

# The Charlotte News

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## Redhawks soar as playoffs begin

Scooter MacMillan  
 Editor

After beating the Burlington-South Burlington Seawolves 33-0 on Friday, Oct. 18, the Champlain Valley Union High football team finished the regular season unblemished by any losses.

And they continued that winning streak in convincing fashion in the first round of the Division 1 playoffs with a 63-6 win over Mount Anthony last Saturday, Oct. 26.

Now, Champlain Valley prepares to face the Middlebury Union High Tigers at 1 p.m. this Saturday, Nov. 2, at home.

The Redhawks were dominating all season against all challengers. They outscored their eight opponents during the regular season by a total of 331 points to 35, for an average score per game of more than 41 points to less than 5 points for the other side. Three of their eight victories were shutouts.

Although his team is satisfied, coach Rahn Fleming said, they're not satiated.

"We're living in a paradox: We have reason to be proud, and we have reason to be humble," Fleming told his players in a recent email. "When you put those two on balance, it's got to be humble over pride."

### Champlain Valley 33, Burlington/South Burlington 0

Taking the opening kickoff at South Burlington, Champlain Valley started the game following its usual script, scoring on its first possession. However, this game varied from the past in taking them at least 10 plays to score. Redhawks' fans have grown accustomed to seeing them score on their first set of downs. Almost seven minutes had passed in the first quarter before the Redhawks got on the scoreboard, an almost interminable length of time by this season's standard.

From the 9-yard line, senior running back Nolan Walpole broke through a seemingly impenetrable wall of Seahawk defenders, scampering untouched for the last

CVU FOOTBALL continued on page 2



Photo by Mike Yantachka

From left, Sen. Peter Welch, Sarah Waring of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Ted Brady, executive director of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns celebrate Charlotte's piloting of loan program in funding for town garage solar power panels.

## State officials tout innovative garage solar power funding

Scooter MacMillan  
 Editor

On Monday, the Vermont Bond Bank announced it had received \$40 million for zero-interest funding from the federal government to help municipalities and school districts with low-interest loans for projects that address climate change.

And the Bond Bank chose to make the announcement at the new Charlotte Town Garage.

Around 40 people attended a ceremony that included U.S. Sen. Peter Welch; Sarah Waring, Vermont and New Hampshire director of rural development for the U.S. Department of Agriculture; representatives of U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders and U.S. Rep. Rebecca Balint; and members of the Charlotte Selectboard.

Michael Gaughan, the executive director of the Bond Bank, said the town garage was chosen as the site for the announcement because the financing for the solar panels on the garage roof was a pilot project for the type of financing the funding will provide.

The solar panels were paid for with a 2-percent loan. It was the first project funded by the Rural Energy Savings Program.

The officials were thrilled with the garage because, besides the solar panels on the roof, there is the geothermal heating. Many of those gathered commented on how comfortable the garage was with heat radiating up from the floor.

It was a nice event to show off how toasty Charlotte's new garage felt on a chilly day when many attendees who came from out of town had

woken up to the first snow of the season.

The town garage project was extremely helpful, Gaughan said, and he expressed his appreciation for selectboard chair Jim Faulkner facilitating the solar panels as a pilot program for the Bond Bank's initiative for "green lending programs."

"We did the solar here as kind of a pilot project to sort of figure out how everything worked and see what the impact would be," Gaughan said.

American Rescue Plan Act funds, commonly referred to as ARPA dollars, has done energy assessments around the state. "So, we're just going to be able to kind of follow that wake and do projects that were recommended in those reports," he said, also singling out schools statewide where there are huge facility needs that could be funded if they incorporate sustainable energy efficiency, as the garage does.

The Vermont Bond Bank was created in 1969 and is the first Bond Bank in the country. It has been widely copied across the nation, Gaughan said.

The Charlotte Town Garage was not only one of the first recipients of a Rural Energy Savings Program loan, but one of the first in the nation.

While we have mostly moved beyond the questions about whether climate change is real, Sen. Welch said, "There is still an immense amount of apprehension about what is the cost of implementing climate change remediation efforts."

With the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, he said, for the first time in the history of the country, there is a major financial commitment and major tax

TOWN GARAGE continued on page 2

## Barges lay cable from Quebec to NYC

Lucia McCallum  
 Community News Service

As Nancy Wood watched the almost block-long cluster of vessels float before her earlier this month, she recalls, all she could think was: "It was the biggest thing I had ever seen on the lake."

The vessels Wood, Charlotte resident and founder of The Charlotte News, spotted Oct. 4 were barges helping install the Champlain Hudson Power Express, a project working to create a 339-mile, high-voltage transmission line from Quebec to Queens, N.Y., a large portion of which will rest under Lake Champlain's waves.

The project aims to eventually provide New York City with 20 percent of its annual energy needs through hydropower. It's pegged to cost some \$6 billion, according to builder Transmission Developers, which is owned by private equity titan Blackstone.

Though a spokesperson for the project said the barge would never cross New York's state line and would have no impact on the town of Charlotte, the barge sparked curiosity for some. For about a week, it was stationed north of Essex, N.Y., where Wood said she took a picture of the vessel from her motorboat.

It then headed south and was visible from Charlotte for a couple of days.

The section of the transmission line in Lake Champlain is submarine, but the project also has terrestrial routes that begin near Lake George, N.Y. Wood remembers watching the barge first head north to start its work toward the Canadian border in August.

"I'd kind of done some research into it at that time," she said, "but it wasn't until after we actually went out and circled it that we saw that it's actually three barges."

The vessels consist of two barges that transport the cable and one that places it. The high-voltage electric cables are sometimes installed through a process called jetplowing, which involves using high-powered water jets to blast trenches for the cable to be placed in.

BARGE continued on page 3



## TOWN GARAGE

Continued from page 1

incentives to take steps to cut down on the use of fossil fuels, save money and reduce carbon emissions.

The best decisions about how to allocate that loan money are going to be made locally, such as in Charlotte, Welch said. “We are absolutely committed to making renewable energy not just cleaner, but a cleaner and an affordable, available option for working families.”

Waring echoed the gratitude already expressed for Charlotte’s participation in the initiative, saying, “This feels like the beginning of something that we’re going to be doing more and more, with the capital being put to work across many towns in our state.”

Brady began his remarks by quoting the catchphrase from the TV show “The A-Team”: “I love it when a plan comes together.”

He said it had taken about 50 years, but

**“Here we are, for the first time in decades, a federal, state and local in a partnership that’s going to end up in more projects like the ones you’re sitting in today.”**

— Ted Brady, executive director of Vermont League of Cities and Towns

a plan has finally come together with the building of the town garage and the initiating of the Rural Energy Savings Program.

“Here we are, for the first time in decades, a federal, state and local in a partnership that’s going to end up in more projects like the ones you’re sitting in today,” Brady said. “And, oh, by the way, it doesn’t just save money, as everybody said; it also reduces our climate emissions. So, congratulations to Charlotte for this incredible building.”

Faulkner started his remarks by praising the efforts of the town’s energy commission in advocating for the garage to be constructed as a net-zero energy building.

“We have an energy commission that has been pushing as hard as they possibly can,” he said.

The solar power on the town garage produces enough electricity for the garage, the town hall, the library, the senior center and 83 percent of the electricity used by the fire and rescue building, Faulkner said. In about eight years the loan for the solar panels should be paid, and then it will just cost Charlotte for delivery fees which should be \$50.

## CVU FOOTBALL

Continued from page 1

few yards to start the CVU scoring.

It was almost five minutes into the second quarter before the Redhawks scored again. Sophomore quarterback Orion Yates connected with senior wide receiver Jacob Armstrong for a 37-yard score to put his team up 14-0, which is where it stood at halftime.

The Seahawks took the kickoff to start the second half but were stopped. Burlington-South Burlington’s attempts to move the ball were hampered by a very ineffective snapping game. More than a few times the hiked ball skipped off the grass before reaching Seawolves quarterback Ahmed Diawara.

On the first play of CVU’s ensuing possession, Walpole raced 50 yards for CVU’s third score to make it 21-0, with just two minutes ticked off the clock in the second half.

Sophomore Alex Jovell kicked a field goal to increase the Redhawk’s advantage to 24-0, and Yates took it in from the 1-yard line to push it to 31-0 with 1:26 left in the third quarter.

By the fourth quarter, CVU was putting in a lot of players to get them some game experience. The only other scoring came with 1:04 remaining in the game, when another bad Seawolves’ snap, this one in the end zone, lead to a safety for the final 33-0 margin.

After the game, Fleming said he was so proud of his defense, particularly Sean Kennedy, who celebrated his birthday with a sack in the Burlington-South Burlington game. The senior captain has been a four-year starter for the Redhawks.

“He is the one who broke my philosophical glass ceiling, because I was basically committed to not playing a ninth grader at the varsity level,” Fleming said.

But four years ago, the coach listened to those who told him that Kennedy was different, more levelheaded for his age. Fleming hasn’t regretted the decision to move Kennedy up, and because of his example, there have been several other ninth graders who moved up to varsity.

Fleming attributed the Seahawks’ problems with hiking and kicking the ball to his team’s defense. He encouraged his nose guards to get



Photo by Calvin Morse

Billy Bates eludes Mount Anthony’s Aiden Riordan in CVU’s 63-6 win in the first round of the state playoffs. Bates scored on a 51-yard touchdown pass on the Redhawks’ first play from scrimmage and also had an 80-yard kickoff return.

up and into the center as quickly and as much as they could legally, saying he told them to “get into his chest, get into his shoulders, get into his head.”

All night, CVU’s dominating defensive line was hurrying up plays and breaking into the backfield to harass the Seahawks’ quarterback.

For Walpole, the Burlington-South Burlington contest was a statement game. The teams for the Vermont North-South Game had just been selected, and the running back was not selected. Seawolves’ coach Chadde Wolf is also this year’s coach of the North Team.

Walpole said before the game, “I want to make sure the coach understands he made a mistake.”

Fleming said Walpole had been promising him that he was going to have a 200-yard running game sometime this season. He made good on that promise in CVU’s final regular-season game, also notching two rushing touchdowns.

However, on a 40-yard run to the 1-yard line late in the game, Walpole hurt his rotator

cuff. Stalking the sidelines with a bag of ice strapped to his shoulder, he didn’t play for the rest of the game.

But, the shoulder didn’t prevent Walpole from playing in the next game, the first round of the playoffs.

One of the few problem areas for the Redhawks this year has been penalties. There were times in a couple of games where their dominating offense almost matched its yards gained by its yards given up to penalties. However, on Friday night in South Burlington, CVU only had two penalties.

“That’s the best we’ve ever performed,” Fleming said.

“It finally came together. You know, you wait for Jell-O to be Jell-O. It looks a lot like hot sugar water for a long time, and then it’s finally Jell-O,” he said. “Tonight, we’re Jell-O.”

**No. 1 Champlain Valley 63,  
No. 8 Mount Anthony 6**

The Redhawks returned to form for their

**CVU FOOTBALL** continued on page 3



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

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**Editor:** Scooter MacMillan ([scooter@thecharlottenews.org](mailto:scooter@thecharlottenews.org))  
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## CVU FOOTBALL

Continued from page 2

first playoff game, not just scoring on their first possession but on their first play from scrimmage.

After senior Lucas Almena-Lee returned the opening kickoff to the 49-yard line, senior Billy Bates fielded Yates' first pass of the game and raced to the end zone for a 51-yard score. Less than 15 seconds had passed and CVU was ahead 7-0.

Just over three minutes into the game, Walpole pounded the ball in from a yard out to make the score 14-0.

Then, a minute and a half later, Walpole juked and dashed for a 45-yard score, and the rout was on.

With 30 seconds left in the first quarter, senior George Taylor added another touchdown on a 13-yard scoring pass from Yates.

Halfway through the second quarter, senior Daniel Tuiqere ran it in from 5 yards out and, with just under two minutes left in the first half, added another 7 points on a 12-yard run to make it 42-0.

With less than a minute remaining, the Patriots finally got on the scoreboard when junior Asa Reis scored, but the extra point attempt failed.

As if to extinguish any optimism the TD may have given Mount Anthony faithful, Bates returned the ensuing kickoff 80 yards to make the score 49-6 with less than half a minute remaining before the halftime horn sounded.

In the second half, Fleming didn't intentionally run the score up, but with everyone getting a chance to play, it was difficult to tell players, who haven't had many scoring opportunities, not to cross the goal line.

At the 9:50 mark, freshman Harrison Whitmore bolted in from the 8-yard line, and with just over a minute left in the game senior Jacob Barrett took the ball in from 12 yards out for the final 63-6 score.

Taylor, who saw a good bit of time at

quarterback during the second half, said he was confident of his team's ability to not get overconfident.

"We talk about it every week: Don't get complacent; put on the gas the entire way. Our team is senior heavy. We're really, really motivated to win a championship," Taylor said. "We bring each other up the entire time, and we're not done until the last play."

He and his teammates should know what to expect from Middlebury, not just because they have played them already this year. Taylor said, "I've played them my entire life. They've run the same offense my entire life. We know each other really well, so we're going to be in a battle of wills."

