



By Corey Gambardella,
Okemo

A PASSION FOR SKIING, LEADS TO A CAREER, HOME AT OKEMO

Terry Fortuna worked her way up to the leadership team. Okemo is now a family affair!

Page 5

TAXES: WHAT IS MY 'FAIR SHARE'?

Did you know: Vermonters with an income of \$229,550/year pay the same tax rate as those who earn \$2m? Lt. Gov. Zuckerman explains taxes: what the current policies are and how they compare.

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Courtesy VTF&W

Exterior building damage caused by a bear attempting to access food in a kitchen.

BEARS ARE OUT EARLY THIS SPRING

Due to warmer than average temperatures, bears are coming out of hibernation. Take steps to ensure safety of you and the bears!

Page 2

MVSU seeks public feedback

By Polly Mikula

Voter turn out was "huge" this past Town Meeting Day, March 5 — even a record in some towns in the Mountain Views Supervisory Union (MVSU) district.

Reading had the highest percent of its registered voters turn out, at 59%. All other district towns were also higher than average at over 45%.

Primary elections typically bring out more voters, but so do local hot-button Articles like high-dollar bond votes or increases in the budget.

This year, MVSU had both. MVSU listens → 7



By Paul Holmes

Deep snow smiles

Killington received 27 inches of snow in two days Saturday night through Monday, March 11. Skiers, riders and pups rejoiced!

Vermonters rejected nearly one-third of school budgets

On Town Meeting Day 29 of 93 school budgets were voted down including four in Rutland County and two in Windsor County

By Ethan Weinstein/VTDigger

Voters struck down close to a third of school budgets across Vermont on Tuesday, March 5, the highest proportion in at least a decade, according to the Vermont Superintendents Association.

Twenty-nine of 93 reported budgets were rejected, according to unofficial results collected by the association. Four districts still hadn't reported as of early Wednesday afternoon, and 22 have votes still to come.

Last year, only two budgets were rejected on Town Meeting Day.

Leading up to Tuesday, voters had expressed dismay at the anticipated increase in education property taxes, projected to rise by an average of 19%, due in part to a proposed increase of more than \$200 million in school spending.

In a joint statement, the Superintendents Association and the Vermont School Boards Association called for state and local collaboration in the face of a historic rejection of school budgets.

"Yesterday's school district voting results indicate that, as a community, we have work to do in supporting our public education system and the taxpayers who fund it," read

"I know that last night's rejection of nearly a third of all school budgets isn't a repudiation of our local public schools," Tinney said.

"Rather, it's a reasonable reaction to completely unrealistic spikes in property taxes driven by events over which our dedicated local school boards have no control."

the statement. "In an environment where societal needs are growing and the capacity of our public systems is diminishing, schools are expanding services to meet the needs of students and families. As a result, costs are mounting."

School boards have until July 1 to rework budgets and pass them. If they're unable to secure approval for a revised budget, districts can borrow up to 87% of their last passed budget to pay for operations.

School budgets → 6

Rutland's Social Tinkering organization expands reach with national spotlight

Last Wednesday, March 6, Rutland area nonprofit organization Social Tinkering was featured during the prime news hour between 5-6 p.m. on National Public Radio (NPR). The Social Tinkering team is thrilled that people are hearing about their work all across the nation, but that spotlight is just the beginning. The response they've received from people in states near and far has been very exciting. Their 4-minute NPR piece skyrocketed engagement and reach on social media by 79% on Facebook and 1,600% on Instagram, and within hours over a dozen people from across the country had joined their email list.

Messages flowed in asking things like: "Do you have events in my area?" "How can I get involved?" "Am I in luck that you're doing events in my town?" "How can I start this in my area?"

From New York to Alabama, Detroit-Metro to California to Omaha, people all across the country are reaching out. So what's local Director Jeanette Langston's reaction? "Hold on folks, we're working on it!" Because what Social Tinkering is doing is different from your usual hangout. They named the complex problem of social isolation and lack of connection and intentionally design their social spaces in ways that people can be socially awkward, unsure, and make mistakes, and still be welcomed with open arms, compassion, laughter, and a hot tea or cocoa.

As Langston said, "We're all awkward and weird so let's just be that together, talk about it, and overcome it."

Marissa Arduca, the organization's assistant director said: "It's not just about the numbers for us. What really matters is the genuine impact on people who stopped, who related to

Social Tinkering → 14

Be a Castleton University student, for a day

Free opportunity for the community by the community

Castleton University is hosting a new event: A 1-Day University.

Free and designed for the greater Rutland community, the inaugural event will take place on Saturday, March 23, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the VTSU Castleton Campus.

Registration opened Monday, March 11, and over 100 people signed up within the first few hours of the offering.

The one-day event is aimed at bringing the community together to explore, enjoy and learn.

There will be presenters — neighbors, students, and faculty — who will share their passions and expertise. The subjects will span a wide variety from fiber arts, biking tips and 3D scanning to public speaking, international folk dancing, yoga and living off the grid. Sessions are 50 minutes long and people can sign up for as many sessions as they like.

Lunch can be purchased in town or in the university



Ross Conrad, former president of the Vermont Beekeepers Association, will lead a session on beekeeping during Castleton's 1-Day University on Saturday, March 23.

cafeteria with more time to meet and chat.

1-Day University is a free — the attendees do not pay and the presenters do not get paid. The goal is simply to bring community members from the greater Rutland County together

and for everyone to be inspired, enlightened and entertained, to discover new ideas and interests — and have a great time doing it. Plus no tests or grades — just the pure joy of learning!

1-Day University is

organized by the Castleton Bridge Initiative and the VTSU Castleton Student Government Association.

Registration and a list of classes is now open at: bit.ly/Castleton1DayU.

(Register ASAP to secure a spot!)

Courtesy VTSU

Killington clarifies study on feasibility of leaving MSVU

By Curt Peterson

Last week, Killington voters approved Article 5 authorizing a study into the ways the town might leave the Mountain View Supervisory Union and either join “a Rutland SU” or become a total “choice town.”

At Monday's very short Select Board meeting, March 11, Debbie LeBlond asked selectman Jim Haff to clarify any costs for the study, citing his statement that the study would be “at no cost” and the informational meeting before the vote, but that Town Manager Michael Ramsay had written in the Q&A published in the Mountain Times that “consultants will be hired.”

Haff assured Ms. LeBlond that there will be no cost associated with the study. Ramsay acknowledged he might have given the wrong impression in his previous answer.

The proposed “exit study” is inspired by opposition to a \$99 million bond required for a new middle/high school complex at the Woodstock campus and the high rate of education taxes in the MVSU district.

The current middle/high school building was ranked second worst in the state by the state a few years ago, but Haff feels doing only renovations that are absolutely required to keep the facility functioning would be better tax-wise, and more appropriate for the number of students in the district.

Killington voters rejected the MVSU FY2025 budget by the greatest margin of any town in the district and presumably rejected the bond by at least that margin, likely greater.

Haff's description of the Article 5 study at Monday night's meeting provided more information than his spontaneous motion to add the Article in February (approved without comment by the other two selectmen) but is still basically an outline.

At Monday's meeting he said “Rutland” will come to Killington and give a presentation, including budget information, Study → 6

Bears are becoming active earlier in the spring

VTF&W: Take steps now to prevent bear conflicts

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Dept. has begun to receive reports of bears coming out of their dens and is urging Vermonters to take steps now to prevent conflicts with bears over the spring and summer.

“Vermonters need to act to prevent bear conflicts now, even if they have never had a bear visit their property before,” said Jaclyn Comeau, the department's bear biologist in a news release March 8. “Do not wait to take down your birdfeeders and bearproof your yard until a bear comes to visit.”

Bear incidents have been on the rise over the past several years. Officials believe this trend is a result of Vermont's healthy black bear population learning to associate people with food over generations.

Shorter winters also mean that bears are emerging from their dens earlier in the spring. In recent years bear activity has begun in mid-March, roughly two weeks earlier than what is typically thought of as the start of bear aware season in northern New England.

“Mid-March is the time for Vermonters to take down our birdfeeders, make sure our garbage is secure, and protect our backyard chickens and bees with an electric fence,” said Comeau. “This helps teach bears that our yards and neighborhoods are not good places to search for food. But, it will only work if everyone does their part.” The department asks Vermonters to take the following proactive steps for coexisting with bears:

- Take down birdfeeders between mid-March and December
- Store garbage in bear-resistant containers or structures; trash cans alone are not enough
- Follow the steps on vtfishandwildlife.com for composting in bear country
- Use electric fences to keep chickens and honeybees safe
- Request a bear-resistant dumpster from your waste hauler
- Feed your pets indoors
- Never feed bears, deliberately

or accidentally

“Preventing bears from having access to human-related foods is key to successful coexistence with these long-lived and intelligent animals,” said Comeau.

VTF&W also asks Vermonters to submit reports of bears engaging in potentially dangerous behavior like targeting birdfeeders and garbage, feeding on crops or livestock, or investigating campgrounds. Reports can be submitted on the department's Living with Black Bears web page. The data help biologists keep track of bear incidents and provide early interventions to head off conflicts.

“At the end of the day, purposely feeding a bear is not just bad for the bear,” said Comeau. “It is also dangerous for you, it causes problems for your neighbors, and it is illegal. If bears are finding food on your property it is your responsibility to remove that attractant and report a problem before the situation escalates.”



Courtesy VTF&W

Fresh bear tracks on a Vermont porch photographed in the first week of March 2024.

