus and special programs for the upcoming week.

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

Follow the senior center on Facebook or Instagram at charlotteseniorcentervt.

Write Ingredients

Halloween is for youngsters – and for patrons of senior center

Susan Ohanian
Contributor

For those who think Halloween is just for youngsters, I'd just point out that my sister is 89 and hands out treats from the front porch of a house in a very busy neighborhood in northern California.

This year, her Halloween shirt's slogan is: "They didn't get all the witches in Salem."

When I was a child, my family handed out treats. One year we ran out and turned off the lights so no one would knock. The next year, determined to prevent any such misfortune, Dad bought a case of candy corn.

October starts a wonderful time at the Charlotte Senior Center. It used to be fudge season, when a senior center stalwart made a huge batch of fudge every year and gave it out to the world.

At the beginning of October, volunteers started preparing individual bags filled with her fudge. Word got out and this fudge extravaganza attracted lots of people who never set foot in the senior center. They came in every year to get that bag of fudge, discovering what a nice place this is. Many lingered — and returned.

Serving pumpkin cookies at Monday Munch on Oct. 14, volunteer cooks began the senior center Halloween food fest. The menu for Oct. 28 is to be announced, but they promise a Halloween theme.

On the topic of Halloween themes, the Washington Post offered, "It's almost Halloween and 'feetloaf' is already giving us nightmares."

To amuse his five children, someone used raw ground meat to sculpt very realistic feet with rounded slivers of onion supplying perfectly formed ghostly, grisly toenails. It's definitely ghoulish.



Adobe stock photo

You can see those feet at <https://tinyurl.com/2ufkjphr>.

For a very informative, non-macabre investigation of the sugar content of Halloween candy, follow this link <https://tinyurl.com/427yd5cp>. You don't need to be a New York Times subscriber to access the article.

Since this is also the season of campaigning for the most important job in the U.S., take a look at how Republicans and Democrats eat during the campaign season at <https://wapo.st/3U6bbJu>.

Since January 2023, the Trump campaign has spent \$31,000 at McDonald's, with the Harris group clocking in at \$4,000. Trump spent \$200,000 at Chick-Fil-A, Democrats \$40,000. For Democrats, Panera has been the most popular fast-casual food spot.

Forget the politics for a moment and

consider pumpkin, which The New York Times rightly labels "autumn's answer for winter."

Nutrition experts tell us that the pumpkin is a nutrient-dense food, delivering a lot of nutrition with relatively few calories. Open a can of pumpkin (puree, not pumpkin pie filling, which has a lot of sugar), eat one cupful and you'll get a good supply of vitamin A, vitamin K, vitamin E and vitamins B6 and C. Plus magnesium, riboflavin, iron and potassium. That one cup also delivers 25 percent of the fiber you need for the day.

Those large pumpkins sold for jack-o'-lanterns aren't good for eating, but you can scoop out the seeds and roast them for a good snack.

For carving that jack-o'-lantern, take a look at the work of this expert pumpkin sculptor (<https://tinyurl.com/ymnbf4x8>), a

young woman in charge of the carving of nearly 7,000 pumpkins at the Great Jack-O'-Lantern Blaze at Van Cortland Manor in Croton-on-Hudson, New York.

The CBS News video offers practical advice as well as artistic skill, noting that it's best to first slice off the bottom of the pumpkin.

You don't have to travel to the vicinity of New York City for a good pumpkin display. New England Wanderlust (<https://newenglandwanderlust.com/vermont-pumpkin-patches>) notes that Vermont is one of the most fun New England states for hunting down the perfect pumpkin in the fall season and offers a list of the 17 best Vermont pumpkin patches and fall farm stands. From Bennington to Shelburne, the article offers a detailed list and proposes that, whether you want a pumpkin or the donuts all the sites offer, this is a trip to take.

Years ago in upstate New York, I taught a classful of 22 third graders labeled by lots of documents as "non-readers." From the first day of the month, October was get-ready-for-Halloween month in our classroom, exploring stories, poetry and nonfiction on October-subject matter.

Outside our classroom door, a strip of adding machine tape stretched down the hallway. Kids put on interesting words they found in their reading. To be eligible to post a new word, the student first had to read all the previous words.

Classmates stood by to cheer on the performance. Kids came from around the school to watch that word list grow.

Monday Munch

Oct. 21, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Chili, coleslaw, corn muffins and pumpkin cookies.

Oct 28 Halloween theme

TBA.

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