He expects the Tigers to have some trick plays and "try some fancy stuff."

Yates said that Middlebury has a really good pass rush and that, when the Redhawks faced the Tigers at the first of October, it was the first time he had faced that kind of rush this year.

"Throughout that game, I had to learn how to see the pressure coming before the play and know to dump it off to a smaller route," Yates said. He plans to take the knowledge he gained from that game into this Saturday's game.

Fleming said he expects to face a well-coached team in Middlebury. Most of the team has played together since the third or fourth grade. Although Jed Malcolm has only been head coach for a year and half, he was an assistant coach for the school for 14 years.

"He's going to have those guys ready to rock and roll. We have to be ready to stop their run and their pass attack both," Fleming said.

For what is believed to be the first time ever, the CVU football team received an honorable mention in Sports Illustrated's regional rankings of the top 10 teams in the Northeast.

But, he said, the Redhawks' most dangerous opponent is "right here in Hinesburg. We need to not believe the hype. We've got to stay hungry every single week."

## Charlotte rescue department hires director of emergency services

Charlotte Volunteer  
Fire and Rescue Services

The Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services has hired Jamie Valyou as its new director of emergency services. In this role, he will have overall operational responsibility for all aspects of Charlotte's fire and emergency medical services.

Valyou comes to Charlotte Rescue from the Burlington Fire Department where he served for more than 25 years. Most recently, he has been a battalion chief and shift commander overseeing 27 personnel for the department.

"We are lucky to have found someone with Jamie's decades of experience in a multi-function department," said John Snow, president of Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services. "We believe he will provide the hands-on leadership we need to build a stable and efficient response to the emergency needs of the community."

"This is a great new challenge for me, and I am enthusiastic about joining CVFRS. Smaller communities, like



Charlotte, have all the same emergency challenges as larger towns but often need to respond with fewer resources," Valyou said.

He lives in Richmond. Valyou will start his new role on Nov. 4.

The appointment of Valyou comes after a year-long search to replace the previous chief, Justin Bliss.



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## BARGE

Continued from page 1

In similar projects nationwide, some have raised concerns that the process can disturb ecosystems, but Wood said she is more curious than worried about its environmental implications.

"I think it's great to have Hydro Quebec power going to New York City," she said, "and I haven't read anything that indicates it's a serious threat to the ecology of Lake Champlain."

As part of the project, developers have allocated \$117 million over 35 years to fund environmental protection programs through the Hudson River and Lake Champlain Habitat Enhancement, Restoration and Research/Habitat Improvement Trust Fund. A governance committee, which includes the New York environmental regulators, has been established to manage it.

As the vessels continue down the southern portion of its route on Lake Champlain, the project is set to reach its expected completion goal of mid-2026. Beyond the behemoth barges, Vermonters can expect a quieter scene on the lake as they stow away their boats and settle in for winter. For Wood, the barge was a



Photo by Nancy Wood

Barges that were visible from Charlotte on Lake Champlain were laying cable to carry power from Quebec to New York City.

welcomed change of scenery this fall.

"It was a very interesting sight to see out in the middle of the lake," she said, "and I felt fortunate to be one of the people to get a

chance to get up close to look at it."

*(Via Community News Service, a University of Vermont journalism internship, on assignment for The Charlotte News.)*

## Correction

In the Oct. 17 edition, a story about the selectboard celebrating Nate Bareham's first year as town administrator had an error. The date of that selectboard meeting was Oct. 7.



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# Letters to the Editor

## Expanding child tax credit should be Congress' first priority

To the Editor:

The child tax credit is a popular topic of conversation these days. Both Vice President Kamala Harris and Sen. J.D. Vance have called for expansions of the child tax credit during the presidential election. There's a good reason why. It works.

When Congress expanded the child tax credit in 2021 and sent it in monthly payments, struggling families finally got a financial breather. Groceries, health care, rent and child care all got a little easier to manage. Not to mention the payments cut child poverty by almost one-third. But Congress let the expanded child tax credit expire and families are again having a harder time and child poverty has increased.

The candidates know that expanding the child tax credit is both good policy and good politics. After decades of tax cuts for the rich, they know that everyday folks deserve a break. Expanding the child tax credit provides it.

Reforming the tax code will be a big debate in Congress next year. Their first agenda item should be expanding the child tax credit to all families experiencing poverty.

In Vermont, an expanded child tax credit would lift 3,000 children above the poverty line and would further help the families of 96,000, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. In a state with a 2023 population of 114,636 children under 18,

this credit will make a significant difference for a majority of Vermont children.

Sen. Peter Welch supported the last version of the bill to expand the child tax credit while Sen. Sanders did not, believing the bill didn't go far enough. Please join me in encouraging both Sen. Welch and Sen. Sanders to do all they can to pass an expanded child tax credit in the next Congress. As they both well know, the need is critical and we have a tool that works. Let's use it.

Julia Russell  
Charlotte

*(Julia Russell is a member of The Charlotte News board and of RESULTS Vermont. RESULTS is a nonpartisan citizens' advocacy group that works to end poverty.)*

## Habitat project description was revisionist history

To the Editor:

I read with great interest the article concerning the development project in Hinesburg situated along the banks of the LaPlatte River. I am especially concerned with the way in which David Speidel characterizes the development of the Habitat project on Albert's Way. Allow me to offer my perspective.

For the 30+ years that my husband, Allan Jordan, had lived and worked in Vermont prior to the Habitat project, he ensured affordable housing for families from as far away as Alburg and Williamstown, to

closer projects in towns like Hinesburg and Vergennes. In each project, the Vermont state regulations, as well as those of the communities involved, were strictly respected. Allan had attended the Villanova University school of law. He did his homework.

When the opportunity to address the lack of affordable housing in Charlotte presented itself to us (in the form of advancing age, family illness and death), we decided to pursue a collaboration with Habitat for Humanity to build on land that had been in the Gecewicz family since 1946. Allan and I were not wealthy, nor did we aspire to become so in embarking on this project.

The land where 12 greenhouses had once stood was sold at minimum cost to Habitat. Allan and I contributed the infrastructure costs — road, electric, septic, two wells, landscaping, etc. All these steps required adherence to the state and local building and environmental codes in place at the time.

I would ask Speidel with whom at Habitat he spoke when he quotes someone as saying, "We can't be picky. We get free land — we build on it." If only it were that simple.

Allan and I worked very closely with Habitat every step of the way to ensure the adherence to regulations. It was hardly the "let's-see-what-we-can-get-away-with" approach to land use that one might see in development projects throughout our state.

We live in an ever-changing world, with rules and regulations to match. We continue to move, hopefully more forward than not, according to new evidence provided us through more and more sophisticated methods of exploration. We also contend with the political, social and economic vagaries of a living society. But we continue to move forward, neither fixated upon the past nor stagnant in the present.

Habitat for Humanity is not a perfect organization. It is a work in progress. The Albert's Way project was born of a commitment to providing decent housing — and pride of ownership — to families who would otherwise not be able to participate in this part of the American dream. The manner in which the project was conceived and executed was thoughtful, sincere and compliant with the parameters set forth by the state and local regulations of the time. Property owners in the area may not like the new neighbors and that is their prerogative. But it does a disservice to the concept of Habitat for Humanity to dismiss the modus operandi of the organization in such a cavalier fashion as to say "we get free land — we build on it." If only it were that simple.

Trudi Gecewicz Jordan  
Charlotte

## Malloy's conduct towards Sanders unbecoming

To the Editor:

Watching the debate last week between these two, I was struck by Gerald Malloy's hostility toward and visible contempt for Bernie Sanders. As someone who was raised in a multi-generation military family, I felt the retired Army major's conduct toward Sanders was unbecoming to an officer and gentleman, but I suppose when you cast your lot with today's GOP, this is your duty.

What struck me even more was Malloy berating Sanders for the national debt and his supposed lack of legislative success. As

far as I know, Sanders is the longest-serving independent in the history of Congress, so it makes sense that his legislative work has been less about maneuvering bills to law (as he did with the Veterans Choice Act of 2014, co-sponsored with John McCain) and more about fighting for less popular policies — in Congress at least — while sneaking amendments into larger bills to the benefit of Vermonters and many other middle and working-class Americans.

If Gerald Malloy had been a Vermont voter for longer than two years, he'd probably already know this about Bernie Sanders. He'd also know that Sanders is supremely aware of the sources of spending and debt and has voted against the Bush tax cuts and their extension, as well as the Trump tax cuts, all of which added trillions to the debt.

What's really funny though is that Malloy would attack Sanders' long-held beliefs in collectivism and social welfare, because Malloy has benefitted from both for his entire adult life.

As an active duty Army officer, he received free medical, dental and vision care for himself, his wife and four children at any Tricare provider around the world (no restrictions, no networks like the rest of us), in addition to life insurance coverage. This would cost the average Vermont family over \$2,000 a month.

As a retiree he and his wife will receive these benefits for life for free, and his children will continue to receive these benefits until they graduate from college. This is after retiring from the Army before he turned 50, at which point he transitioned to a second career as a civilian defense contractor.

Malloy attended West Point as an undergraduate, along with Temple and Georgetown grad schools with 75-100 percent tuition assistance from the Army, an education that would indebt a Vermonter between \$200,000 to \$300,000. In exchange, he was required to accept a job from which it was nearly impossible to be fired or demoted.

As an active duty officer, Malloy's children had access to free education or generous tuition assistance, along with free or low-cost childcare. In light of current school tax debates and skyrocketing pre-K costs in Vermont, you may do your own math on this one.

As an active duty officer and retiree, Malloy could insure his family's cars and property for 35 percentage lower than market rate through USAA, saving thousands of dollars per year.

As a major (his rank at retirement), Malloy received a basic housing allowance that was pegged to the local housing market — in his case, Washington, D.C., the country's seventh most expensive housing market. If he were this rank and living in D.C. today, his monthly allowance would be over \$4,000. Alternatively, his family could live in Army housing for free and have access to walkable towns with government-subsidized grocery stores, playgrounds, well-maintained infrastructure and plenty of open space.

After 22 years of service, Malloy retired with 44 percent of his final base pay for the rest of his life. The average annual base



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued from page 4

pay for a major with 22 years of service is \$116,000 (similar to Sanders' Senate salary), 44 percent of which is \$51,000. This is in addition to the Army's 5-percent match of savings contributions and is guaranteed even as he receives compensation as a defense contractor.

The overall budget of the Department of Defense in 2023 was \$776 billion dollars. The second largest category of this budget supported pay and retirement benefits for service members and cost \$184 billion.

After retiring, Malloy worked for Raytheon and Northrop Grumman, whose combined revenue from the U.S. government in 2022 was over \$60 billion.

The government has spent approximately \$8 trillion dollars in excess military spending since 2000 compared to previous decades, increasing debt as a percentage of GDP by 30-plus percentage points.

All of this comes at the expense of the American taxpayer. All of that military spending comes at the expense of spending on education, healthcare, housing and infrastructure, and Bernie Sanders said as much during the debate.

To paraphrase noted socialist peacenik, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the cost of war is everything else.

So, while I believe that service people deserve every bit of respect and benefit they receive, I also believe that as a serviceman, Gerald Malloy should be more respectful of what it would cost to give real Vermonters a

life like he has lived and more humble about what it has already cost real Vermonters to give him that life.

If you want to deploy Malloy, it's a free country. I personally think Bernie's the one who's really ready to fight for us.

Peter Macia  
Charlotte

### Rodgers is best candidate for lieutenant governor

To the Editor:

I am writing to express my strong support for John Rodgers as the next lieutenant governor of Vermont.

Having previously served as commissioner of Vermont's Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation for 12 years, appointed by two different governors with a significant legislative portfolio over six legislative biennia, I worked over an extended period with both David Zuckerman and John Rodgers. The differences between them are real and important, and Rodgers emerges clearly as the best choice for Vermont. It's not close.

During his time in the Senate, he served on two committees with important roles relative to forests, parks and recreation: the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy — with jurisdiction over Vermont Forests, Parks And Recreation's responsibilities, programs and budget — and the Senate Committee on Institutions — with jurisdiction over capital appropriations and land transactions (think state parks' infrastructure, ski area leases and land-conservation transactions).

While Rodgers and I certainly differed on some topics over the years, he was a breath of fresh air and a welcome voice of practicality and reality all the while. He listened actively, asked informed and sometimes tough questions (always appropriately and respectfully) and he consistently offered ideas and solutions or, at worst, a willingness to work together to find them.

My experience with David Zuckerman was very different, characterized and summarized best as him doing a lot of talking at me — whether in the Senate Committee on Agriculture or in the hallways in advance of important floor debates in the Senate after he became lieutenant governor. That may seem tough, but it's fair.

I've also come to know John Rodgers more personally as a friend, affording an expanded view of him as a person and his values and ethics. John is smart, fun, talented, honest, hardworking and reliable. He is committed to his family, friends, land and community. Indeed, watching him delight in engaging with our young daughter says it all, whether when fishing with her or touring her around his farm. He was kind and encouraging while also being appropriately clear and firm with her. I continue to marvel at his energy, authenticity and ability to connect with anyone.