<p>Mechanical & Herbicide Treatment</p> <p> 348 acres</p> <p>To Enhance Oak</p>	<p>Prescribed Fire</p> <p> 963 acres</p> <p>To Enhance Oak</p>	<p>Climate Adaptation</p> <p> 381 acres</p> <p>Tree Planting</p>	<p>Emerald Ash Borer</p> <p> 786 acres*</p> <p>Hazard Tree Mitigation</p> <p><small>*within total Telephone Gap IRP boundary.</small></p>
<p>Stand Improvement</p> <p> 465 acres</p> <p>Growth Enhancement</p>		<p>Stand Improvement</p> <p> 855 acres</p> <p>Carbon Enhancement</p>	

Courtesy USDA

Courcelle SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are now available to all Rutland County High School Seniors

Application Deadline is April 29, 2024

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Applications can be found at your school guidance counselors office, or online at: pegtvt.com

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Forest Service invites public to review the Telephone Gap Project preliminary environmental assessment

Open house to held Wednesday, March 20, at Barstow

Following nearly four years of study, the Green Mountain National Forest's preliminary environmental assessment for the Telephone Gap Integrated Resource Project is now available for public review and comment. Written comments will be accepted until April 8, 2024. Public comments received will be used to prepare a final environmental assessment, expected to be completed by early June 2024.

A public open house to learn more about the project proposal is scheduled for the evening of March 20, from 6-8 p.m. at the Barstow Memorial School, 223 Chittenden Road, Chittenden. After a brief introduction, the open house will provide an informal opportunity to ask Forest Service staff questions regarding the environmental analysis.

Maps and information will be available for review.

The project area is located in the Rochester and Middlebury Ranger Districts of the Green Mountain National Forest, primarily within the towns of Chittenden, Killington, Mendon, and Pittsfield and also includes small portions of Brandon, Goshen, Pittsford, and Stockbridge.

The project area encompasses approximately 72,253 acres, 49% of

which are National Forest System (NFS) land.

Goals and public benefits of the project include improved wildlife habitat, increased habitat diversity, restored soil and watershed conditions, a sustainable network of roads and trails, increased recreation opportunities, and timber harvesting to provide wood products for the local and regional economy while enhancing forest health and diversity.

Six public meetings and four field trips were held to gather input and ideas regarding the future management of this area to develop the proposed action. A scoping letter was then shared with the public in January 2023, public comments were gathered through March 13, 2023 and the original proposed action has been modified, and two additional alternative proposals have been developed to address public comments:

- Alternative B - Modified Proposed Action
- Alternative C - Developed to address public issues regarding the amount of mature and old forests proposed for harvest.
- Alternative D - Developed to address public issues

regarding the quantity of fossil fuel emissions from timber harvest activities.

Proposed timber harvests and additional treatments are designed to address resource concerns identified by forest inventory, including:

More than 5,000 acres of timber stands in the project area are overstocked with trees and are experiencing reduced growth and increased density-caused mortality.

Over half (approximately 57%) of the suitable timber lands in the Telephone Gap project area are comprised of tree species that will exhibit increased signs of mortality or loss of merchantable value from disease or insects between now and the next time this landscape is likely to be considered for management.

Low quality timber stands, including trees with poor form, declining vigor, insect, disease or physical damage, and in particular beech bark disease. Beech bark disease, for which there is no cure, involves an interaction between an introduced insect and a fungus that slowly kills the tree. Stands of beech often succumb to the disease before reaching maturity, resulting in a flush of new beech re-sprout growth

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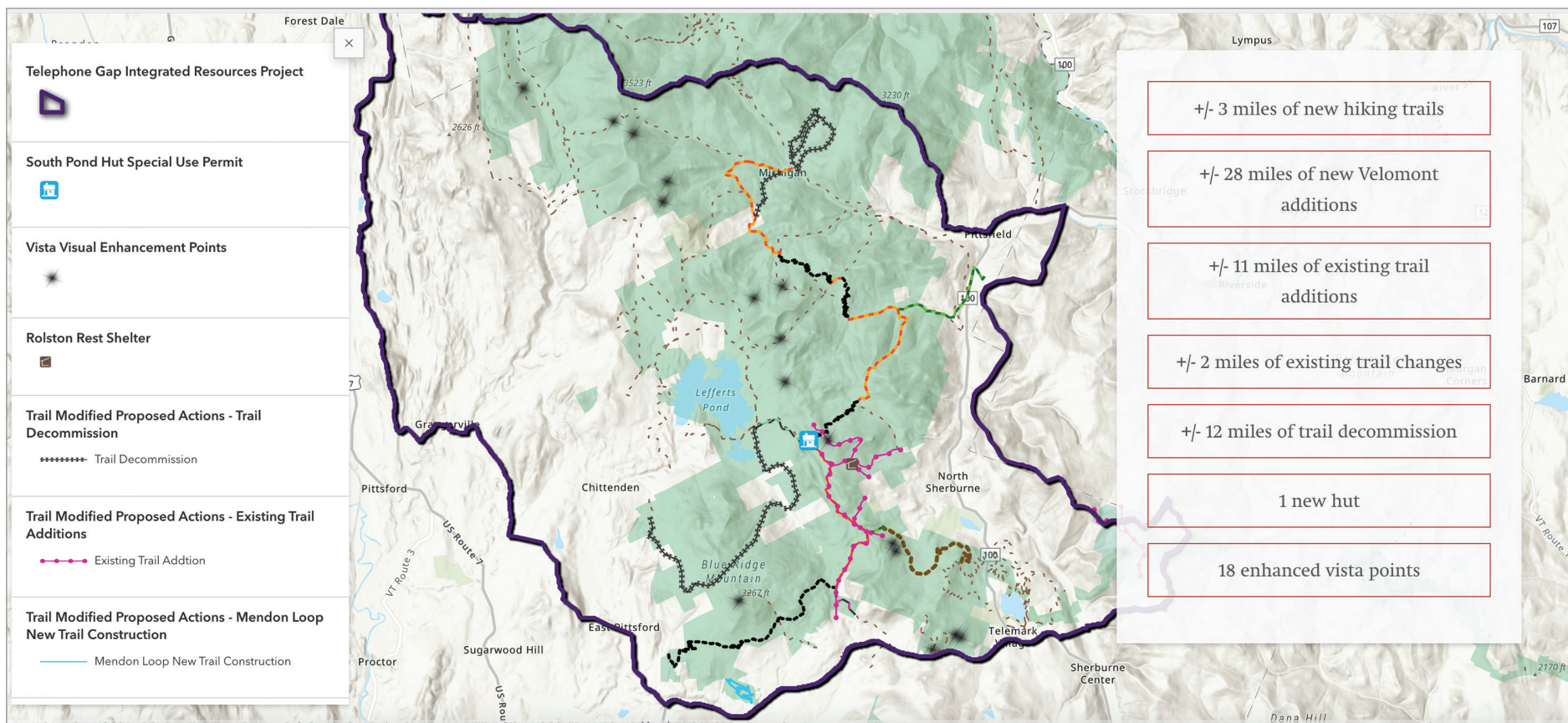


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Courtesy USDA

Map shows trails and visual vistas (lookouts) within the Telephone Gap area as well as the site of a newly proposed hut. The proposal includes new trails for hiking and biking (listed right).

← Telephone Gap: from page 3

destined for the same fate. Forest management focuses on reducing the density of beech in the forest while reserving individual beech trees that appear to be resistant or provide habitat for wildlife. Beech doesn't compete well in full sunlight, so management involves creating openings where full sunlight reaches the ground, favoring other species such as yellow birch.

Recreation and vistas

Recreation resources within the Telephone Gap project area include trails, developed recreation sites (such as shelters and trailheads), dispersed recreation

activities, and recreation special uses.

Currently, there are limited opportunities for specific trail uses such as mountain biking. At the same time, there are challenges involved in maintaining existing trails and facilities.

One of the most popular public activities on the Green Mountain National Forest is viewing scenery provided by established vistas. Management activities are needed to provide new vistas and maintain existing vistas especially along the Appalachian Trail/Long Trail.

The Vermont Huts Association has also applied to construct and operate a hut/

cabin providing year-round use north of South Pond. The hut would be managed under a special use permit and made available for public use by reservation. The Vermont Huts Association would be responsible for operation and maintenance. The permit would include use of an existing access road by snowmobile for operations including maintenance during the winter, and by wheeled vehicles in non-snow conditions.

Recreation and visual quality related proposals are the same for all alternatives. Although no alternatives were developed to address recreation or visual quality

concerns, public scoping comments associated with proposed trail activities and infrastructure within the project area led to modifications to the proposed action. These modified proposals include trail relocations, changes in managed trail use, adding existing trails on the South Pond acquisition to the Forest Service system, and reduced trail decommissioning.

A detailed description of the Telephone Gap project, the preliminary Environmental Assessment, associated maps, and directions on how to submit comments can be found at: fs.usda.gov/project/?project=60192.

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Okemo: A family affair and home for Fortuna

By Karen D. Lorentz

Born in Rockingham, Vermont, Terry Fortuna grew up the second of five children in Gassetts, Vermont, and graduated from Green Mountain High School in Chester in 1978. At age 17, she learned to ski with friends at Magic Mountain and Timber Ridge.

“I started skiing while working at Magic and could afford to do it. Prior to that it was an expense that was not possible for my family,” she said of beginning a lifelong connection to skiing that soon included Okemo.

Starting in December 1983, she worked at the Sitting Bull “to help a friend for Christmas vacation. I ended up staying the rest of the season,” she remembered.

She also met Bob Fortuna during a winter carnival, and they married later that year.

As weekend warriors, the Fortunas commuted to Okemo from Fairfield, Connecticut, “every weekend from November to mid-April. Bob was a former racer and very into skiing, so we got our kids started at 18 months,” Terry noted.

She taught each tot on the lower mountain and her husband took over when that child graduated to the upper mountain. Since the boys were all a few years apart, “it all worked out well. Ryan, Matthew, Zack, and Cody became competitive snowboarders and also worked at Okemo for periods of time, with Matt and Cody still working here,” Fortuna said of Okemo becoming a family affair.

Having traveled around the country for competitions and having lived in Park City for two years due to a job transfer, the family moved to Ludlow permanently in September 2001.

Q&A with Terry Fortuna

Mountain Times: What positions have you worked in at Okemo?