I am grateful for John Rodgers' significant and selfless service to our state to date and for his willingness to run and serve us as lieutenant governor now. When he speaks of unsettling changes in Vermont's legislative process over the last decade or so —

becoming more political and less inclusive — he is spot on. It is real and damaging. And given his experience, personality and commitment to Vermont and all of her people, Rodgers is best equipped and best suited to bring a different, more realistic and truly effective approach to Montpelier.

I encourage you to consider John Rodgers' candidacy, and I hope you too will conclude that he is the right person at the right time to serve as our next lieutenant governor, regardless of party affiliation.

Michael Snyder  
Stowe



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## Hi! Neighbor

# Caldwell: Varied opportunities at fire and rescue service

Phyl Newbeck  
Contributor

Robert Caldwell was intrigued by the 23-foot Defender Class boat he saw on a trailer at the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services headquarters.

It looked like a phenomenal piece of equipment for a small town. His curiosity led him to a department open house in 2022, where he talked to the chief.

“Next thing I knew, I had a pager,” he said.

These days, Caldwell is a marine specialist with the department. He also serves as the treasurer.

“We’re lucky to have highly trained medical people, many of whom were trained at the University of Vermont,” he said.

Caldwell said the fire side of the department is made up of volunteers while the EMS side is paid.

“One aspect that I appreciate is the desire to be cross-trained,” he said. “It’s important in a small town to have versatility.”

Caldwell grew up in a Coast Guard town on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence River and summered on the Thousand Islands. Watching the Coast Guard as a youngster, he wanted to learn those skills. He and his family volunteered for search and rescue under the Coast Guard Auxiliary before he officially joined the force and spent four years doing search and rescue.

Caldwell’s career in higher education fundraising started when he went to work for his high school. He was an English teacher and worked in the alumni relations office. From there, he went on to fundraising jobs at St. Lawrence, Dartmouth, Bucknell and Champlain College, where he served as vice president before retiring during COVID.

Caldwell also worked for an alumni engagement software company called Graduway. He noted that in the United States, alumni engagement is centered around a person’s graduating class and often takes place at reunions or football games. In other parts of the world, engagement is based on profession and Graduway was developed as a way of gathering alumni in particular fields on the theory that people are more likely to do business with those with whom they have commonalities.

Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services averages over 1,000 calls a year, an amount which has doubled in the last 10 years. Most of those are medical calls. This year, the marine rescue service recorded roughly a dozen rescues.

Caldwell noted that the group’s activity on the water has increased but he believes there are more incidents which were resolved by self-help. In addition to the Defender Class boat, the group has a smaller Zodiak. As the weather gets colder, they begin cold-water training for ice rescues.

Caldwell hopes people will be careful when they head out on the lake, noting



Photo by Ryan Donnally

Robert Caldwell believes in giving back to his community.

that foul weather can come up quickly. He is always thankful when people call to report things they’ve seen, although he remembers a conscientious observer who reported an overturned kayak that turned out to be a log. “At the end of the day, we’re glad to have those calls,” he said.

Caldwell and his family moved to Charlotte in 2018, shortly after he started working at Champlain College. In his spare time, he enjoys watching his kids play soccer, reading, taking care of the house, listening to podcasts while mowing the lawn and playing the bagpipe, a talent he picked up in military school.

Caldwell estimates he has spent over 300 hours training with fire and rescue and another 500 with Vermont E911 and dispatch. “I’ve learned so much,” he said, “and I continue to do so.”

The experience has instilled in him a deep respect and regard for people in emergency services and law enforcement.

“These services are like a silent safety blanket around each one of us,” he said. “They are oftentimes unnoticed until in time of need.”

Caldwell said it’s important that people know that when they dial 9-1-1, someone will answer the call and help them in their moment of crisis.

“We need more people to lend a hand,” he said. “There are opportunities to become involved at a level that works for any individual.”



# Carving canoes with fire on the banks of the Missisquoi

Natalie Bankmann  
Community News Service

Near where the Missisquoi River meets Lake Champlain sits a large grassland where open fields meld with shallows and long grass peeks out of the water as far as the eye can see. On a Sunday in September, as the grass hissed in the wind, a small group pieced together tarps and tents there for the nights to come.

They moved with the land, taking a moment to sink their fingertips into the water before silently collecting dry wood and sticks. The next day a log from a white pine tree would be engulfed in a torrid blaze — the beginning of a six-day burn to hollow out the wood and, in a common Indigenous tradition, turn it into a canoe.

Day after day, Sept. 23-29, people gathered near Mac's Bend in Swanton to prep the log, tend the hungry flame beneath it, then, on the final day, launch the canoe into the water. Two or three volunteers remained overnight every step of the process, sometimes more, never less, taking turns sleeping in between fire-tending shifts.

"We pay our honor to the tree and to the water," said Brenda Gagne, organizer of the burn and chief of the Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi, one of the four state-recognized tribes in Vermont. The Missisquoi tribe collaborated on the weeklong event with one of the other three tribes, the Nulhegan Band of the Abenaki Nation.

Decomposing logs, patches of shrubbery and sandy shores make up the almost 7,000-acre stretch of mostly wetland the two tribes call the Delta. Others refer to it as the Missisquoi Wildlife National Refuge in Swanton. For 12,000 years before European colonization, native people used the land's nutrient-rich soil and vast wildlife.

"It must have been incredibly bountiful with fish spawning up the river, things like salmon and sturgeon, and abundant waterfowl and other bird life, as well as a giant blueberry bog," said Ken Sturm, manager of the refuge, which is part of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service system. Today the land is the migratory home of an estimated 200 species of birds.

On Monday, Sept. 23, volunteers removed the tree's bark and chiseled down its surface slightly. Then they ignited the tree, beginning with small pieces of wood to create coals. Slowly, more wood was added and the fire burned — a pace that organizers said was designed to offer reflection on the tradition and respect for nature. "A tree is a living being just like a human is," Gagne said.

The idea is to burn away enough of the wood so that you can carve out the interior of the vessel — which is why they're often called dugout canoes. The fire also helps release the sap from the wood, which acts as a natural sealant.

The event marked the first Abenaki log burn in the delta in over 300 years, said Dan Shears, a member of the Nulhegan Abenaki tribe and an expert on the tradition. The six days of the burn were "a time to reflect," Gagne said. "It is medicine to the people."

In the weeks before the event, organizers put out calls among members of Vermont's state-recognized tribes and to



Photos by Catherine Morrissey

Left: Eugene Rich shovels out water from the canoe, hours before it's launched. Right: From left, Dan Shears, Eugene Rich and Brian Chenevert are the first crew to paddle the canoe after its launch.

the public at large for volunteers to sign up for fire-tending shifts. At least one person was present for all 160 hours of the burn, said David Schein, the administrative coordinator of Alnôbaiwi, a nonprofit focused on Vermont Abenaki culture that helped put on the event.

"The whole time you have to manipulate the fire. You must put it out when it starts to get too close to the log or if any part of the log gets too thin," Shears said.

As the days waned and the fire burned on, Shears and his cousin Brian Chenevert came out to ensure the most challenging part of the process went smoothly. Throughout the last few hours of the burn, the log needed to rest above the ground on a couple smaller logs so that the fire tenders could feel how evenly it was burning.

Shears said the process was successful, although the fire failed to fully reach one side of the log, leaving it partly too thick. The extra material was chainsawed off before Sunday when the canoe was scheduled to be sent into the water.

On Sunday morning, around 30 people gathered to witness the finished canoe's launch. Twenty hands carried the canoe to the shore and situated it on six pieces of telephone pole to roll it toward the water.

Gagne led a ceremony for members of the two tribes to bless the water. "We honor Mother Earth every day," said Gagne later. "The elements are water and fire.

Without either one, there is no life."

With a bout of cheer, volunteers pushed the canoe into the water and watched it glide gently across the surface. Audience members got the opportunity to climb aboard and pack themselves into the pine boat's interior.

Traditionally the log would be collected from an elm or chestnut tree growing close to the shore and removed from its trunk through a slow burn, Shears said. Since the wildlife refuge is federally owned and protected, that process would be illegal, so the tribe instead chainsawed the log from a white pine on a member's property a year prior. Plus, white pines have more sap, organizers said, providing further natural waterproofing for the boat.

Federal regulations and the area's status as a safe haven for wildlife makes putting on events like the log burn somewhat rare. Overnight use at a national wildlife refuge is seldom allowed, and organizers had to file for a permit to carry out the burn. Sturm, the Missisquoi refuge director, described the evidence of native history workers have discovered on the site, such as a longhouse.

He said it is important to "honor native heritage, promote their activities and educate folks."

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

## Charlotte Property Transfers July 2024

**July 2** Earthkeep Farmcommon, LLC to Dobson Meier LLC 1297 Ethan Allen Highway 583.23 acres and Farm Buildings \$2,200,000

**July 3** Asher & Nicole Noor to Kenneth & Adrienne Bagstad 25 Common Way .04 acres +/- with dwelling \$415,000

**July 8** Catherine Bock to Robert J. Bauer 1 Common Way .06 acres +/- with condo \$350,000

**July 9** Caleb Kiley to Rooney Castle 2073 Dorset St. with dwelling 13.27 acres \$1,475,000

**July 9** Jan W. Cannon to Chiara Hollender 19 Garen Rd. with dwelling 2.66 acres \$595,000

**July 10** Alex Bunten to Charlie Broadbent & Macy Margolin 488 Monkton Rd. with dwelling 11.16 acres \$651,000

**July 17** Rodney G. & Donna M. Stearns to Michelle Donlan 9529 Spear Street with dwelling 2.02 acres \$1,092,500

**July 26** Burlington House Buyers LLC to Joshua & Roxanne Banker 207 Lower Old Town Trail 10.05 acres \$820,000

**July 29** Dillon Machavern Trust to Call the Bee Holdings Group LLC 5880 Mt. Philo Rd. Land only 5.51 acres \$530,000

**July 31** Raymond Curtis Jr. & Eileen Curtis to Kasey & Lee Minetree 95 Stone Wall Lane w dwl \$ 691,000

*This information was supplied by Jay Strausser of Four Seasons Sothebys International Real Estate.*



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## Happy hues-day

Saturday morning, lots of West Charlotters had front row seats for a family-friendly, prismatic performance of uncommon verve.

Photo by Louisa Schibili

Left: The view from Mt. Philo.

Photo by Susan Sim

Below: The view from Greenbush Road.





## Education

# Grant brings computer coding to youngest students

Naomi Strada  
(Summarized by Tom Scatchard)

This fall the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) classroom received a grant of \$2,000 from a larger Rowland Foundation allocation focused on building more robust and equitable computer science programs in the Champlain Valley School District.

Teacher Steve Flint purchased several Blue Bots for Charlotte Central School's youngest learners. A Blue Bot is a small smiley-faced robot that moves along a flat surface after being programmed by a student.

Looking like a clear plastic upside-down bowl with forward-backward-right-left arrow buttons on its back, Blue Bot challenges students to create sequential

directions and then witness the results of their directions in real time as the robot follows their commands. From there, students can revise their code to better accomplish the task. This type of coding and programming helps develop important thinking skills while having fun.

If the code doesn't do what the students wanted, they can change the commands and run the program again. Creating a program and revising by students provides an additional conceptual level of understanding that further develops algorithmic thinking skills. Blue Bot blinks and beeps to provide feedback as it follows a program. The clear shell allows its components to be seen, helping to demystify technology.

### Online safety, digital citizenship

The annual Digital Citizenship Week was the week of Oct. 21 at Charlotte Central School. Online safety is a priority for the school.

Parents are asked to monitor their child's online footprint. Where do they spend their time when online? Are they talking with others, and what information do they share about themselves online?

Throughout the year, staff will teach developmentally appropriate lessons that are highlighted on the Common Sense Media website ([commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship](https://commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship)).

### Halloween at Charlotte Central

Several years ago, Charlotte Central School moved away from celebrating Halloween during the school day to maintain a calm routine focused on learning and social activities that are accessible and inclusive for all students.

Parents are asked not to send costumes to school. If a family is interested in celebrating Halloween, check out the fantastic festivities happening around town by looking at the Charlotte Library or the Charlotte-Shelburne-Hinesburg Rotary websites.

### Library news

Kindergarten-fourth grade library classes are participating in the Global Read Aloud. Millions of students have participated in the program since it began in 2010. The featured picture-book author for this year is Minh Lê, the award-winning author of books including "Drawn Together," "The Blur," "Real to Me" and "Lift."

As explained at [theglobalreadaloud.com](https://theglobalreadaloud.com), a book is picked every year by the organization to read aloud to students during a six-week period. During that time, the school tries to make as many global connections as possible around the book. Some teachers choose to connect with just one class, while others go for as many as possible. The scope and depth of the project is up to teachers.

While there are many platforms commonly used to connect classrooms, teachers choose the tools that make the most sense for them. Teachers get a community of other educators to do a global project in hopes these connections continue through the year. This global collaboration shows students that they are part of something bigger than themselves.