By Corey Gambardella, Okemo
Terry Fortuna smiles on a sunny day outside Jackson Gore at Okemo Resort.

Terry Fortuna: After the 1983-84 season, I worked on the patrol part-time for nine years. Then I went back to Food and Beverage and for periods of time managed every food outlet except the Summit Lodge. This led to becoming manager of Wedding Operations/Banquets in 2016.

When Vail purchased Okemo [2018], I was offered an amazing opportunity as general manager for hospitality [title since changed to senior manager of lodging]. Although I did not have hotel experience, I was told that I was recognized for my leadership and work ethic. I have learned a lot about the lodging and hospitality business from Vail leaders. Being part of the larger Vail family of resorts, we have so many learning and leadership opportunities.

MT: What do you like about the hospitality business? How is it a good fit for you?

TF: In the hospitality business, our goal is to make people feel welcome, relaxed, and happy.

We are faced with daily challenges with guests that span a spectrum of issues. We need to prioritize and solve as many issues as we can as quickly as we can with the goal of guest satisfaction always in mind. I am so fortunate to work with an amazing team that cares about people.

Challenges and crisis are an area I do very well in. If there is a crisis or emergency, this is the area I thrive in. It could be my 34 years working part-time as an EMT here and in Connecticut. While handling a crisis, I get very focused and seem to see the creative solutions easily.

The flood really tested us this past July. I was here with my two front office managers and a desk agent — no other employees. We had 125 guests who could not leave. We had to figure out how to feed them and take care of everything ... it was a challenge!

MT: What is the best part of your job? Rewards?

TF: Best part? For sure the people — guests and employees.

We meet a lot of people. There is nothing better than knowing we helped guests make memories for a lifetime. I still have wedding couples that stop in to say hi, eager to catch up, and show me their growing families.

I met my best friend here 40 years ago. I met my husband here, too. I have made so many lifelong friends.

It is also rewarding to know that we as Okemo managers and leaders have helped shape the lives of so many of our employees.

MT: Any special influences or situations that have helped shape your life?

TF: My parents for sure. My dad had high expectations for me, higher than I had for myself. I had aunts who were determined to teach me that etiquette and manners matter and the



Submitted
Terry Fortuna (left) and her husband Bob enjoy their time with grandkids.

OBITUARY

Bernard Rome, 89

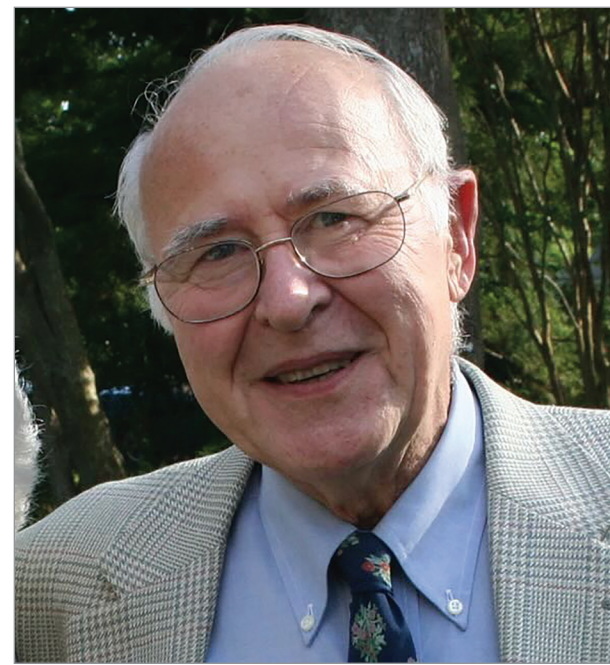
Bernard Rome passed away on Saturday, March 9, in West Palm Beach, Florida, from heart failure. He was 89. Rome was survived by his much-loving family: his wife of 55 years, Timmie (née Blumstein), son Narric and daughter Mallory, daughter-in-law Megan, and four grandchildren he adored (Ziv, Will, Natan, and Hadley).

Bernard Rome was born in Burlington, July 18, 1934, but his family moved to Clinton Ave. in Rutland when he was 2 years old. Rome attended Rutland High School (Class of 1952) where he later returned as a graduation speaker. He was a lifelong member of the Rutland Jewish Center, which is where he was when Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941, launching the U.S. into World War II. Bernard’s father, Louis, was the oldest man drafted in the state of Vermont and served as a chaplain’s assistant in the war. Rome was predeceased by his father, Louis, his mother, Celia (Katz), and his brother, Newman.

The family opened a business in Rutland in the 1960s which later turned into the Ski Shack and moved in 1976 to the corner of Route 4 and the Killington Access Road, where it flourished for decades.

Rome earned a B.S. in business from the University of Vermont (Class of 1956). He spent his life as an entrepreneur, developing ideas with a creativity, passion, and commitment that led to some notable successes, including the Rome Report, Teletrade, and a technology that began the modern-day tracking of TV advertising, which he sold to Time Warner. He lived life seeing the opportunity for improvement, whether in grocery shopping or plastic wrap or stock trading. He loved to learn and build expertise in new fields.

Rome returned full time to Vermont in 1991, for what he called retirement. He expanded the Ski Shack, opened other businesses in the area, and worked hard to build a campus in Killington to help expand the housing, education and cultural options in the region. His strong beliefs about the state education finance legislation (Act 60) led him to run for governor in 1998. He had strong political views describing himself as a “Jimmy Jeffords Republican,” after Senator Jeffords (with whom Rome grew up with in Rutland) left the party to serve as an independent. Rome later served several terms on the Killington Town Select Board helping to guide Killington’s economic development. He loved starting his days over coffee at the Deli at Killington Corners and then working in his office above the Killington post office. He loved Vermont and cherished his family’s history there.



Submitted
Bernie Rome → 6



By Donald Dill

Natural wine store opens in Ludlow

The Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce recently celebrated the grand opening of Yeah Wine Shop, a natural wine store, in Lamere Square in Ludlow. The ribbon cutting event was accompanied by a wine tasting afternoon. Yeah Wine Shop has a vast variety of natural wines made both locally as well as from around the world. For the ribbon cutting ceremony, Karen Kraut, owner, and Eric Kraut cut the ribbon together with Chamber Executive Director Carol Lighthall holding the ribbon (left) and Assistant Chamber Director Leah Kriebel (right).

← Fortuna: from page 5

value of being kind.

At Okemo, I could see over decades that it was possible to advance and make a career here. I now sit on the senior leadership team with managers like Bruce Schmidt, Eb Kinney, and John Neal who have been here for three or four decades.

MT: How do you spend time out of work?

TF: I spend time with my sons, their families, my mom, and local relatives. The best is time spent with Sage, Maple, and Cedar, our grandkids! I'm an avid skier but due to injuries, I've had to put a pause on that but hope to restart next winter. We all play golf. If we can't ski, we are looking for a golf course.

I've also been active in community fund-

raising, most recently working with a group to raise money for the Ludlow Fire Dept.

MT: What would you tell someone who was thinking about a job at a ski area?

TF: Experience Okemo because if you come to Okemo for a job, you could be here for a lifetime.

MT: Any insights to share with readers?

TF: At some point in life, you are offered opportunities and later you wonder if you should have made other life choices. That's only been a fleeting thought for me. I would not change a thing. We are happy here. This was a great place for us to raise our kids and to put down roots. We have lived in Ludlow for more than 20 years. Okemo is not just where I work, it is my home.

← Study: from page 1

facility description and academics. The Mountain Times asked selectman Chris Karr to which "Rutland" district the board is referring.

"Nothing has been determined," Karr said. "The ballot question was to do a feasibility study into the process."

Ramsay will be researching if and how Killington can get out of the district in the first place, then tax implications of a possible merger with Rutland or school choice.

Per state law, in addition to all district towns voting separately for Killington to leave the district, the state also needs to approve the move as beneficial for the district and the state.

Every district wants more students, a benefit in the state education funding scheme.

As a "choice town," Killington students could use state "tuition" dollars to attend

any school of their choosing — in state, out of state, public or private. Killington would pay the state-set tuition to the accepting institution.

Some sources say the state would never approve making Killington a choice town as it runs counter to improving state education costs that are incentivized through consolidation.

"From the beginning I thought [Jim Haff's] proposal was just grandstanding," Vito Rasenas told the Mountain Times. "I don't think it will go anywhere, but it should be a shock to the [New Build] committee."

Haff has said the same himself: "If nothing else it should be a wake up call to the district. It's too expensive. We can't keep this up. We're looking to alternatives that may better meet our citizens' needs."

Ludlow Rotary donates lectern to town in memory of Martin Nitka

Just prior to the start of the town of Ludlow annual meeting on March 4, Tom Ray, Ludlow Rotary club president, and past president Jim Rumrill, presented to the town a new lectern in memory of long-time town moderator, Ludlow Rotarian and respected attorney Martin Nitka, who passed away last year. Nitka was affectionately known around town as "Marty."

Marty, who was involved in numerous organizations in town including over 20 years as the treasurer of the Fletcher Farm Foundation, received the club's community

service award in 2023. Rumrill recognized Nitka's appreciation and respect for local level democracy, always being careful, as town moderator, to let people have their appropriate say on matters concerning the town. He was instrumental in many of the Rotary projects that impact the community still to this day.

Ray noted that it was a pleasure to have Alice Nitka, Marty's spouse, in attendance at the meeting. Town residents and selectmen were delighted to witness this gesture made in remembrance of the town's beloved citizen.



By G Thomson

Jim Rumrill speaks about Marty Nitka.



By G Thomson

Alice Nitka speaks of Marty's contributions.