## Bridge installation



Photo by Steve Goldstein

A new walking-biking bridge, beside the vehicle bridge, was installed Saturday, Oct. 19, over the LaPlatte River where Irish Hill meets Falls Road in Shelburne. The bridge came in two sections that were joined, and then the 36,000-pound span was lifted into place by crane.



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## Education

# Co-ops lock in jobs after the pomp and circumstance

Margo Bartsch  
Contributor

Can you guess which of the four Boston schools had the most applications for the class of 2028 — Boston University, Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology or Northeastern University?

The answers in alphabetical order are: 78,750 (3.65 percent admitted), 54,008 (11 percent admitted), 28,232 (4.55 percent admitted), and the winner, Northeastern at nearly 100,000 (5.2 percent admitted). Just a decade ago, Northeastern had a 32 percent admissions rate with half the number of applicants. Unlike the other schools, Northeastern's co-op model combines academics and apprenticeships so that students can create more career opportunities after graduation, which is especially important with the increasing costs of college.

This August, the Wall Street Journal profiled Northeastern's co-op program that includes academic credit for up to 18 months of full-time paid internships. These work experiences leverage the school's professional networks and can enhance the student's resume to increase their chances of getting jobs. Other universities that require career-oriented internships are Drexel University in Philadelphia and Georgia Tech in Atlanta.

Locally, in September, the University of Vermont Grossman School of Business received a \$15 million donation to build their co-op program starting this fall 2025. The program will be organized into four academic concentrations of accounting, finance,

marketing and business analytics. One-semester internships will alternate between classroom academics and full-time work. The goal is for undergraduate students to gain professional experiences that apply their classroom knowledge to real-world business situations.

Although most colleges do not offer co-ops as part of their curriculum, students can still create internships to build professional exposure and teamwork learning. With first-semester classes wrapping up, students should attend networking panels, meet with professors and visit the career services office to develop their own co-op.

First, specific college majors typically outreach to alumni who are established in various industries that match the academic courses. George Washington University School of Business presented a business panel this September. There were two categories of business professionals: the first represented Consulting and Marketing, while the second included Technology and Finance.

For example, the technology and finance panel included alumni from the big tech companies of Meta, Amazon and Salesforce, along with two start-ups — ID.me and Wiz. The professional roles varied from sales, customer success and account management in working with businesses, government agencies and non-profit organizations. Students can ask the panel questions for a candid and relevant discussion about skills they are looking for.

Afterward, students can talk with individual panelists to reflect how the



Photo by Stanley Morales

conversation was relevant to their interests. Be sure to follow up on LinkedIn to keep in touch.

Another effective way to get internships is to meet with professors. Their academic expertise is typically connected to their professional networks. For example, when I was teaching Advertising at Champlain College, one student stepped up with their academics, team leadership and class participation. When career services reached out to professors about a social media internship at Burton Snowboards, I recognized this was an ideal fit for that student, who snowboarded and worked part-time at Free People.

Professor recommendations vouch for the student's credibility because the teacher is putting their professional reputation on the line. The student jumped at the internship opportunity, which later became a full-time job after graduation.

This June, LinkedIn published a report correlating how internships can give a competitive edge in the job market. Research shows that internships provide a 25 percent increase in the likelihood of starting a full-time position within six months after graduation, compared to those without internships.

Building upon work experiences are essential to pave the way toward career opportunities. The LinkedIn survey shows that applicants are four times more likely to get a job at a company using networking connections.

Update the LinkedIn profile to include writing samples, professional references and personal interests. This context can show that applicants are academically prepared and a fit for the corporate culture.

Interviews can further elaborate on skills learned during internships, team interactions and challenging situations. Hands-on examples highlight being prepared to interact within the work environment.

It is never too early to plan for internships. Little steps taken over time can add up to make a big difference.

Academic coursework builds the foundation of knowledge relevant for specific careers. Apprentice internships are a credential to extend learning into careers.

Co-ops lock in the job after the pomp and circumstance.

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



# Outdoors

## Happy trails — and trail workers — restoring town trail

Bill Regan  
Contributor

In late October, trails committee members and other volunteers repaired damage to the Town Link Trail caused by the July storms.

That flooding washed away large sections of trail near the Route 7 underpass and caused deep ruts elsewhere along the path. The trails committee was helped by Charlotte volunteers, including an unsolicited donation for the repairs by Alexandra Lehmann, work by Eric Richardson and his tractor, help from Tom Hengelsberg and loads of replacement gravel supplied by road commissioner Junior Lewis.

The trail committee also completed its annual trimming of overgrowth along the Town Link Trail and painted new navigation blazes on the Plouffe Lane Trail. Users of the Pease Mountain Trail will see new tree identification signs, raising to 22 the number of species identified there. Brandon Benedict, the new Chittenden County Forester, helped with the tree identification work.

Jack Pilla constructed a wooden walkway over a drainage on the Village Loop Trail near Greenbush Road.

Much of the wood Pilla used came from the trails committee's recent Ferry Road bridge project that he completed in September on the mowed path along Ferry Road west of Greenbush Road. The bridge



Photo by John Limanek

From left, trails committee members Chris Boffa, David Ziegelman, Jack Pilla and Richard Hendrickson pose after working on the Town Link Trail by the Route 7 underpass.

there also replaced a bridge damaged by flooding. (For more see [charlottenewsvt.org/2024/09/19/trails-committee-replaces-bridge](https://charlottenewsvt.org/2024/09/19/trails-committee-replaces-bridge).)

*(Bill Regan is a member of the Charlotte Trails Committee and The Charlotte News board of directors.)*

Photo by Jack Pilla

Eric Richardson stands with his tractor after repairs to the Town Link Trail.



Photo by Bill Regan

Jack Pilla built this walkway on the Village Loop.



## The Power & Poetry of Water

Photographs by Jonathan Hart

Opening reception at Charlotte Senior Center

Saturday, November 2, 3-4:15PM





## Outdoors

# Athletic fields reverting to wetlands to improve lake water quality

Kate Kelly  
Contributor

Lewis Creek Association has nearly completed the conversion of a playing field behind the United Church of Hinesburg back to a wetland.

The restored area now includes native shrubs and trees that will support pollinators and other species, while also improving water quality.

The work was made possible by funds from Watersheds United Vermont and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation Clean Water Fund.

The water that flows through this area of the village of Hinesburg moves generally from east to west, draining into a ditch north of the United Church of Hinesburg and, after making two 90-degree turns, into the LaPlatte River. The LaPlatte drains into Lake Champlain at Shelburne Bay.

It picks up stormwater from several residential developments, businesses, churches and a portion of Route 116. This area of Hinesburg has been identified in two past studies as an important area for water quality improvement.

Historic channel straightening, ditching, berming, filling of wetlands and altered flow from stormwater runoff contribute to channel instability. The area behind the church was part of a larger wetland that



Photo by Jessica Louisos

Fields in Hinesburg after regrading and planting to be reclaimed as wetland. The bridge in the foreground will allow people to walk out into the wetland to view it.

had been converted to agriculture and then into playing fields.

Wetlands are critical to maintaining water quality, allowing water to be naturally cleaned by wetland plants before heading downstream. This fall, contractors

K. Bellavance Landworks tilled the lawn under, regraded it to allow water to flow through the wetland in a more natural path, laid in rocks and logs across the depression to slow the water and planted native trees, shrubs and wetland seeds.

Next year, after the plants have fully established, the berm that is holding water in the existing ditch will be removed, allowing the wetland to accept and clean up water from upstream. Restoring the wetland will help to keep the LaPlatte River from becoming impaired by phosphorus, which contributes to harmful cyanobacteria blooms and fish die-offs in Lake Champlain.

The area's proximity to town playing fields and the Hinesburg Town Hall in the center of the village will allow it to function as an Ahead of the Storm demonstration project, showcasing water quality issues and habitat improvement through restoration. You can learn more about the problem and what landowners can do to improve water quality in a brief 17-minute presentation on the Lewis Creek Association's website at <https://bit.ly/lca-wq-videos>.

Things landowners can do to improve water quality include slowing water down, spreading it out and sinking it into the ground. These are the "the three S's" that are central to the Ahead of the Storm program.

You can learn more about the Ahead of the Storm program at [bit.ly/lca-aots](https://bit.ly/lca-aots).

*(Kate Kelly is the Lewis Creek Association program manager.)*



# Community Roundup

## Lake Champlain Basin Program's \$400,000 grant for lake studies

The Patrick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin Program seeks proposals for studies that assess the economic value of Lake Champlain at both the community and watershed scales.

The program anticipates awarding approximately \$400,000 through two grant opportunities:

- Request for proposals for Lake Champlain community-level economic valuation studies (up to \$50,000 per award; the Lake Champlain Basin Program anticipates awarding up to \$200,000 total).

- Request for proposals for Lake Champlain watershed economic assessment: the value of our clean water and healthy ecosystems (up to \$200,000 available to support one project).

The Lake Champlain community-level economic valuation studies will provide an economic analysis and public-facing outreach materials for communities connected to the analysis. These projects will demonstrate the economic value of investing in watershed practices at the community level.

The Lake Champlain Watershed Economic Assessment will measure and communicate the economic value that Lake Champlain and the clean water and healthy ecosystems of its watershed provide to the regional economy. The results of this project will provide a credible economic analysis and public-facing outreach materials. The results of this valuation will be used in reports and publications by the Lake Champlain Basin Program and partners, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This comprehensive, multisectoral study will update and expand previous economic studies in the region. This study may lead to additional work in this sector.

Eric Howe of the Lake Champlain Basin Program, said, "Economic valuation studies can describe the benefits of clean water and healthy ecosystems as dollar values, allowing resource managers and decision makers to better understand and act on the economic rationale for protecting our waterways and ecosystems."

The awarded grants will support projects that advance the goals of the long-term

Lake Champlain management plan Opportunities for Action.

Proposals are due at noon on Jan. 10, 2025. Awarded projects will begin work in August 2025. More information is available on the Lake Champlain Basin Program's website at [lcbp.org/grants](http://lcbp.org/grants).

## Hurricanes cause Red Cross blood donation shortage

Blood supply momentum must remain steady, as the Red Cross has worked this month to recover blood products uncollected due to recent hurricanes. Any disruption in the ability to collect blood can lead to an impact on routine and lifesaving medical care.

Give blood or platelets and make a big difference in someone's life by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org), calling 1-800-RED CROSS or by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App.

In thanks, those who come to give by 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](http://RedCrossBlood.org/Treat).

Those who come to give in early November, Nov. 1-17, will receive a \$10 e-gift card to a merchant of choice, plus be automatically entered for a chance to win one of two \$7,000 gift cards. For full details, visit [RedCrossBlood.org/Thanks](http://RedCrossBlood.org/Thanks).

Through Nov. 17 blood donation centers will be set up in Chittenden County at:

- **Milton**

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

Nov. 6, 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Arrowhead Senior Center, 46 Middle Road

- **Hinesburg**

Nov. 8, 12:30 p.m.-5 p.m., St. Jude's Parish Hall, 10759 Route 116

- **Jericho Center**

Nov. 15, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Mount Mansfield High School, 211 Browns Trace Road

- **Winooski**

Nov. 15, noon-5 p.m., Winooski Senior Center., 123 Barlow St.

## Button Up Vermont offering up to \$15,00

The best time to weatherize your

home for a warm, comfortable and more affordable winter is today.

The annual "Button Up Vermont" campaign launched on Oct. 1. Homes needing repairs to be warmer can get up to \$15,000 through the program that prepares homes to be weatherized.

Button Up Vermont encourages Vermont homeowners to prepare for winter with rebates and resources that make "buttoning up" homes more accessible and affordable. This year, the campaign launches alongside a new Home Repair offer to address underlying home issues that need to be fixed before weatherization can happen. Up to \$15,000 for improvements is available to homeowners through the new Home Repair program.

All repair projects must be deemed necessary as part of a planned weatherization project in a home, including manufactured homes.

Homes served by Burlington Electric or Vermont Gas Systems are not eligible for the Home Repair offer.

Many home repairs are eligible, like roof repair, ventilation and ductwork, asbestos and vermiculite remediation, window repair or replacement, foundation repair, plumbing, siding or sheathing and more.

All contractors are eligible. Any contractor can install or complete home repair measures, including members of the Efficiency Excellence Network of independent contractors.

After repairs, the next step is a weatherization project. Efficiency Vermont's Home Performance with rebate offers 75 percent of project costs back, up to \$9,500. Vermont Gas Systems also offers weatherization rebates. Income-eligible households can also get free weatherization from the state's weatherization assistance programs.

Telltale signs a home has opportunities to take advantage of the Button Up program include drafts even when the heat is on (a sign that cold air is leaking in and heat is leaking out), snow melting unevenly on a roof (indicating an attic in need of air sealing and insulation) and icicles or ice dams forming on a rooftop from escaping heat.

"Buttoning up is one of the best ways to make a home more comfortable year-

round, and making essential home repairs is a great first step," said Peter Walke, Efficiency Vermont's managing director. "Once a home is ready, air sealing and insulating as part of a weatherization project means a warmer home that uses less energy and lower energy bills for years to come."

Vermonters can take advantage of the program this fall by:

- Attend a Button Up event in your community ([buttonupvermont.org/events](http://buttonupvermont.org/events)). Learn about reducing heat loss and trimming energy bills through energy fairs, webinars and other opportunities. If there are no events in your area, you can host one.

- If you aren't sure where to start, try a free virtual home energy visit ([efficiencyvermont.com/rebates/list/home-energy-visit](http://efficiencyvermont.com/rebates/list/home-energy-visit)). An Efficiency Vermont energy expert can assess your home by video chat and give you a personalized list of projects and improvements. Vermont Gas customers may also qualify for an energy assessment.

- Complete three do-it-yourself weatherization projects ([efficiencyvermont.com/rebates/list/diy-weatherization](http://efficiencyvermont.com/rebates/list/diy-weatherization)) and get \$100 back. These weatherization projects may not reduce your heating bills, but they can limit drafts and make your home more comfortable. Follow this DIY Weatherization Guide to start your buttoning-up efforts.

- Find a qualified contractor through Efficiency Vermont's Efficiency Excellence Network ([efficiencyvermont.com/find-contractor-retailer](http://efficiencyvermont.com/find-contractor-retailer)). An Efficiency Excellence Network contractor can get you started on a weatherization project to air seal and insulate your home.

As part of this year's Button Up efforts, Efficiency Vermont is hosting "Weatherization Wednesday" webinars offering weatherization tips and information about climate-friendly heating with heat pumps. Learn more and register at [buttonupvermont.org](http://buttonupvermont.org).

Join a "Weatherization 101" webinar at noon, Oct. 23, or a "Heat Pumps 101" webinar at noon, Oct. 30.



## Our Local Feast

# Local tomatoes and fennel make tasty autumn soup

Dorothy Grover-Read  
Contributor

Tomato soup made from scratch? Little toasted cheese soldiers to accompany? Who could ask for more?

At this time of year, one can usually find some good bargains on bulk tomatoes at the farm stands. The frost has ended the growing season, although we've had some remarkable record-breaking high temperatures since then, so a few folks who provided protection are still harvesting.

This has been a good year for fennel as well, and these beautiful bulbs often come with long sturdy stems and fronds that all can be used to create a soup with tons of flavor. So many fronds and stems that, when I cut the bulbs off my two fat beauties, I knew I would use the abundant remainder to make a flavorful stock.

Additionally, one fennel bulb sliced very thin was all I needed to make a lovely little side salad, paired with thinly sliced purple onion from the farm stand, radicchio and chunks of dried apricot in a simple vinaigrette.

That left me with a second monster fennel bulb and enough tops to fill my large compost bucket. However, they were not quite ready for compost. I think it is important to think about how our grandparents and



Photos by Dorothy Grover-Read  
The late harvests combine for comfort soup at its best.

great-grandparents approached food in the Depression and before and after. Every scrap saved and used. Every bit of flavor and nutrition extracted. Nothing went to waste.

The addition of an onion, a sorry carrot, a bay leaf, a few odd vegetable and mushroom scraps, transformed those fennel stems and fronds into a stock so flavorful it could be served by itself as broth. Once you start thinking of these scraps as a treasure, a windfall, you will never pay \$5 for a quart of vegetable or chicken stock again.

Whatever was left after the simmering was



Roma tomatoes are fleshier than standard tomatoes, and they have less seeds. If you can't find these at the farm stand, substitute whatever they have on sale. It will still be delicious tomato soup.

happily dispatched into the compost bucket.

The fennel and tomato are a lovely combination. If you don't have fronds on your fennel to make stock, just make a vegetable stock from your refrigerator scraps and add some additional crushed fennel seeds, or, in a pinch, just use vegetable stock in this recipe. It won't have as much fennel flavor, but it will still be delicious; it's tomato soup after all.

I used the oddball field tomatoes and Romas, plus the last of my own cherry tomatoes, for more flavor, but frankly most tomatoes will do well here. If you don't have a bounty of fresh tomatoes or if it is the middle of winter, just use a 28-ounce can of organic diced or whole tomatoes. It will work fine.

There is always a swap. If it is homemade with love, it will be delicious. Who doesn't love tomato soup on a crisp, or even 70-degree, autumn day?

### Harvest tomato and fennel soup

Heat a heavy stock pot over medium high and add a couple of tablespoons of fruity olive oil. Toss in:

- 1 large leek or onion, diced
- 1 large fennel bulb, diced
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon crushed fennel seeds
- A large pinch of salt.

Let cook until everything has softened. Then add 1/2 cup tomato paste.

Let this mix in well with the other ingredients and the flavor bloom. Add 1/2 cup dry red wine.

Let this simmer for five minutes or so to let the alcohol evaporate, then add:

- 1 quart chopped tomatoes, Roma or other
- 1 quart fennel or vegetable stock
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- salt and pepper to taste

It's your choice whether to seed the tomatoes or not. I just leave them in.

Bring to a boil, cover, reduce to a simmer and continue simmering for a half hour. You can also place this in a 300-degree oven to



Every bit of a fennel bulb is edible and tasty as well, from the bulb and stalks to the fronds and seeds. You'll use all parts in this recipe.

finish off.

The house should smell really good just about now.

Purée with an immersion blender, standard blender, food processor or food mill. I use either the immersion blender or food mill, the former being less cleanup, but the latter producing the best texture. Your choice. Your time.

Garnish with a few fennel fronds, a drizzle of olive oil, maybe some croutons and serve with grilled or toasted cheese. We love making little toasted cheese soldiers, so everyone can have as many or few as they want, and they are fun to dunk.

### Cream of tomato, fennel soup

About half of us like tomato soup straight up, there are those in the family who like theirs with a splash of cream of some sort.

Before concerns about cholesterol in our family, I used half-and-half or light cream to everyone's desired whiteness, but you can substitute light coconut milk and keep it vegan as well.

### Make your own fennel stock

In a large stockpot, combine a big bunch of fennel stems and fronds, a cut-up onion, skins and all, a large carrot, old and limp from the bottom of the crisper is fine, mushroom pieces and stems if you have them, a teaspoon of fennel seeds and whatever other little scraps of vegetables you have on hand. Bring this to a boil, then simmer for a half hour. Let cool to room temperature, then strain.

### Toasted cheese soldiers

These are perfect for dunking.

Lightly toast a few slices of wholegrain bread. Slice into strips along the short side, usually four or five per slice depending on the loaf. Sprinkle liberally with Parmesan, vegan Parmesan, cheddar or other melting cheese. Pop under the broiler until melted and starting to bubble and brown. Try to let them cool a few moments before attempting to eat.

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# Outdoors

## Birders work to preserve monarch butterflies' migration

Kate Kampner  
Community News Service

From August to November, the members of Putney Mountain Hawkwatch stand on the summit of their namesake spotting and surveying migrating raptors. But that's not their only job. As they count hawks, they also count migrating monarch butterflies.

The Hawkwatch is one of the many groups in Vermont and the U.S. that have been keeping record of migrating monarch numbers. In the wake of changing climates, butterfly lovers have been concerned for their black-and-orange friends in the sky.

"The butterfly itself isn't in danger of going extinct — it's this great migration which we're in danger of losing," said Kent McFarland of the Vermont Center for Ecostudies, a nonprofit that promotes the conservation of wildlife.

To help the species' hurting population, conservation experts in the Northeast urge people to record their observations through sites like eButterfly, iNaturalist, Mission Monarch or Journey North. People can also learn how to plant butterfly-friendly plants to help the critters on their yearly journeys.

With the help of community science platforms like those, the Center for Ecostudies is working on its second Vermont Butterfly Atlas, a five-year survey done every 20 years to document butterfly abundance statewide.

It was not a good year for monarchs in Vermont. McFarland said, "Monarch productivity was terrible."

He believes the bad heat waves and heavy rain the state faced in July put a strain on the population migrating north. Vermonters seem up to the task.

"I do see more Vermonters interested in conserving pollinators, including monarchs, and a growing awareness of the ability for communities and individuals to be contributing," said Emily May, a pollinator conservation biologist who lives in Middlebury and works for the Xerces Society, an Oregon nonprofit focused on the conservation of insects and other invertebrates.

"Eastern monarchs are definitely in decline," May said. "We may not see it as individuals because population fluctuates."

According to her organization, western monarchs have declined by more than 95 percent since the 1980s, and their eastern counterparts have declined by over 70 percent since the 1990s. Weather and climate change have played a part in the decline, but May said, people can help out on a small scale by using fewer pesticides and planting pollinator-friendly plants like milkweed and goldenrod.

She also referenced national funds to put monarch-friendly habitats on working lands like farms.

When they arrive in Vermont, monarchs expect fresh milkweed to eat and lay their eggs on, but between delayed travel and a decline in milkweed, they have nowhere to go, and numbers for the next generation of monarchs will be a lot lower.

"Being able to nectar the whole way on their migration to Mexico is super important," said McFarland. In the U.S. there's been a significant decline in monarchs

seen during this time, he said.

"The only way we know a lot of this stuff is because thousands of people have helped us collect data across the landscape," he said.

This includes groups like the Putney Mountain Hawkwatch.

John Anderson from the Hawkwatch calls 2024 a "bust" year for monarchs. "What we've observed is that there is a boom-and-bust cycle." Last year, they counted 318 monarchs, and projections for this year's numbers are looking similar.

"All of these little things that are chipping away at the population — the insect predators, spraying the cornfields in the Midwest, the droughts down in Texas — all these things are probably a factor. But I think the overall problem is probably the weather," Anderson said.

The Pollinator Pathway, a volunteer organization spanning 18 states, plants pollinator-friendly gardens across the U.S. Julie Parker-Dickerson is a part of the Charlotte effort, one of several in Vermont.

"The idea is that we would connect all of these gardens so that every butterfly would have a waystation," she said.

She recommends leaving leaves and gardens up in the fall. "The more we leave up our gardens in the fall, the better habitat we're creating for the spring," she said. "You're also helping the environment and keeping insect populations in locations they're familiar with."

The Center for Ecostudies also works with Mission Monarch, a community science platform that allows anyone to document monarch breeding. The platform was created by Maxim Larrivé, director of the Montreal Insectarium, one of the largest insect museums in the world.

"We can get fooled sometimes by a lot of the abundance locally where we live," said Larrivé. "Having this capacity really allows us to put in perspective how monarch breeding and migration is happening."

Larrivé said migration came very late in Canada this year. That country saw a similar-sized population to last year, he said. But in the U.S., platforms recorded that this year the population was half the size of last year's.

"It really underscores the fact that this year might not be a year that we can feel good about," Larrivé said, "in terms of what the size of the overwintering population will be next winter."

While the numbers in Canada were similar to last year, it doesn't mean the numbers weren't good, he said.

"We have control over making efficient efforts to restore monarch breeding ground and identifying the migratory record," Larrivé said. "We can ensure when those monarchs are initiating their migration from the breeding ground in the north, they have access to all the nectar necessary to fuel up before they migrate."

The data that Mission Monarch gains is used to identify where the higher densities



Photos by Olivia Miller

Left: The chrysalis of a monarch butterfly, seen recently at Shelburne Farms.

Right: A sign describes the life cycle of monarch butterflies at Shelburne Farms recently.

of the species are, especially prime breeding areas, so that people can restore their habitats. Sightings from cities, Larrivé said, might not paint the whole picture.

"When you consider the effort in documenting them in natural habitats, you realize that their density is much worse," he said. "What we can do is encourage people to create more breeding habitat."

Without a proper breeding habitat, monarchs will lay more eggs than natural, hurting their reproductive capacity and food source and causing most of the caterpillars to starve, Larrivé said.

"Monarchs have a high capacity to reproduce, but they need a break," he said. "They need to be able to bounce back."

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



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## Gardening

# Putting the fall garden to bed with spring dreams

Deborah J. Benoit  
University of Vermont Extension

Fall foliage color has peaked, and leaves are falling. Temperatures are dropping, and it's time to put the garden to bed. It is also a perfect opportunity to prepare for spring. What you do this fall can provide big benefits when the garden wakes up next year.

Spring flowering bulbs will be the most visible reward for work done in the garden now. If you don't have early blooming plants such as hellebores or witch hazel, consider adding spring blooming flowers such as low-growing crocus and snowdrops or showy daffodils and tulips. They bloom early (snowdrops will emerge beneath the snow) and provide welcome color at the beginning of the season. If deer are visitors to your yard, keep in mind they'll love nibbling on tulips but will avoid daffodils.

Plant spring bulbs in clumps for a colorful splash or scattered between perennials for a sprinkle of color. If you have the time, create a new bed or two, adding spring blooming bulbs for an early show. As an added bonus, once you've prepared the bed for bulbs, it will be ready and waiting come spring for additional plantings.

If you're planning on adding new beds

next year, you can get a head start now. Mark out the area and trim grass or weeds as close to the ground as possible. Then cover with a layer of moistened cardboard or multiple sheets of newspaper. Top with a layer of mulch to keep everything in place. By the time you're ready to plant next spring, the grass or weeds will be smothered and the bed ready to be prepared for planting.