← School budgets: from page 1

The following districts or supervisory unions failed to pass budgets on Tuesday, according to the Superintendents Association:

Rutland County:

- Barstow Unified Union
- Otter Valley Unified Union
- Rutland Town School District
- Slate Valley Unified Union SD

Windsor County

- Green Mountain Unified SD
- Springfield School District

Others statewide:

- Addison Northwest School District
- Alburgh School District
- Barre Unified Union School District
- Champlain Islands Unified Union SD
- Champlain Valley School District
- Elmore/Morristown Unified Union School District
- Enosburg-Richford School District
- Fairfax School District
- Harwood Unified Union
- Holland School District
- Kingdom East School District
- Lamoille North Modified Unified Union School District, elementary
- Milton School District
- Montpelier-Roxbury School District
- Mount Abraham Unified SD
- Northern Mountain Valley Unified Union School District
- Paine Mountain School District
- South Burlington School District
- South Hero School District
- St. Johnsbury School District

Schools this Town Meeting Day grappled with the latest changes to Vermont's education funding formula, which affected how much money towns could spend at a given tax rate, and became a target of school spending frustration.

Amid concerns about dramatic property tax hikes and questions about the impact of the state's revamped education financing formula, lawmakers passed, and Gov. Phil Scott signed, 11th-hour legislation last month allowing districts to postpone their budget votes to next month.

Don Tinney, president of the Vermont-National Education Association, a teachers' union, said in a statement that a "once-in-a-generation confluence of events" had fueled this year's projected property tax increases.

"I know that last night's rejection of nearly a third of all school budgets isn't a repudiation of our local public schools and the tens of thousands of Vermont students they serve every day," Tinney said. "Rather, it's a reasonable reaction to completely unrealistic spikes in property taxes driven by events over which our dedicated local school boards have no control."

Now, as school boards must redraft budgets, the average estimated education property increase for Vermonters will almost certainly fall, though the exact extent will remain unknown until all budgets pass and the Legislature works through other Education Fund considerations.

Area cliff tops and overlooks closed to protect nesting peregrines

Hiking Vermont's hillsides is a great way to enjoy a spring day, but the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Dept. and Audubon Vermont recommend people check to see if the area they are planning to hike or climb is open. In addition to trail closures to reduce impacts during mud season, several cliff areas are also closed to protect nesting peregrine falcons.

"Peregrine falcons are very sensitive to human presence during their breeding season, so we ask climbers and hikers to please maintain a respectful distance from their nests," said nongame bird biologist Jillian Kilborn with Fish & Wildlife. "The areas closed include the portions of the cliffs where the birds are nesting and the trails leading to cliff tops or overlooks."

Over the next couple of months, biologists and community scientists will be identifying cliffs occupied by peregrines this year. Sites listed will remain closed until Aug. 1 or until Fish & Wildlife determines the risk to nesting falcons has passed. The majority of the sites are visited in April, and nesting falcons can choose new sites, so additional sites may be added or removed from the closed list which will be updated and provided on Fish & Wildlife's website.

Locally, areas include:

- Mt. Horrid (Rochester) – Great Cliff overlook closed
- Rattlesnake Point (Salisbury) – southern overlook closed

Audubon Vermont conservation biologist Margaret Fowle works with volunteers and other conservation professionals to monitor the sites throughout the nesting season.

"Peregrine falcons were removed from Vermont's endangered species list in 2005, and the population continues to thrive thanks to the efforts of our many volunteers and partners," said Fowle. "In many cases the lower portions of the trails remain open, and we encourage people to enjoy watching peregrine falcons from a distance that requires using binoculars or a spotting scope."

What you can do to help Vermont peregrines:

- Respect cliff closures, and retreat from any cliff where you see peregrines
- Report any disturbance of nesting peregrines to your local state game warden
- Report any sightings to Margaret Fowle at margaret.fowle@audubon.org



Courtesy VTF&W

Hikers and climbers can help nesting peregrine falcons by avoiding several Vermont cliff areas this spring and early summer.

Voter Turnout	Barnard	Bridgewater	Killington	Plymouth	Pomfret	Reading	Woodstock	Average
Potential Voters	669	698	1062	472	789	512	2835	7037
Percentage Turnout	53%	48%	47%	45%	55%	59%	49%	51%
FY24 Budget Voters	83	116	457	98	142	140	482	1518
FY25 Budget Voters	355	332	501	213	433	301	1385	3520
# Increase	272	216	44	115	291	161	903	2002
% Increase	328%	186%	10%	117%	205%	115%	187%	164%

Courtesy MVSU

The chart above shows the voter turnout for Town Meeting Day, March 5, by town in the Mountain Views Supervisory Union district as well as percent changes.

MVSU listens:
from page 1

The district budget — 11% higher than the previous year (causing tax rates to rise by 25%-30% for many of the towns after the CLA is factored in) — passed with 60% voter approval.

The bond for \$99 million to build a new middle school/high school in Woodstock, however, failed with 55% of the voters saying "no."

While the bond votes were commingled, the budget results were tallied by town. Killington defeated the budget by the largest margin, followed by Bridgewater. All other district towns passed the budget.

At the MVSU district board meeting Monday night, March 11, district board representatives weighed in on what they had heard from constituents who didn't support the bond measure and vowed to listen to as many concerns as possible from residents across the region before defining a plan to move forward.

"As a representative from Killington... I'm really looking forward to engaging more with folks in my town, to really understand and listen and hear what their concerns are, and bring them back to this group," said Anne Karl, from Killington, adding that she wants "To make sure people's concerns feel answered, that they feel really brought along in the process, because that's a lot of what people are saying: That they joined the conversation, maybe late in the game, but at the same time didn't feel sufficiently brought along. So I'm really excited — in the next year or whatever the time period is — to really listen...bring their concerns to this group."

Others representatives echoed Karl, calling for more listening tours in every town and encouraging diverse voices to join the conversation without judgment.

"I heard many who said it's too fancy or too big," said Carin Park, from Barnard. "I think when folks actually went to the info sessions and to the tours at the school, they understood that a renovation would cost almost as much and we don't get close to the same value for it. They also understood that renovation and redesign have been looked into and this is what the board judged was best. That's what a bond vote is, after all, not an A, B, or C vote. But I do think we need more engagement around the reality of options."

John Williams, from Woodstock, added: "There seems to be consensus that we need to do something and we need to do it soon. One of our challenges is that we really needed that momentum four years ago when we were coming off the design of the new build. Instead we were interrupted by the pandemic

... Some people might feel like they were just handed the designs because we did all the work to engage the public on design from 2016-2019... so I just want to take everybody's different opinions into account and hear what their proposals are — appeal to different parts of the electorate to get them excited about the vision, rather than feel like they're being handed something."

Others focused on the need to engage the state for additional aid.

Sam DiNatale, Woodstock, said: "I think we all need to be petitioning our state representatives and senators to reignite funding for new

"I'm really looking forward to engaging more with folks in my town, to really understand and listen," said Karl.

builds, because if that money still existed like it used to, I think a bond (for what was needed plus the state funding) would've passed... as gold towns we send so much money, and our taxes keep going up, but what are we getting for all this money?... Where are our state representatives fighting for this money?"

Josh Linton, a board member from Plymouth who was "openly opposed to the bond" echoed DiNatale, saying: "We need state commitment, for them to have skin in the game and help" if the plan is ever going to be affordable.

Lara Bowers, Bridgewater, added: "All the no votes I've heard have not been 'no, we don't want a high school in our town anymore' rather everybody — both 'yes' and 'no' — wants a school to stay here. I would hate to see an education desert happen in the middle of our state if our high school fails and we start pushing our students out. I live way up the mountain in Bridgewater and I can't imagine how long my student would have to be on a bus to get anywhere else."

Ben Ford, vice chair of the board from Woodstock, who led the new build information sessions in each of the district towns, spent most of Monday's meeting listening. But did add that he was "proud of the transparency" that the board had in its communication about the new build and made a commitment to be even more "clear on financials" moving forward, noting that the policy to cap tax increases at 16% got "lost in the shuffle," but felt that it might be helpful to remind constituents about it moving forward.

Residents interested in voicing their feedback about the new build should contact their board representatives. A list of members by town with their email addresses is listed at: mtnviews.org/school-board-members.

What is a 'fair share' to pay in state taxes?

Editor's note: The following article is republished from the lieutenant governor's March 6 newsletter.

Today, I have an exceptionally important topic to talk about: taxes!

Taxes have become a dirty word, and in many ways for good reason. Since the 1980's there has been a significant shift in how much everyday people pay in taxes. Wealthy and high-income individuals have seen their marginal tax rates drop precipitously, while working class people have been asked to shoulder more of the costs of funding a functional government.

It is important to remember that we collect taxes in order to fund our government, public services, and programs. From maintaining public lands, funding public safety and the judiciary, protecting our waters to expanding childcare opportunities, economic development, and social services, there is a massive range of essential functions that your tax dollars support for you and the broader community. As Vermonters' needs shift and as we learn more about our collective impacts, we must adjust what we fund and determine how to allocate those costs across taxpayers fairly.

I have long been a proponent of progressive taxation, meaning that the more money an individual makes, the higher the rate at which those higher incomes are taxed. Vermont has done a relatively good job at creating and main-



By David Zuckerman, Lt. Gov.

taining a progressive tax system. But as the income gap between the top and the bottom continues to

widen and as more and more wealth gets concentrated at the top, thus squeezing everyday working people, it is time to think about how we can make the system more equitable.

The Legislature just passed H.850 to work to address some aspects of the projected education tax increase. Additionally, there are two proposals currently in the House of Representatives that would move us in a more progressive direction by taxing high-wealth individuals' unrealized gains and implementing an income tax surcharge on income over \$500,000/year. Before we get into the details about those two bills, here is some background information about how our tax system currently works.

How the current tax system works

Taxes are generally split into three broad categories: income, property, and consumption (sales and excise). According to a report by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP), Vermont currently has the third least regressive overall local tax system in the country, just behind Washington D.C. and Minnesota. We are one of only six states and the District of Columbia that have overall progressive tax systems. Forty-four states have tax systems that are regressive and help exacerbate income inequality.