Fall is a good time to have a soil test done. Why do a soil test? Without knowing the nutrients available in your soil, you might be adding unnecessary amendments and omitting those actually needed. A soil test can tell you your soil pH and available phosphorus (P), potassium (K), calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), micronutrients and more, along with recommendations for amendments and fertilizer for specific crops. The University of Vermont Extension offers soil-testing services. You can use a kit (available at the extension offices and many garden centers) or print out a form from the website and mail in a soil sample — just 1/2 to 1 cup. Follow the directions at [go.uvm.edu/soiltest](http://go.uvm.edu/soiltest).

You'll thank yourself next spring if you clear weeds from existing beds now and add amendments recommended in the results of your soil test.

If you lost the war on weeds this year,



Photo by Kate Cox/Pixabay

Inventory, clean and sharpen garden tools in the fall to be ready for spring.

you can get ahead of them now for next year's garden. Most annual weeds have begun to die back and should be easier to pull. Just watch out for any seedheads. Avoid putting them in your compost pile to slow the spread of weeds to your garden in the future. Carefully remove seed heads and put them in the trash along with any diseased plant material.

The last item on your fall to-do list is likely storing garden tools for the winter. Take the time to clean them and sharpen those that need it. While doing that, inventory your garden tools. Over

the winter, you'll have time to repair or replace items and purchase what you don't already have. When spring arrives, you won't have to make an emergency run to the garden center.

It's always sad to see the end of the gardening season but doing a few simple tasks now can put you ahead of the game come spring.

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

## Don't move firewood — buy it where you'll burn it

University of Vermont Extension

This fall, communities across the country are raising awareness about the importance of responsible firewood use. The cooler weather is the perfect time to remind everyone that moving campfire wood for long distances can unintentionally spread forest pests that threaten the health of our forests.

"Buy it where you'll burn it" is one of the tenets of the Arrive Clean, Leave Clean campaign, launched earlier this year by University of Vermont Extension; the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation; and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. The campaign is designed to inform and educate Vermonters about preventing the introduction or slowing the spread of harmful pests such as the emerald ash borer by not moving wood for campfires.

Many people take wood from their own property as they head out to camp or hunt, without realizing the wood might be hiding the eggs or larvae of forest-damaging insects or the spores of disease-causing fungi. These pests cannot travel far on their own, but they can travel

hundreds of miles a day on someone's campfire wood.

"Most insect eggs or diseases are too small to see," says Ginger Nickerson, University of Vermont Extension forest pest education coordinator. "Logs that look healthy can still have tiny insect eggs or fungal spores, so anyone moving firewood may unknowingly introduce a forest pest to a new area."

Outbreaks of emerald ash borer, Asian long-horned beetle and oak wilt have all been found near campgrounds and traced to people moving wood for campfires.

When you go camping or hunting this fall, instead of bringing wood from home, buy firewood locally or gather it near where you are planning to burn it (if permitted). You can also purchase certified heat-treated wood that has been treated for pests.

The "Recommendations to Slow the Spread of Emerald Ash Borer" factsheet ([go.uvm.edu/movingash](http://go.uvm.edu/movingash)) gives detailed information about the times of year it is least risky to move wood from ash trees. To learn more about the campaign and measures to control invasives, go to [vtinvasives.org/arriveclean](http://vtinvasives.org/arriveclean).

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# Gardening

## Four common invasive and annoying fall insect pests

Ann Hazelrigg  
University of Vermont Extension

When the weather starts to turn cold, four common insect invaders may show up uninvited in your home. None of them breed in the house or cause any damage to humans, pets, food items or structures. These nuisance pests are looking for a warm, protected place to overwinter and hibernate.

The western conifer seed bug (*Leptoglossus occidentalis*) is the largest of the four insects. It feeds primarily on seeds and developing cones of several conifer species. The range of these true bugs (order Hemiptera) currently extends across the northern U.S. into Canada.

Adults are about three quarters of an inch long, brownish in color, with alternating light and dark bands running along the outer wing edges on each side of the abdomen. The lower hind leg is widened on each side and looks like a tiny leaf has been attached. These insects move slowly and can fly, often making buzzing sounds when airborne, and will give off a pungent odor if you handle them.

The brown marmorated stink bug (*Halyomorpha halys*) can be confused with the western conifer seed bug but is smaller. It is brownish, shield-shaped and about five-eighths of an inch long, and the next to last (fourth) antennal segment has a white band. Several abdominal segments protrude from beneath the wings which are alternatively banded with black and white, hence the term "marmorated."

This insect was introduced to the U.S. from Asia in 1996 and has become an invasive, destructive fruit and vegetable pest in the mid-Atlantic states. Their numbers have been low in Vermont and they are considered home invaders as opposed to crop pests. During the several weeks of peak flight, they can enter homes through any small opening. Once inside, they will often fly, causing a buzzing sound. They do not reproduce, damage structures, bite people or harm pets. They can exude a pungent chemical when they are handled or crushed. Adults mate outdoors in the spring about two weeks after emerging from a resting phase.

The multicolored Asian lady beetle (*Harmonia axyridis*) is a more colorful nuisance insect that was introduced by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as a predator of aphids and scale insects. Asian lady beetles are slightly larger than native lady beetles, are oval and yellow to red in color. They can have no spots or as many as 19.

These beetles congregate on sunny south-southwest sides of houses in the fall and can inundate homes from September through April. It is common for tens of thousands of beetles to congregate in attics, ceilings and wall voids. Due to the warmth of the walls, they will move around inside voids and exit into living areas. The little beetles can exude a foul-smelling defensive chemical which will sometimes cause spotting on walls and other surfaces.

Boxelder bugs (*Boisea trivittata*) are about one-half inch long by one-third of an inch wide. They are dark brownish black



Photo by Gyorgy Csoka,  
Hungary Forest Research Institute

Adult western conifer seed bug  
(*Leptoglossus occidentalis*).

with three lengthwise, red stripes on the thorax (area behind the head).

They become particularly annoying in the fall when adults and large nymphs tend to congregate in large numbers, primarily on the southwest side of structures and on boxelder trees. They migrate indoors and adults overwinter by hiding in cracks and crevices in walls, door and window casings, around foundations and other protected places. Once inside, they can spot curtains, furnishings and clothing with their excrement. When crushed, they give off an offensive odor.

They do not breed indoors and when trapped in the house they eventually die. Removing boxelder trees may decrease their numbers in the fall; however, they can fly up to 2 miles. These bugs do little damage to landscape or ornamental plants.

Mechanical exclusion is the best control method to keep all of these nuisance pests from entering homes. Seal cracks around windows, doors, siding, utility pipes, behind chimneys and underneath the wood fascia and other openings with good quality silicone or silicone-latex caulk.

Damaged screens on doors and windows should be repaired or replaced. Attics, fireplace chimneys and exhaust vents should be covered with number 20 (or smaller) screen mesh.

Exterior applications of insecticides may offer some relief from infestations where



Photo by Susan Ellis

Adult brown marmorated stink bug  
(*Halyomorpha halys*).

the task of completely sealing the exterior is difficult or impossible, but this is usually not warranted.

The use of a vacuum is still the most efficient method of collecting beetles in the home. It is advisable to empty the bag and beetles after each vacuuming.

*(Ann Hazelrigg is the University of Vermont Extension plant pathologist and director of the UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic.)*



Photo by Louis Tedders, USDA Agricultural  
Research Service

Color variations of the adult multi-colored  
Asian lady beetle (*Harmonia axyridis*).



Photo by Joseph Berger

Adult boxelder bug (*Boisea trivittata*).

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## Weed's in the Garden

# Saving root vegetables in winter, ways to cook them

Joan Weed  
Contributor

A friend stopped by with a gift of four different winter squashes — a pie pumpkin, a butternut, a kabocha and a yellow spaghetti squash. Cooking for one meant I had enough vegetables for many meals here.

However, how long could I keep them to get the best use of them?

I know that our foremothers saved such vegetables to stave off starvation in the winter months. What did it take to preserve freshness?

A bit of research, added to my experience, helped. They had to rely on a root cellar or dig a deep hole. We, who have modern homes and refrigerators, have it easier. Most stored vegetables need a relative humidity that is over 90 percent. This can be difficult to offer as many also need good airflow. A few, such as pumpkins, garlic, onions, dried beans and dried peppers, prefer humidity in the 60-70 percent range. Winter squashes are best kept at just over 70 percent.

Temperature needs to be considered also. You can come close to freezing but not below 32 degrees. Interestingly, the vegetables that like a bit higher humidity also like to be stored at a slightly warmer temperature.

Sweet potatoes like 55 degrees and 90-percent humidity.

The root vegetables that store the best and longest are beets, carrots, celeriac, turnips, daikon radish, potatoes and parsnips. Most can be saved for anywhere from two to seven months.

Onions need either a mesh bag or loosely woven basket for best results and air flow. Potatoes should be stored in paper or baskets, never plastic, as their starch turns to sugar easily. Darkness is important for potatoes also, or they'll turn green and that becomes toxic. However, if you should have any green hues on your potato skins it can easily be peeled away. No worries.

Cabbages, leeks and celery keep for one-three months. If the top layer of leaves becomes slimy or discolored, they can easily be pulled away and discarded, revealing fresh leaves. No need to waste the good parts. Sometimes my carrots begin to sprout hair roots, but again, a peeler makes short work of restoring them. Check your stored veggies often to keep them at their best.

Some vegetables are sensitive to ethylene, a natural hormone found in plants. The best producers of ethylene are many fruits which ripen after picking, like avocados, apples, apricots, pears, melons and bananas. These should be kept away from the sensitive vegetables in storage to ward off spoilage. Some of the most sensitive are sweet potatoes, cucumbers, onions, potatoes, corn, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, broccoli and cauliflower.

Now I suppose you're wondering what I did with my gift of squash?

I roasted the pumpkin and kabocha after cutting in half and removing seeds. Just enough olive oil to prevent sticking. When flesh was soft, I scooped it out, mashed it and made a curried squash bisque with shallots, one potato (for smoothness), diced celery and water.

My seasonings were sweet curry powder, herbed salt, sumac powder, bay leaves and ground pepper. Here I could have used chicken or veggie broth. Sage or thyme would be good accents also. This is where the cook gets to make it their own.

I still have two squashes to go. For the spaghetti squash, I'll roast like above and then take a fork and draw it down the tender but firm flesh, making "spaghetti." You can eat as is or add tomato sauce, butter and fresh herbs, or perhaps a creamy hollandaise type of sauce. Perhaps with Parmesan?

The butternut is also in reserve for a future bisque or mashed side vegetable, perhaps roasted with other root vegetables.

I often make pickled or Harvard beets in winter. Beets can be wrapped in foil and roasted or boiled in a saucepan of water. Slip skins off by rubbing when fully cooked and cooled. For the Harvard beets, make a slurry of corn starch and apple cider vinegar and add to sweetened cooking liquid, with salt and pepper. Beets are sliced or cubed first. I usually use sugar to sweeten but maple syrup might add a dimension worthy of this elite dish. Season to your own tastes.

For pickled beets, I slice the cooked vegetable into diluted cider vinegar, adding sugar to sweeten, and salt and pepper. I also like to add sliced sweet onions to the mix. I have never added hardboiled, peeled eggs, but I know that is a crowd pleaser, too. Be sure your liquid covers all.

So much of the above produce offers excellent nutrition. Vitamin A in the orange-colored types. Beets offer anthocyanin which is an antioxidant that wards off inflammation. Cabbage offers vitamin C and K as well as minor elements and fiber.

## Flower power



Photo by Lorna Bates

The first thing that Lorna Bates planted when her family moved into their house 35 years ago was this purple clematis. It's been blooming every June since. It grew as high as the roof. Last fall, the porch was rebuilt. In the process, the clematis was damaged, so she cut it to the ground. It grew to 7 feet this year and blossomed. Its intense purple flowers are looking more gorgeous every day.

You can see why our predecessors worked so hard to offer these in winter. Perhaps with instinctual knowledge, they kept the family healthy all season by providing well.

**Send us  
your photos!**



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

The **Charlotte News**



# Calendar

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

## Green Mountain Book Festival Friday & Saturday, Nov. 1 & 2

The Green Mountain Book Festival is holding its third annual event in Burlington. The two-day festival celebrates the works of Vermont authors through panel discussions, readings, signings and workshops. The festival kicks off at the Venetian Soda Lounge at 7 p.m. with a fundraising event and tribute to Archer Mayor, who will receive the first annual Phoenix Books Lifetime Achievement Award. The evening will include an introduction and musical performance by author Stephen P. Kiernan of Charlotte, a silent auction, a cash bar, light refreshments and music throughout the night by Ethan Sawyer. The silent auction is now live and can be found at [32auctions.com/greenmountainbookfestival](https://32auctions.com/greenmountainbookfestival). At the Fletcher Free Library on Saturday, Kenneth Cadow will discuss his work. There will be panels about Vermont's history, poetry, writing horror, Romantasy, publishing and the craft of memoir. The evening will conclude with "Lit Night" at Muddy Waters at 5:30 p.m., featuring Vermont Poet Laureate Bianca Stone, a tribute to the late poet Ruben Jackson and readings. The schedule of events is at [greenmountainbookfestival.org/festival-schedule](https://greenmountainbookfestival.org/festival-schedule).

## 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



Courtesy photo

Champlain Valley Union High will present the musical version of 'Footloose' for four performances in the school's theater Nov. 15-17.



Courtesy photo

Shelburne Museum's holiday light spectacular, Winter Lights, runs Nov. 21-Jan. 5. For the first time, Winter Lights is partnering with Shelburne, expanding the lights into the village.

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 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 its Constitution reproductive freedom and liberty and support gay marriage. Vermont has been a leader in the equal rights movement for decades.

## Clothing drive 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.

## 'A Taste of Freedom'

### Wednesday-Saturday, Nov. 6-9, 7 p.m.

A Saint Michael's College student is shining light on the lived experiences of people with disabilities — including her own — through her original play, "A Taste of Freedom." A cast of four, which includes playwright Sadie Chamberlain, will perform the play in the McCarthy Arts Center Mainstage Theatre at Saint Michael's. Chamberlain's play is a fantastical, theatrical riff on her life as a person with cerebral palsy. More information at <https://tinyurl.com/469f4ksu>. The performances are free.

## Shelburne grab-and-go meal Tuesday, Nov. 12, 11 a.m.-noon

Age Well and St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Shelburne are providing a Thanksgiving meal to go for anyone age 60 and older. The meal will be available for pick up in the parking lot at 72 Church Street from 11 a.m. until noon. A \$5 donation is suggested. The menu is roast turkey with gravy, mashed potatoes, stuffing, sliced carrots, cranberry sauce, wheat roll, pumpkin pie with cream and milk. Order by Nov. 6 by email at [agewellstcath@gmail.com](mailto:agewellstcath@gmail.com) or phone at 802-503-1107.

## 'Footloose' at CVU

### Friday-Sunday, Nov. 15-17

Champlain Valley Union High will present the musical version of "Footloose" for four performances in the school's theater. Based on the iconic 1984 film, "Footloose" tells the story of Ren McCormack, a teenager who moves to the small town of Bomont, where dancing is banned. Ren teams up with local students to challenge the oppressive rules and bring the joy of dance back to their lives. With songs like "Let's Hear It for the Boy" and "Holding Out for a Hero," the musical celebrates freedom, friendship and the transformative power of music. The performances are Friday, Nov. 15, 7 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 16, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Nov. 17, 1 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and \$8 for students and faculty.

## Morningside Cemetery Association Monday, Nov. 18, 2 p.m.

The annual meeting of the Morningside Cemetery Association will be held at the Charlotte Town Offices on Monday, Nov. 18 at 2 p.m. This meeting is open to the general public. For additional information, contact Sheila Burleigh at 802-425-3835 or [sheilab@gmavt.net](mailto:sheilab@gmavt.net).

## Shelburne Thanksgiving meal Wednesday, Nov. 20, 11:30 a.m.

St. Catherine of Siena and Age Well are offering a Thanksgiving meal for



## On Books

# Orange trees, scampering squirrels and two good books

Katherine Arthaud  
Contributor

It is such a glorious day, so much so that it is almost impossible to justify going inside. Lately, each day seems as though it is the absolute most beautiful, most perfect day possible. And then the next day, it's even better. The orange trees, the yellow leaves, the bluebird sky, the gentle breeze, the just-right temperature, the buzzing bees, the little squirrels running around, the slim white trunks of birches, the still-green grass, the brilliant yellow-white moon at night. I could go on and on.

But I will cease, as I have a couple of good books to recommend. The first, "Here One Moment," is Liane Moriarty's 10th novel for adults. She's also written three children's books with beguiling titles, who knew.

Many who have never read her fiction have seen the two-season HBO television series, "Big Little Lies," based on her sixth novel, which takes place in sparkling Monterrey, Calif., and involves a bunch of rich parents, spectacular seaside homes, spoiled kids and some very dark secrets and goings-on, starring Reese Witherspoon, Nicole Kidman, Shailene Woodley, Alexander Skarsgard and Laura Dern. It is stunningly good, with a haunting musical score I will never get out of my head, breathtaking scenery and a compelling, unsettling, spine-prickling plot line. It's won a bunch of awards. If you haven't seen it, I recommend that you do.

"Nine Perfect Strangers" (Hulu) is also adapted from a Moriarty novel, again starring Nicole Kidman as the coiffed and spectral director of a new-age-y health-and-wellness resort. Not as good as "Big Little Lies," but definitely worth a binge on those upcoming cold fall-winter nights.

But enough of television; back to the written page. A little about Liane Moriarty: She is an Australian author, whose genre has been described as "character-driven heavier chick lit and mild thriller." Born in Sydney, Australia, in 1966, Moriarty worked in advertising and marketing, then ran her own company, before becoming a freelance advertising copywriter.

Her first novel, "Three Wishes," was written as part of a master's degree at Macquarie University in Sydney. She

currently lives in Sydney with her husband, a former farmer from Tasmania, and their two children. Her sister, Jaclyn Moriarty, is a young adult novelist.

When I picked up "Here One Moment," I didn't know what to expect; I was just so thrilled that Liane Moriarty, whose books I always enjoy, had written another book. And I was intrigued by the frontispiece, from Samuel Johnson: "When a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully."

And then, the first two sentences: "Later, not a single person will recall seeing the lady board the flight at Hobart Airport. Nothing about her appearance or demeanor raises a red flag or even an eyebrow." Odd and intriguing, I remember thinking, before contentedly turning the page, one hundred percent secure I was in excellent hands.

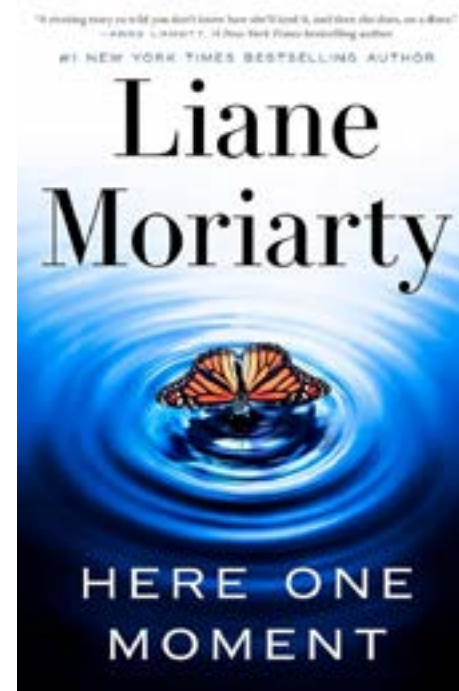
It took a while to figure out who this unassuming, uncolorful, unprepossessing older woman was and why she was important. "The lady is not strikingly beautiful or unfortunately ugly," writes Moriarty. "She wears a pretty green-and-white-patterned collared blouse tucked in at the waistband of slim-fitting gray pants. Her shoes are flat and sensible. She is not unusually pierced or bejeweled or tattooed. She has small silver studs in her ears and a sliver brooch pinned to the collar of her blouse, which she often touches, as if to check that it is still there."

"Which is all to say," the author goes on, "the lady who will later become known as 'the Death Lady' on the delayed 3:20 p.m. flight from Hobart to Sydney is not worthy of a second glance, not by anyone, not a single crew member, not a single passenger, not until she does what she does."

As I hate, hate, hate book reviews that reveal the plot and spoil all the surprises, I will not say much more, except that this story becomes increasingly compelling as it goes along. The simple, straightforward prose is in striking contrast to the unsettling plot, which is mind-opening and a tad radical. This book takes risks. Read it! You will not be disappointed.

"Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow" by Gabrielle Zevin is another good read. (Or in my case, good listen.)

It all starts with Sam and Sadie encountering one another in the children's

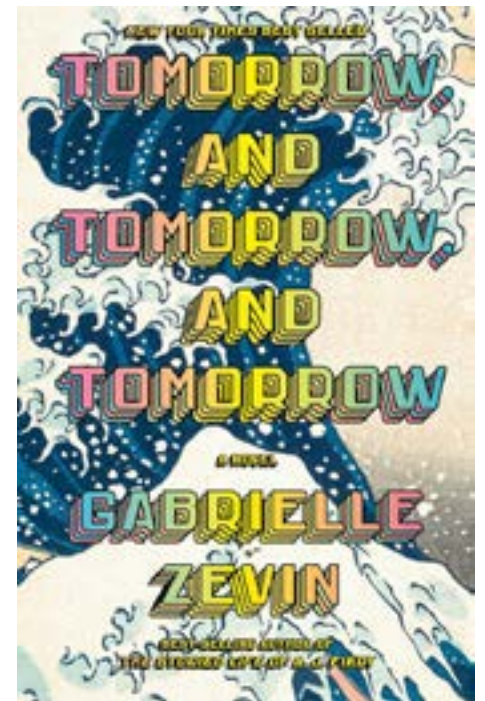


ward of a hospital. On the day they meet, 11-year-old Sadie "had been banished from her older sister Alice's hospital room. Alice was moody in the way of 13-year-olds, but she was also moody in the way of people who might be dying of cancer. Their mother, Sharyn, said that Alice should be given a great deal of latitude, that the dual storm fronts of puberty and illness were a lot for one body to grapple with. A great deal of latitude meant Sadie should go into the waiting area until Alice was no longer angry with her."

Intending to take shelter from the storm by escaping into the world of Nintendo for a bit, Sadie strays into the hospital game room where she sees a boy, wearing pajamas in the middle of the day, a pair of crutches at his side, his foot in a "medieval-looking cage-like contraption," playing Super Mario Bros.

"He had tangled curly black hair, a piggish nose, glasses, a cartoonishly round head. In Sadie's art class at school, she had been taught to draw by breaking things down into basic shapes. To depict this boy, she would have needed mainly circles."

To make a long story short, while not giving too much away, Sadie and Sam grow up and lose touch but reunite one cold December day during Sam's junior year at



Harvard, on a crowded subway platform in Cambridge, Mass. He calls her name, and for a moment she pretends she hasn't heard him. But then she turns, and the friendship is reignited. Though often in love, Sadie and Sam do not become lovers, but rather, collaborators in video game design, a realm about which I know next to nothing, though now know a good deal more than I did.

This book has good and important things to say about "the redemptive possibilities" of the art of playing. "Yes," says the jacket blurb, "it is a love story, but it is not one you have read before."

Very, very good read. Or listen. A tantalizing, infuriating, intricate, interesting, unusual plot. Excellent dialogue. Totally worthy. Highly recommend.

For those who don't know, the novel's title is from a speech from "Macbeth": "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow/ Creeps in this petty pace from day to day/ To the last syllable of recorded time/ And all our yesterdays have lighted fools/ The way to dusty death."

Happy reading. Oh, and carpe diem, everyone.

## CALENDAR Continued from page 20

anyone 60 or older in the parish hall at 72 Church Street in Shelburne. Check-in is 11:30 a.m. with meal served at noon. \$5 suggested donation. Menu: menu is roast turkey and gravy, stuffing, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, carrots, wheat roll, pumpkin pie with cream and milk. Entertainment by Gerry Ortego on guitar. Register by Nov. 13 at 802-662-5283 or kbatres@agewellvt.org.

### Winter Lights

Thursday, Nov. 21, 4:30 p.m.

Shelburne Museum's holiday light spectacular, Winter Lights, returns Nov.

21-Jan. 5. The museum campus will be aglow in a dazzling visual display of lights accompanied by musical selections. For the first time, Winter Lights the town of Shelburne is joining in, creating a holiday-village vibe. New is an circus display with figures inspired by the museum's collection illuminated by a Big Top of lights. At the steamboat Ticonderoga, sea creatures modeled after weathervanes in the museum's collection will "float" on the water created by a sea of lights. If purchased online at shelburnemuseum.org/visit/winter-lights, tickets are \$15 for adults; \$10 for children ages 3-17. Children under 3 — free. Tickets at the door — \$20 adult; \$15 child.



# Library News

## Wild Card Wed., fire dept. celebrate First Responders Day

Margaret Woodruff  
Director

Oct. 28 was First Responders Day.

The Wild Card Wednesday kids made a sign and decorated cupcakes to thank all the folks at Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service for the amazing work they do. They met up with a children's center class at the fire station to express their appreciation in person.

Everyone got a tour, explored the vehicles and learned a lot about what first responders do.

### Family Programs

#### Discovering the life of water

**Saturday, Nov. 9, 10:30 a.m.-noon**

Declan McCabe, aquatic ecologist and educator, brings his insight to the library for a hands-on water exploration event. With microscopes and other tools, you're invited to investigate life under and around the stones of our rivers and lakes. Registration appreciated but not required.

#### Vermont Reads 'Gather'

**Wednesday, Nov. 13, 5:30 p.m.**

Join the final program related to the Vermont Reads book for 2024. The library will be making stone soup and serving with fresh-baked bread so stop in to celebrate the value of community. If you haven't yet read "Gather," pick up a copy to take home and enjoy. Author Kenneth Cadow won the Kirkus young readers' literature prize, for the young adult novel about a boy living in poverty with his mother, who is struggling with opioid addiction. The jurors wrote of the National Book Award finalist, "Humor, grace and tenderness bring to life this beautifully realized story."