As you can see from the chart

below, Vermont's tax rates increase gradually but become regressive for the top 5% of income.

Today, I want to focus specifically on income taxes. As an individual makes more money, their increased income is taxed at a higher rate.

Our top tax bracket applies to all income over \$229,550, so whether you make \$250,000 per year or \$2 million per year, there is no difference in the rate at which you pay income taxes. This makes the overall tax burden lower for people with higher incomes because their other taxes (property and consumption) become a smaller and smaller share of their income.

Vermonters are struggling with many basic needs, including affordable housing, accessible childcare, flood recovery, and so much more. These costs are hitting working people, especially for those with lower incomes. As we look to find ways to fund these programs, I believe it is time for those with excessive incomes and wealth to pay their fair share.

Income tax surcharge

One of the proposals in the Legislature is H.828, An Act Relating to the Creation of a Personal Income Tax Surcharge. This bill proposes a 3% income tax surcharge for adjusted gross incomes (AGI) over \$500,000. To put it another way: the money an individual makes over \$500,000 in a calendar year would be taxed an extra 3%.

As you can imagine, this would not impact the vast majority of Vermonters. Only 1.1% of tax returns filed by Vermonters in 2022 had an AGI of \$500,000

Income	\$0- \$45,400	\$45,400- \$110,050	\$110,050- \$229,550	\$229,550+
Base tax	\$0	\$1,521	\$3,475	\$14,870
Marginal tax rate	3.35%	6.60%	7.60%	8.75%
On income above	\$0	\$45,400	\$110,050	\$229,550

Data source from 2023 Vermont Tax Rate Schedules

The chart shows our current (2023) tax rate schedule for single individuals. It is important to note, the "base tax" is the sum of the tax rate applied.

or more. Despite this low additional rate, it is estimated that this surcharge would bring in an additional \$71.4 million in revenue for the state. This money could help fund affordable housing, workforce development, flood resiliency, mental health services, drug recovery, public safety, and so many other programs that help support everyday working Vermonters.

This would also fix the issue of our regressive tax structure at higher income rates. It's true, some of the taxes paid (in the chart at the bottom of this page) may look like a lot to most of us who annually make less than those figures. However, it is important to look at the next column where it shows their net income after taxes. From that you can see that the top 1% should still be able to pay their bills!

Wealth tax

Another proposal is H.827, An Act Relating to Applying Personal Income Tax to Unrealized Gains. This bill is essentially a wealth tax that would be imposed on residents with net assets in excess of \$10 million. Again...this would only apply to people with more than \$10,000,000 in assets!

An "unrealized gain" is an increase in value that the owner has not yet taken by selling their asset. For example, if an individual purchases a house for \$10 million one year, and the next year the value increases to \$11 million, then that individual has seen a \$1 million unrealized gain. This applies to stocks as well. Many rich people avoid paying taxes on these gains because when they die, most, if not all, of those gains are untaxed when the assets are passed on. Under current law, this is a form of income that is almost never taxed. This is a tax benefit that everyday working people do not get.

This bill would require individuals to pay personal income tax

on 1/2 of their unrealized gains. In the example above, that would mean taxes would need to be assessed on \$500,000 of the \$1,000,000 gain.

Like the income tax surcharge, this would NOT affect the vast majority of Vermonters, just a small percent with excessive wealth. We are still waiting on an estimate of how much additional annual revenue this would generate.

Reflections

As I indicated at the beginning of this update, this is an important topic. Our tax system, at the federal and state level, essentially penalizes or rewards different people in society. Generally, our tax system penalizes working people by making them pay a higher percentage of their income in fees, consumption taxes and splinter taxes, while wealthier people avoid taxes through lower (or no) taxes on capital gains and wealth accumulation. It costs working people extra by passing on societal costs such as school buildings, roads, bridges, and more onto regressive sources of revenue like property taxes and fuel

How big should the difference be?

It is true, some people go to school longer, or work

harder, or chose more lucrative professions. These people can and should be rewarded for that extra effort. However, the question remains: how big should the difference be? Do we value those that are critical to the everyday society we live in? Are janitors worth that much less? How about early childhood educators? What about those folks that support the mental health of our youth? Or those that are helping raise foster kids from families that have been afflicted with substance abuse disorder? While working hard every day, these folks are struggling to pay their basic needs.

We can do better.

State	Lowest 20%	Second 20%	Middle 20%	Fourth 20%	Next 15%	Next 4%	Top 1%
Florida	13.2%	10.9%	9.5%	8.4%	6.4%	5.0%	2.7%
New Hampshire	8.9%	6.0%	6.7%	6.3%	5.2%	4.2%	2.8%
Washington*	13.8%	10.9%	10.9%	9.4%	8.0%	5.4%	4.1%
Massachusetts	8.2%	9.2%	9.6%	10.0%	9.1%	7.9%	8.9%
Maine	8.6%	9.3%	10.6%	10.7%	10.8%	10.1%	9.5%
Vermont	6.3%	8.2%	9.6%	10.5%	10.6%	10.3%	10.1%
Minnesota	6.2%	8.0%	10.0%	10.9%	9.9%	9.9%	10.5%
D.C.	4.8%	10.6%	11.5%	12.4%	12.1%	10.9%	11.4%

Data sourced from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy

Chart shows total state and local taxes as a share of family income for Vermont compared to the states and districts with the least regressive tax system (D.C. and Minnesota), those with the most regressive tax system (Florida, New Hampshire and Washington), and some neighboring states. Note: Washington state does not tax personal income. These rates reflect property and consumption taxes compared to household income only.

AGI	State income tax under current law	Additional 3% surcharge on income over \$500,000	Total tax with 3% surcharge from H. 828	Income after State tax and surcharge	Percent of income paid
\$600,000	\$47,284	\$3,000	\$50,284	\$549,716	8.38%
\$1,000,000	\$82,284	\$15,000	\$97,284	\$902,716	9.73%
\$1,500,000	\$126,034	\$30,000	\$156,034	\$1,343,966	10.40%

Courtesy David Zuckerman

Chart shows the estimated impact of 3% Income Tax Surcharge on adjusted gross incomes (AGI) of varying levels over \$500,000. The last column shows the percent of income paid if implemented.

\$15.5 million awarded to 46 manufactured housing communities for water infrastructure

\$420,625 awarded to two projects in Brandon and Castleton

Governor Phil Scott and the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) on March 8 announced \$13.3 million in Healthy Homes Initiative awards and \$2.2 million in Three-Acre Stormwater Initiative awards to help 46 manufactured housing communities (also known as mobile home parks) repair, replace, and upgrade water infrastructure.

“This initiative shows exactly why it was so important to invest American Rescue Plan Act funding in infrastructure that helped families and communities across the state,” said Governor Phil Scott. “These investments support safe, affordable housing for historically underserved or economically disadvantaged communities, and help residents in manufactured housing communities overcome barriers to fixing water infrastructure issues. Healthy Homes has been an important part of our housing strategy for years, and I hope the Legislature continues to support it.”

Most of the awards will address problems with inadequate or failing wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater systems. The funding covers:

- Assessing what needs to be addressed, using contracted engineering firms;

- Technical and permitting assistance; and/or

- Construction to improve water infrastructure.

“These awards will improve water infrastructure for an estimated 5,608 residents — including 1,882 seniors and 933 children,” said Dept. of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Jason Batchelder. “These residents will not

only gain more reliable access to safe drinking water, but they will also benefit from improved drainage, stormwater, and wastewater systems, protecting both them and the environment.”

Community residents, owners, and partners applied for assistance in the fall of 2023 through the ANR Healthy Homes Initiative. This spring, ANR plans to finalize agreements to fund the projects listed below. Awardees are located throughout the state, and at least one community was selected from every county from which an application was received.

Locally, two projects were funded in Rutland County, none in Windsor County.

- Triangle Cooperative in Brandon was award services valued at \$40,000 and \$78,750 for an engineering firm to complete a comprehensive water infrastructure needs assessment, and construction funding for the wastewater system.
- Fort Warren Mobile Home Park in Castleton was awarded \$301,875 for technical assistance and permitting and construction funding for the drinking water system.

To date, ANR has awarded \$28.1 million in ARPA dollars to 67 different manufactured housing communities across the state. This equates to just over one in every four manufactured housing communities in Vermont receiving funding from this program.

March designated as Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Governor Phil Scott has officially proclaimed March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM), according to a news release March 6. The Vermont Dept. of Mental Health (DMH) and the Dept. of Liquor and Lottery (DLL), in collaboration with the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG), join forces to highlight PGAM’s mission: elevating public awareness regarding problem gambling and promoting the accessibility of prevention, treatment, and recovery services.

This year’s observance gains particular significance in the wake of online sports betting going live in Vermont in January of 2024, bringing the conversation around responsible gambling to the forefront. Problem gambling is de-

finied as gambling behavior patterns that compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family, financial, or vocational pursuits. Approximately 2 million U.S. adults (1% of the population) are estimated to meet the criteria for severe problem gambling. Another 4-6 million (2-3%) meet the criteria for mild or moderate problem gambling.

“Problem Gambling Awareness Month provides a unique opportunity for us to connect with our Vermont community,” said Dept. of Mental Health Commissioner Emily Hawes. “Our goal is not only to raise awareness about the signs and impacts of problem gambling but break down the stigma surrounding this issue. We want to ensure that our community is not only

Gambling → 12

Lake encroachment permit required, March 15-July 1

During the spring fish spawning season, the Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) reminds Vermonters that permitted lake encroachment construction projects on public lakes and ponds are typically not allowed from March 15 to July 1.

“Vermont’s public waters offer us many benefits from clean drinking water and recreation to outstanding fish and wildlife habitat,” said DEC Commissioner Jason Batchelder. “By pausing permitted projects during the spring fish spawning season, we can help support the health and breeding success of fish populations statewide.”

Examples of projects that are not allowed during this period include adding rock or other material to the water for shoreline stabilization (such as riprap or seawalls), boathouse reconstruction, dredging, or other projects that disturb the lakebed.

If you have not finished your project before spawning season, you must stabilize the area. You must also make plans to finish the work after July 1 when spawning season ends, as required in individual Lake Encroachment Permits. Please reach out to your regional Lakes and Ponds Permit contact with questions.

Projects that do not add rock or concrete to the lake and that do not disturb the lakebed (like installing docks, floats, rafts, or buoys) can continue during spawning season.

DEC staff will continue to accept and review permit applications during the spring spawning season. After July 1, permitted construction projects may resume or begin as identified in the permit.

“From northern pike to smallmouth bass, thousands of



The mean water level (shown with a red arrow) is the average height of a water body over time and often marks where plants no longer grow. Vermont’s DEC warns against permitted lake encroachment construction projects.

Submitted

eggs develop and hatch between March 15 and July 1,” said Fish Program Manager Maureen Lynch with the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. “Protecting and promoting fish populations mean not only a healthy aquatic environment but also healthy wildlife populations, a healthy tourism economy, and a higher quality of life for those who value our state’s fisheries.”

Any project that proposes work at, below, or beyond

mean water level of public lakes or ponds may require a Lake Encroachment Permit.

The Dept. of Environmental Conservation is responsible for protecting Vermont’s natural resources and safeguarding human health for the benefit of this and future generations. For more information on lake encroachment permit visit: dec.vermont.gov.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Rejection of school budgets shows need for new funding method

By Don Tinney

Editor's note: Don Tinney is a longtime high school English teacher who serves as the elected president of the 13,000-member Vermont-NEA. The Vermont-National Education Association is the union of Vermont educators.

My fellow 13,000 members and I know that last night's rejection of nearly a third of all school budgets isn't a repudiation of our local public schools and the tens of thousands of Vermont students they serve every day. Rather, it's a reasonable reaction to completely unrealistic spikes in property taxes driven by events over which our dedicated local school boards have no control.

We know that local communities are struggling, and most can't afford year-over-year property tax increases of the sort proposed this week.

A once-in-a-generation confluence of events conspired to boost tax rates: the end of pandemic aid; a new pupil weighting law and its since-abandoned 5% growth cap for towns affected by the new law; inflation; decades of deferred and neglected building maintenance by the state; rising healthcare costs; and spiking property values caused by our acute housing shortage.

While we are grateful that the governor and legislature apologized for their part in this year's school budget fiasco, there is much more that can be done. For years, we have

We continue to insist that lawmakers stem the flow of nearly \$100 million a year in public education money to private schools.

advocated for a simpler and fairer way to pay for our schools than the regressive property tax: an education income tax that will raise more money from those most able to afford it.

We also implore the Legislature to take a serious look at how our local schools are governed and organized. And we continue to insist that lawmakers stem the flow of nearly \$100 million a year in public education money to private schools without any accountability to Vermont's taxpayers.

For centuries, Vermonters have placed a high priority on — and demonstrated dedicated support of — our local public schools. This week showed that despite that track record, there is a point where Vermonters can't afford double-digit increases in their property taxes. We must get this right so that Vermont's students — our future — have all the tools they need to become healthy, happy, and ready to pursue their dreams.

WRITE TO US:

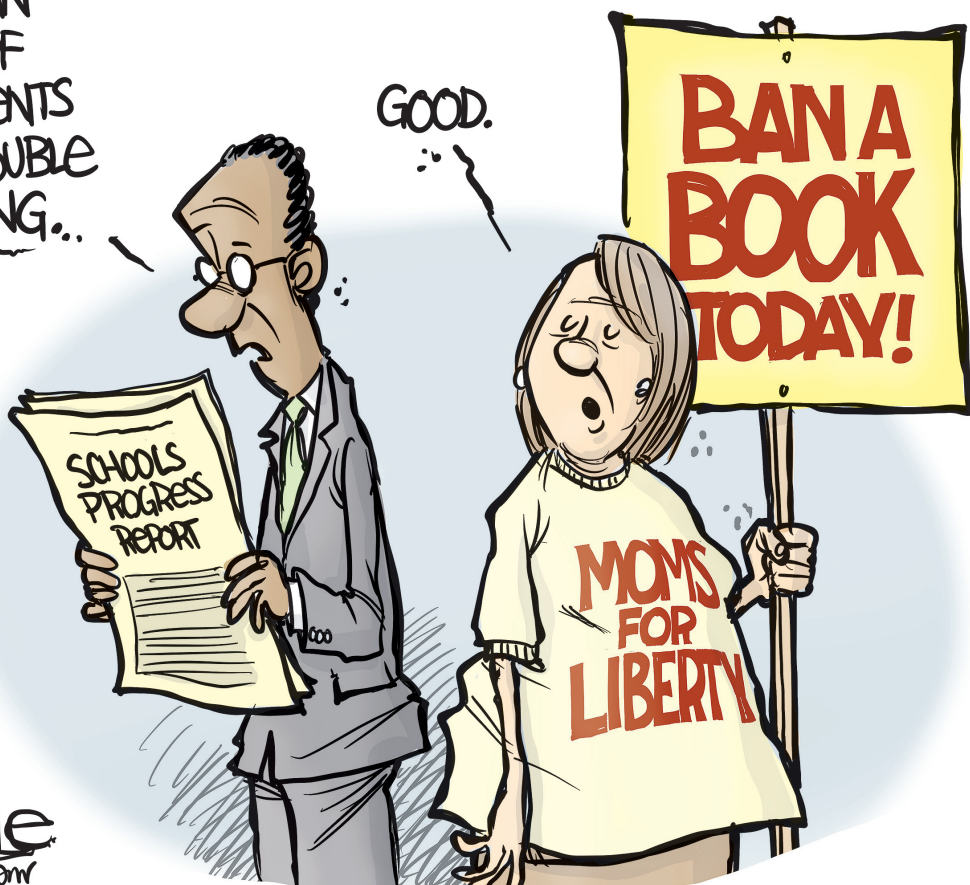
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Email letters to editor@mountaintimes.info



• MORE THAN A THIRD OF OUR STUDENTS HAVE TROUBLE READING...

GOOD.



JOHN COLE
GEORGIA RECORDER. COM
CABLECARDSONS.COM

Reading troubles by John Cole, Georgia Recorder

LETTERS

New leaders to bring a new downtown agenda?

Dear Editor,

Downtown Rutland has been in the news recently concerning the metered parking situation and now the two departures at the Rutland Downtown Partnership. As a long time retail manager, most recently spending 25 years as the Retail Director at Okemo, I tend to look at things as an astute retailer would look. So, let's look at the downtown area bordered by West St., Merchants Row, Strongs Ave., Washington and Wales streets as one big store.

Retailers always have a nice, sometimes exciting, display in their front window to draw passer by into their shop. Throughout the year there are hundreds if not thousands passing through the downtown. What do they see that would draw them into the one "big" store, the downtown? A bunch of buildings, some sculptures, a few murals and just a few people walking the streets. Not sure

Downtown → 12

Cannot humans do better?

Dear Editor,

Yesterday, March 9, 2024, a small flock of robins arrived here in the Rutland valley, four pairs to be exact. The ground was soggy but bare and they set about scanning the earth for food.

This morning, the robins are scampering anxiously about, nonplussed by the thick coating of slushy snow. A small group gathers at the base of a large tree where the snow is scantier.

Other beasts of the field are equally stressed and desperate. A chickadee, a titmouse, a goldfinch and a junco show up hopefully at the feeding station, which was recharged with black oil sunflower seed and peanut suet two days ago. The bag of seed has been used up in anticipation of spring. Eventually birds will scavenge buds and even tree bark.

Starlings mob the suet basket, squabbling and jostling for position, with more sailing in by the second.

A squirrel shelters in the dry spot under my car. Another wraps itself around the hanging feeder until I

Do better → 12

MVSU thanks voters for engagement

Dear Editor,

Editor's note: This letter was written for the entire Mountain Views Supervisory Union School communities of Representing Barnard, Bridgewater, Killington, Plymouth, Pomfret, Reading and Woodstock.

Thank you for the amazing record turn-out at this week's elections. We are grateful for the strong vote of support for the annual school budget. To see our voters prioritize our children and educators, even in a challenging economy, speaks volumes for how our community values education and the importance of our schools to the towns making up this school district.

While we are disappointed the school bond vote did not pass, we are committed to continuing the path to a new school to replace our aging MS/HS building. Across the country, and especially in New England, more than one vote is often needed to establish community support for public school bonds. So we are

MVSU engagement → 12

Keep the power with the citizens

Dear Editor,

It may be time for the changing views of Vermonters towards wildlife to be addressed, but bill S.258 will not accomplish it. Currently and historically the 14 members of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board have been appointed by the governor with input from the Legislature. One seat represents each county. Under S.258 the governor will be stripped of appointments. The appointments would be allocated: Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife (5), The Speaker of the House (5) and the Committee on Committees (5). Somehow, those 15 appointments will be divided across 14 county seats and one at large seat. A perfect set up for gerrymandering. S.258 proposes to force a "balanced" mix of licensed and non-licensed [hunting/fishing/trapping] members. Who will be appointing the licensed and non-licensed? Adding politics where it doesn't belong is

Citizen power → 14

CAPITOL QUOTES

President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have finally held discussions on Friday following an evident absence of direct communication for nearly four weeks. This hiatus has brought into sharp focus fundamental disparities regarding the potential path to Palestinian statehood after the conclusion of the conflict in Gaza.

“There is certainly a reason to be concerned... The more and more we see political considerations dominating the relationship between Biden and Netanyahu, which is likely to continue because of the upcoming presidential election and the weakness of both leaders, the more we will see them pulling apart.”