### Programs for kids

#### Preschool story time

**Tuesdays, 10 a.m.**

Come to the Charlotte 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.

#### 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](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org).

- Wednesday, Nov. 6 & 13: Get Messy with Megan — Join artist and art therapist Megan McSwain Mann for some art-making fun.

- Wednesday, Nov. 20: Edible Creativity — Make edible decorations for Thanksgiving tables, including cookie place cards and candy flowers.

#### Babytime

**Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. & first Saturdays, 10 a.m.**

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

#### 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.

#### Charlotte Grange talk, tour & pie

**Sunday, Nov. 10, 1-3 p.m.**

Jenny Cole, local history curator at the Charlotte Library, shares the story of Charlotte's cheese factories and creameries at the Grange. These small businesses provided a range of dairy products for local and more distant markets. Grange member



Photo from Charlotte Library archive

Milk being taken to the creamery during winter.

Trina Bianchi then leads a tour of the historic Grange building. Homemade pie and local ice cream round out the afternoon.

#### 'Becoming Animal' film showing

**Tuesday, Nov. 12, 7 p.m.**

A collaboration between filmmakers Emma Davie ("The Oil Machine") and Peter Mettler ("The End of Time") and the influential writer and geophilosopher David Abram ("The Spell of the Sensuous"), "Becoming Animal" is an urgent and immersive audiovisual quest, forging a path into the places where humans and other animals meet. Join a brief discussion and refreshments following the film.

#### Tech help at senior center

**Wednesday, Nov. 13, 10-11 a.m.**

Email enigma? Kindle conundrum? App apprehension? Computer questions? Or maybe you want to learn how to use your library card to read or listen to books on a device. Sign up for a 20-minute, one-on-one session at the senior center with Charlotte Library's technology librarian for some tech support. She will troubleshoot with you and will provide suggestions for next steps.

Make sure to bring your device and any necessary login information. When registering, provide a specific topic or item you need help with and include the device you will be bringing to the session (e.g. Windows laptop, Mac laptop, Kindle, iPhone, iPad, Android phone, etc.). To register, call the senior center at 802-425-6345.

#### Zachary DeFranco & Chris Gribnau music

**Saturday, Nov. 16, noon-1 p.m.**

Enjoy folk tunes and instrumentation with these two Charlotte musicians.

#### Mystery book group

**Monday, Nov. 18, 10 a.m.**

In "The Murder of Mr. Wickham," a summer house party turns into a whodunit when Mr. Wickham, one of literature's most notorious villains, meets a sudden and suspicious end in this mystery featuring Jane Austen's leading literary characters. As tempers flare and secrets are revealed,

it's clear that everyone would be happier if Mr. Wickham got his comeuppance. Yet they're all shocked when Wickham turns up murdered, except, of course, for the killer hidden in their midst. 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, library director 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. Group meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Join Zoom meeting 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](mailto:info@charlottepubliclibrary.org)

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

The Charlotte Library Board of Trustees meets the first Thursday of each month at 6 p.m., unless otherwise rescheduled following the Opening Meeting Law. Contact the library or visit the library website ([charlottepubliclibrary.org](http://charlottepubliclibrary.org)) for more information.



# Senior Center News

## 'Capital for a Day' tour of state aging reps visits center

Lori York  
Director

Representatives from the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living and the Vermont Association of Senior Centers and Meal Providers visited the senior center as part of the Governor's Capital for a Day tour in Chittenden County.

Capital for a Day gives local constituents and municipal government leaders the opportunity to connect with state leadership and staff.

### Community

#### November art exhibit

Visit the senior center during November to view The Power & Poetry of Water, and exhibit of the fine-art photography by Jonathan Hart of water and the results of water in natural settings. Check out his website at jonathanhartphoto.com. Artist reception on Saturday, Nov. 2, 3-4:15 p.m.

#### Autumn kirtan

##### Sunday, Nov. 3, 4:30-6 p.m.

Join Charlie Nardoizzi and Heidi Kvasnak for an autumn kirtan on Nov. 3, 4:30-6 p.m. Kirtans are heart-centered practices where a group sings ancient yogic chants or songs that are simple and repetitive, with the intention of creating a feeling of connection and peacefulness. Everyone is encouraged to join in to sing in unison or in call and response. If you prefer to listen, you will still experience the peaceful benefits of coming together in community and taking in this beautiful, contemplative practice. Chant sheets will be available and there will be time between the chants for short, quiet meditation. Suggested donation \$5-\$20. Registration recommended by calling 802-425-6345.

#### Protecting finances from fraud Wednesday, Nov. 6, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Learn about the numerous scams that are out there, especially the ones that are targeted at older adults. Learn how the crooks contact you, the red flags to watch out for, techniques to avoid being taken advantage of and what to do if you fall victim to fraud. The key to preventing fraud is learning how to guard your accounts. Free. Registration is suggested by calling 802-425-6345.

#### Understanding Medicare Thursday, Nov. 7, 1-2 p.m.

Join Joerg Bernhard from Lifetime Solutions Insurance as he leads a discussion about the Medicare changes for 2025, including the Inflation Reduction Act affecting the maximum out of pocket for prescriptions. He will also review the area service reduction by United Healthcare, and he will answer any questions about the open enrollment for Medicare while also providing the option for individual consultations. Free. Registration is suggested — 802-425-6345.

#### Photography discussion group Sunday, Nov. 10, 3-4:30 p.m.

Join photographer Jonathan Hart as he discusses stories about his photographs followed by welcomed feedback. Bring a couple of your photographs for review and feedback. Agreement: The discussion group is a safe space, so photographers feel encouraged to seek impactful outcomes with

their image-making. Free. No registration required.

#### Friends of Charlotte Senior Center Wednesday, Nov. 13, 1-2 p.m.

Join this session to hear the highlights of this past year and what is being planned moving forward. An update of the organization's financial position will be given; questions will be answered; and election of board members will take place. Open to all.

#### Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group Wednesday, Nov. 13, 4-5 p.m.

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

#### AARP Smart Driver™ Course Saturday, Nov. 16, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

The AARP Smart Driver course is designed for older drivers. It will help refresh your driving skills and may even help you save on your auto insurance. Discount for AARP members. Bring lunch. Class size is limited. Checks should be made out to AARP. \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members. Registration required at 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. Taught by a certified instructor who has studied with the founder of the Tai Chi for Arthritis Association. Email questions to belizahammer@hotmail.com. \$10 a class. No registration required.

#### Yoga Strength-Building Practice Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-noon

Heidi Kvasnak leads an integrative practice that builds strength and stability while



Photo by Lori York

Susan Tucker is engrossed in the fall watercolor workshop.

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 to and up from the floor with or without props. \$10 a class. No registration required.

### Programs

#### Acrylics

**Tuesdays, Nov. 12 & 19, 8:30 a.m.-noon**

Sign up for a fun time creating your own stamps and stencils to print fascinating, colorful designs on various types of papers. The group will then tear up the printed papers to create unique collages. The instructor will provide some of the supplies, but you will also need to purchase your own supplies. Register early so you can get your supplies before the class starts since some items are not available locally. A supply list will be sent to you upon your registration and payment. All levels welcome. Cost: \$110. Registration and payment required by Nov. 5. To register: 802-425-6345.

#### Porcelain ornament workshop Thursday, Nov. 14, 1-2:30 p.m.

Join this workshop and make handcrafted porcelain clay ornaments. You will make up to four ornaments that you can decorate with textures and glazes. The ornaments will be fired and the finished ornaments will be brought back to the senior center in two weeks. Judy Devitt is a professional potter who has taught for 30 years. Cost: \$20. Registration and payment due by Monday, Nov. 11. To register, call 802-425-6345.

#### Italian for total beginners Tuesdays & Fridays; Nov. 22, Dec. 6, 13, 20 & Dec. 3 & 10; 10-11 a.m.

Are you interested in beginning your study of Italian? Join the group to explore the beauty of the Italian language and culture. For questions about whether this class is the correct level, email Nicole Librandi at nicolelibrandi2@gmail.com. Cost: \$60. Registration and payment required by Monday, Nov. 11.

#### 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.

#### 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  
212 Ferry Road, Charlotte  
802-425-6345  
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# Senior center plans Patriotic Lunch for Monday, Nov. 4

Susan Ohanian  
Contributor

A piece in “Dressing for Dinner in the Naked City: And Other Tales from the Wall Street Journal’s Middle Column” (1994) grabs attention: “Waiter, There’s a Rat in My Soup, And It’s Delicious.”

The owner of the restaurant featuring 30 different rat dishes promised that they served only “free-range rats,” rats that fed on fruits and vegetables.

I checked out the current menu at this restaurant that once featured those 30 rat dishes. Now there are none. Instead, the diner can choose ocean prawn, Peking duck or Boston lobster. There’s coconut pudding for dessert.

Not to worry. The Nov. 4 Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center is titled Vote: Patriotic Lunch, and its menu offers food favorites: Boston baked beans with franks, red white and blue caprese salad, homemade corn bread and apple pie with ice cream.

In Worcestershire, England, in 2013, thieves cut a hole in a delivery truck and made off with 6,400 cans of Heinz baked beans with sausages. The thieves were never caught, and we can only wonder what they did with all those beans.

Needless to say, people in Massachusetts take their beans very seriously. On June 23, 1993, the Massachusetts General Court determined the navy bean had been the original bean in the venerable Boston baked bean recipe and named the baked navy bean the official Massachusetts State Bean.

Homemade corn bread is in direct lineage from the ground corn meal that was a staple food for Native Americans across the country. European settlers adopted this food and later spread it to Europe.

Pie, of course, has its own story, and here’s the ending to Roy Blount Jr.’s ode to pie from “One Fell Soup or I’m Just a Bug on the Windshield of Life”:

“Apple and pumpkin and mince and black bottom,



Photo by Luiza from Pixabay

I’ll come to your place every day if you’ve got ‘em.”

Monday Munch at the Charlotte Senior Center has indeed got ‘em — apple pie topped with ice cream.

Mark Twain seems to have had quite a negative experience with apple pie. Here’s his description: “Construct a bullet-proof dough ... toughen and kiln-dry it a couple of days ... fill with stewed dried apple; aggravate with cloves, lemon peel and slabs of citron; add two portions of New Orleans sugar. Then solder on the lid and set in a safe place till it petrifies. Serve cold at breakfast and invite your enemy.”

For a totally different experience, invite a friend to join you at the Charlotte Senior Center for a great meal topped with a delicious piece of apple pie.

Noted Episcopal priest and cook Robert Farrar Capon observed, “I like a cook who smiles out loud when he tastes his own

work. Let God worry about your modesty. I want to see your enthusiasm.” I can testify from personal experience that the kitchen at the Charlotte Senior Center is a very enthusiastic place. And the cooks’ out-loud smiling spreads out to the people who eat there.

Early November is a busy eating time at the Charlotte Senior Center.

## Men’s breakfast

### Friday, Nov. 8, 7:30 a.m.

Men’s breakfast happens twice a month, when men gather for breakfast and conversation. Check the senior center website for information on the guest speaker.

Doors open at 7 a.m. Breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Suggested donation: \$6. Registration required by Tuesday for the Friday breakfast. If you are planning to attend the men’s breakfast, email [lmorrison@gmavt](mailto:lmorrison@gmavt).

net by Tuesday, Nov. 6.

Also on Friday, there’s a special complimentary Veteran’s Lunch prepared by the Residence at Shelburne Bay for veterans and a guest. Space is limited and registration is required. Call the senior center at 802-425-6345.

Mac & cheese, pulled pork sliders, arugula salad with champagne vinaigrette dressing and dessert.

## Monday Munch, Nov. 11

The menu features chicken butternut squash soup served over couscous plus a salad and dessert.

A note about couscous: In December 2020, UNESCO officially recognized Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia for “the knowledge, know-how, and practices pertaining to the production and consumption of couscous.” The joint submission by the four countries was hailed as an example of international cooperation.

Meanwhile, Jeff Bezos admits he used to open a can of Pillsbury biscuits, put them on a cooking sheet, spread on butter, pop them in the oven and eat the whole can for breakfast (<https://tinyurl.com/4hatvb9b>).

According to former Trump campaign officials Corey Lewandowski and David Bowie in “Let Trump be Trump,” his go-to McDonald’s order was two Big Macs, two Fillet-O-Fish and a chocolate malted shake.

Somehow, in our troubled times, it seems significant that people can at least agree about good food, and even laugh at the antics of people who like bad food. Go eat at the Charlotte Senior Center with the promise that neither your beans nor your biscuits will come out of a can.

Enjoy the Beach Boys singing “Vegetables,” complete with someone chewing celery in the background (<https://tinyurl.com/yckendsm>).

Finally, I invite you to read what happens when a longtime public schoolteacher takes on Trump. Just published: Volume 3 in my three-book series. This one is “Trump, Trump, Trump: Swan Song.”

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