Said **Eytan Gilboa**, an expert on U.S.-Israeli relations at Israel's Bar-Ilan University according to the Associated Press

“There is certainly a reason to be concerned... The more and more we see political considerations dominating the relationship between Biden and Netanyahu, which is likely to continue because of the upcoming presidential election and the weakness of both leaders, the more we will see them pulling apart.”

Said **Eytan Gilboa**, an expert on U.S.-Israeli relations at Israel's Bar-Ilan University according to PBS.

“The president affirmed his personal history of steadfast commitment to Israel's security and conveyed his intent to strengthen all aspects of the U.S.-Israel partnership, including our strong defense cooperation,”

The White House statement said according to the New York Times.

LETTERS

Reputation and security are at stake

Dear Editor,

Nick Santoro in his Jan. 3 “Try to Imagine Gaza” letter to the MT editor is asking us, Americans, to imagine the horror that “is happening at this very moment somewhere in Palestine/Israel.” It is hard to imagine, and most of us probably can't. Unfortunately, people of Ukraine can, as they have been living through this horror for almost two years after Russia invaded their country. The documentary “20 Days in Mariupol,” which won an Oscar last Sunday, told the horrific and true story about the early days of Russian invasion. The brave nation is fighting for its survival. The Ukrainian Army, with the help of western weapons, is fiercely defending its land and its people. The steady military support of its friends in the West is crucial. With this help being on hold in the House of Representatives, is Putin encouraged that he could win?

When in 1994, according to the Budapest Memorandum, Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons, the third largest arsenal in the world, in exchange for the assurance of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, the United States, England, and Russia were the guarantors. Russia proudly agreed to store these nuclear warheads.

Twenty years later Putin's Russia illegally annexed the Crimean Peninsula from

At stake → 14

2024... the year Vermont went Republican?

Dear Editor,

With its reputation as a blue state since 1965, and despite four generations of liberal progressives, has Vermont resurrected its alternate self as a hotbed of Republican values?

In the primaries on Town Meeting Day, March 4, held in Vermont towns by decree of their original 18th Century charters, a Republican candidate for the presidential nomination swept the Vermont electorate.

But not so fast...

Since the primary ballot does not require a voter to declare a party affiliation but to “vote their conscience” as the 1777 voter's oath decrees, many otherwise left-leaning Vermont voters stepped across the aisle – not because they have changed their stripes, but because a vote for Republican Haley was a vote against a wolf in sheep's clothing, Donald Trump.

Party switcheroos are not unknown. In 2001, Senator Jim Jeffords of Vermont declared his independence from the Republican Party and began to caucus with the Senate's Democrats. He didn't leave the GOP, he explained, it left him – a moderate, meat-and-potatoes Republican surrounded by mean-spirited right-wing zealots whose sense of public service seemed to have abandoned them.

Wikipedia says that

Vt Republican → 14

The hypocrisy of Fish & Wildlife, the board, and the trappers association

Dear Editor,

Wildlife rehabbers in Vermont use their own money, need education and to pass an exam to become licensed. But they are severely restricted by the Fish & Wildlife Dept. and board on what animals they can see and scrupulously monitored for any violation. Nearly all wild animals in Vermont are off-limits to assist, even if they are injured due to deliberate human cruelty. The majority of ailments and injuries wild animals suffer from are caused by people. Research can attest to this. Yet, Fish & Wildlife still penalize those who try to aide wildlife. ‘Let nature take its course,’ they say.

Animals suffer from mange due to rodenticides and bait boxes. They are displaced and scavenge for food due to development. Birds suffer from window collisions, pesticide-laced lawns, and native plants being replaced with non-natives for lawns and gardens. Mycoplasma conjunctivitis, which causes severe eye infections in wild birds, originated from chicken farms.

With its fear mongering and faux concern for public safety, Fish & Wildlife restricts those who can touch or handle ‘rabies vector’ animals. (By the way, people are rabies vectors, too). Even veterinarians

Hypocrisy → 13

Thanks to the Killington community

Dear Editor,

Last week's elections recorded a historic turnout.

I would like to thank you all for taking time out of your busy schedules and heading to the polls to cast your votes. With your active participation, the results confirmed that 40% of the community share my views.

I would also like to congratulate Jim Haff on defending his seat on the Se-

lect Board. I am hoping that we can all work together to look past our differences for the benefit of the entire Killington community.

To be able to accomplish that plan, I would like to be even more involved within the town governance. I have submitted a Letter of Intent for a seat on the Town Planning Commission to continue to ensure you are

represented at the town level. Our government's duty is to work for the people, and I will make sure that everyone's voice is heard and no one is ignored.

Your continued support and active participation is necessary for our town to succeed.

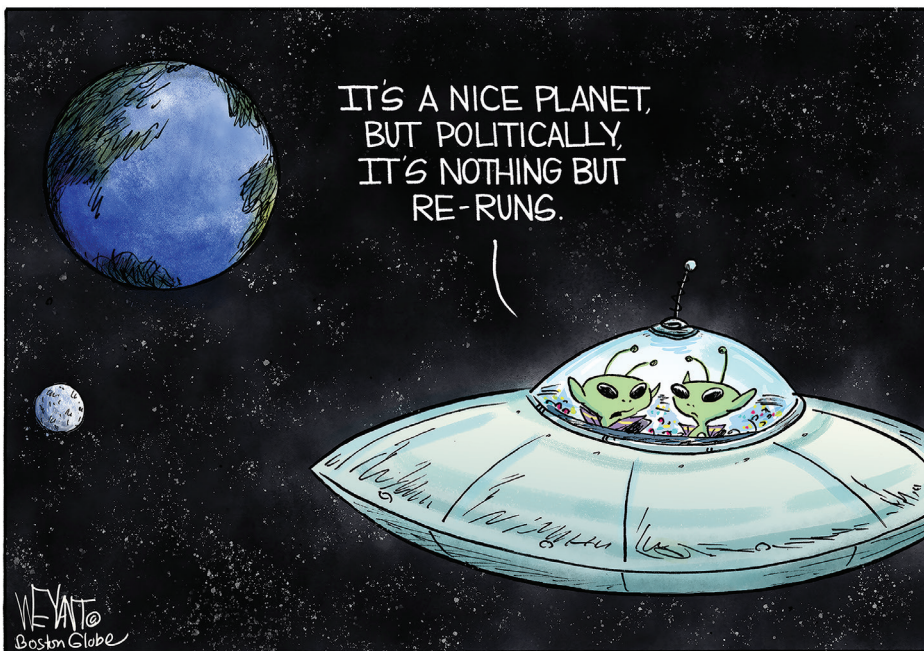
Sincerely,
Andrew Gieda,
Killington

CARTOONS

HOW DO YOU EAT AN ELEPHANT?

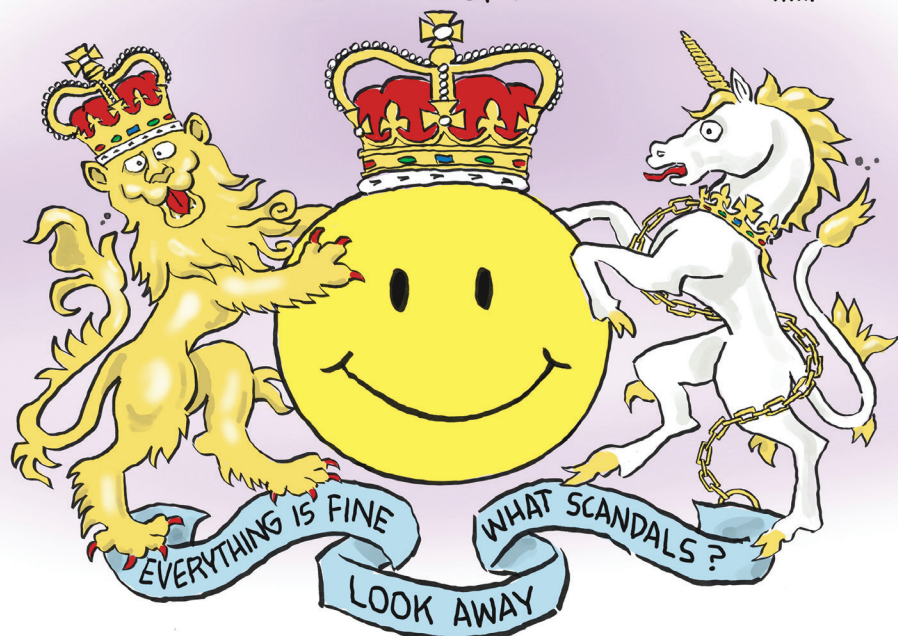


MAGA Meal by Pat Bagley, The Salt Lake Tribune, UT



Same Old, Same Old by Christopher Weyant, The Boston Globe, MA

MORE BAD PHOTO EDITING BY THE ROYAL FAMILY.....



Royal Family Photo Editing by Jeff Koterba

← Downtown: from page 10

that's a big enough incentive to have visitors find a parking spot and spend some time in the "big" store.

As many of you may remember from past commentaries I've been a huge proponent of closing down Center St. between Wales and Merchants Row. I've always pictured all the restaurants and cafes extended well into the street. A couple food trucks parked at the Merchants Row end to attract people driving by. Some business sponsored picnic tables with colorful umbrellas, some park benches and a small area for a soloist or duo to perform for tips. THAT would attract people to spend

some time in the "big" store. Parking is another story.

I have tried and tried to find a spot on Merchants Streets somewhere around 10 a.m. to run into a shop there to get my favorite doughnuts. There is rarely a spot, very rarely. As there is almost no one walking the sidewalks it's hard for me not to believe many of the spots are downtown workers? I believe that's been a discussion in the past.

Yes, I'm a senior citizen. I would park over on Center Street but then I would have to fool around with the new parking system. What a pain when I just need to run around the corner for a

doughnut. Give me a quarter slot anytime. I don't know how the logistics would work but would love to see free parking around the "big" store from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day, same with the parking deck. Good stores need to make it easy for people to stop and shop, even the "big" store.

Here's hoping that the city's public servants and those running the downtown finally make that big jump and close Center Street at least from Memorial Day weekend throughout foliage season. I think it's finally time to give it a try.

Larry Abelman, Shrewsbury

← Do better: from page 10

shoo it away.

Whether these critters survive or die is not Nature's concern. So what if the robins' timing was bad? They were responding to the biological imperative to return north for breeding season... and food. They have to take what they can get.

In the fight for survival, Nature is landing a knockout punch this morning. Somehow, some will make it. They have nowhere else to go. Nature is oblivious to

their wellbeing.

But humans are supposed to be different. The success of the human species has been in spite of Nature's worst. We have gained hegemony from two causes: social collaboration and the year round ability to propagate.

But now at the quarter-point of the 21st Century, with all our historical knowledge, our life-preserving and life-enhancing technology, too many of us have become like the robins — born with

hope, knocked down by the agendas of other, more powerful humans who, like Nature, care not for the collateral damage they inflict while pursuing their own ends. In fact, these potentates blithely celebrate the social Darwinism they enact.

One would think that human beings could do better by each other than Nature does so callously with the hapless beasts of the field.

Julia Purdy, N. Clarendon

← MVSU engagement: from page 10

ready to roll up our sleeves and keep working. First however, we must listen. Over the next several weeks, we will conduct a listening tour throughout our towns to better understand our shared concerns, find common ground, and solve the problems we face together.

The Vermont Agency of Education has already

approved the project, but has yet to identify a funding source for school construction aid. Accordingly, we will most certainly continue to pressure lawmakers in Montpelier to reactivate the School Construction Aid Program. We will also continue working to qualify the project for more federal/Efficiency Vermont funding for

sustainability projects while continuing discussions with the donor community on private fundraising. We look forward to these vital conversations in the coming weeks to put forward a solution all of our towns can support. Sincerely,

Keri Bristow and Ben Ford, MVSU board chair and vicechair

← Gambling: from page 9

informed about the available resources but, above all, know there is hope for recovery."

For those seeking assistance with problem gambling, the Vermont Problem Gambling Provider Network, covering the entire state, is now open to new clients. To connect with a problem gambling specialist in your area, simply dial 1-800-GAMBLER, and the Vermont Gambling Helpline will link you to a specialist who can guide you to the nearest provider.

Additionally, voluntary self-exclusion

is now available, providing a proactive tool for individuals experiencing or recognizing warning signs of problem gambling. Voluntary self-exclusion allows users to take a "time out" from online sports betting.

For more information about problem gambling, visit: Tinyurl.com/VTproblemgambling or call/text the National Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLER or visit: 1800gamblerchat.org. Help is available 24/7/365 — it is free and confidential.

← Hypocrisy:
from page 11

ians and those vaccinated are not permitted to help these animals. If you try to assist any creature labeled a 'rabies vector' without gloves, the department can kill it. The stunning hypocrisy is that those with hunting, hounding, and trapping licenses, routinely gut these animals, step on them, scruff them (grabbing an animal by the back of the neck), skin them, and come in contact with their bodily fluids without restrictions or repercussions.

The Fish & Wildlife Dept. and board monopolize wildlife to suit those with hunting, hounding, and trapping licenses. For those with licenses, including pest control operators, there are no rules on handling 'rabies vector' animals. If you want to bludgeon, dismember, hang, or

suffocate them, the department and board have your back. If you have a trapping or hounding license, you're in the club. No gloves or vaccinations are necessary.

Animals in pain or when attacked are defensive and far more likely to bite. Nevertheless, there are no rabies vaccination requirements for trappers or hounders. There seems to be no concern for hounds bitten by animals considered 'rabies vectors.' Trappers post pictures of themselves holding dead rabies vector species with bare hands. Hounders post photos of themselves with bloodied hounds and mutilated coyotes.

To the commissioner and Fish and Wildlife Board, I see you. I see the hypocrisy and lunacy of the de-

partment's policies and the board's behavior, and the cowardice of some legislators to take on Vermont's hounding and trapping culture,

It's not their land. It's not their wildlife. They are not stewards.

despite how irrational it is.

There are no criteria for being on the board other than holding a fishing, trapping, or hounding license and being friends with the governor. The same goes for the commissioner. No knowledge of wildlife biology, conservation, biodiversity, or ecology. Those on the board don't even need a high school diploma.

Conventional methods used in wildlife management and research frequently cause harm to the ani-

mals studied. Stressful chase and capture methods, often with the use of body-gripping traps, toe and fin clipping, hot-or-freeze branding, and invasive tissue sampling all cause pain and injury. These methods are standard and routine. Most of Vermont Fish & Wildlife's 'research' on wild animal populations comes from trappers' reports on animals they catch. That hardly seems like a scientific assessment.

Vermont wildlife, especially on public land, belongs to everyone. You should have a right to walk your dog, hike, mountain-bike, bird watch, camp, kayak, swim, or peacefully walk in the woods and enjoy wildlife without having to contort to the whims of hounders and trap-

pers. It's not their land. It's not their wildlife. They are not stewards.

There are two bills pending this year, S. 258 and H. 323, that are vital to support. S. 258 will make the Fish and Wildlife Board more democratic and H. 323 will ban the hounding of coyotes and bears. Hounders and trappers cry that their 'rights' are being stripped away. It would be comical if it wasn't so manipulative and hypocritical.

Coyote and bear hounding, and hounding of all large game animals, has to end. It is gratuitous cruelty. It's animal fighting and puts people and farmed and domesticated animals at risk. Call your legislators to support S. 258 and H. 323.

Alana Stevenson, Charlotte



TOWN OF
KILLINGTON
VERMONT

**Request for Qualifications
for Construction Services
Town of Killington – Town Hall Renovation**

**Killington, Vermont
March 13, 2024**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Town of Killington ("Owner") is seeking qualified Commercial General Contractor ("CGC") firms for remodeling the New Town Hall ("Project") in Killington, Vermont.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project will be to renovate the interior of an existing office building and install a vault for the New Town Hall in Killington, Vermont. Nehring & Associates Architectural and DeWolf Engineering Associates were hired in 2023 to examine the needs and have produced architectural and structural plans.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Construction Manager shall provide the following items and in the following order:

- Cover letter
- Similar project experience
- Completed bid form.
- Other information, qualifications and/or exceptions as each Construction Manager may consider appropriate to the selection process
- No more than 3 pages front and back

Submit proposals in PDF format to:
townmanager@killingtontown.com (Michael Ramsey, Town Manager)

Cover letters addressed to:
Michael Ramsey
Town Manager
Town of Killington
2706 River Road
Killington, VT 05751

**Proposals must be received via email no later than 4:00 PM on April 5, 2024.
The full RFQ can be found at www.killingtontown.com under bid opportunity.**



TOWN OF
KILLINGTON
VERMONT

**PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC
HEARING NOTICE**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO KILLINGTON ZONING BYLAWS
and KILLINGTON ZONING MAP**

The Killington Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the proposed Town of Killington Zoning Bylaw Amendments on **March 20, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.** at the Public Safety Building, 800 Killington Road, Killington, Vermont. The hearing will also be held remotely via zoom. The link to join remotely is: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89935436769> or by call in: +16468769923,89935436769#. This public notice is given pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Section 4444.

The principal purpose of the proposed zoning bylaw amendments is to:

- (1) reflect changes to the Vermont Planning and Development Act (the "Act") that were enacted by the Vermont Legislature in July 2023, which establish new required provisions in every municipal zoning bylaw
- (2) modify the manner in which building heights are measured
- (3) modify building height limitations to reflect the new manner in which building heights are measured
- (4) modify building height limitations applicable to PUDs in the Ski Village II District
- (5) modify setbacks applicable to PUDs in the Ski Village District and in the Ski Village II District
- (6) authorize the Town to assess an application fee to pay or to reimburse the Town for the cost of hiring or engaging engineers, professional consultants, or attorneys to assist the Town with its review of applications
- (7) make revisions throughout the zoning bylaw to clarify and correct definitions, paragraph numberings, and other provisions for the purposes of internal consistency and conformance with the Act. These amendments will affect every geographical area of Killington. The Town of Killington Zoning Map has also been amended to relocate the boundary between the Ski Village District and the Ski Village II District.

The proposed zoning bylaw amendments affect every section of the zoning bylaw, however, the section headings materially affected by the proposed zoning bylaw amendments are SECTION 120 – DEFINITIONS, SECTION 240 - USES, DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS, DENSITY AND DISTRICTS, SECTION 426 - HEIGHT REGULATIONS, and SECTION 610 - ZONING PERMITS.

The full text of the proposed Town of Killington Zoning Bylaw Amendments may be found at the Town Clerk's office, 2706 River Road, Killington and on the Planning Commission page of the Town's website at <https://KillingtonTown.com>.

*Dated at Killington, Vermont this 22st day of March 2024.
Lisa Davis Lewis, Town Planner, Town of Killington, Vermont*

← Social Tinkering:

from page 1

our story, and then decided to learn more about our work. They're not just numbers; they're individuals joining our journey, reflecting the heart of our mission — to touch lives and build meaningful connections."

Arduca added: "It's all about the moments we share, the understanding we create, and the excitement for what comes next. Come join us as we keep telling stories that resonate, connect, and inspire."

On Jan. 24, Vermont Public's Nina Keck visited Social Tinkering's cornerstone monthly social, "Gather Together" and captured the intent and energy of the meetups perfectly in her original February story. She created a way for people to directly hear why attendees show up and why they keep returning.

When Keck asked visitor Russ Green if the social is working he responded, "...this is my first time here, so I'll let you know, but yeah, it's just a really super, super, positive vibe."

Heather Wilson, Social Tinkering's board president and a registered nurse, said, "This seems like such a simple concept, but taking time to intentionally work on feeling more connection with others and ourselves is so important. These gatherings create accessible and inclusive space and time for all people in our community where we can all build friendships and connections to improve our health."

Thanks to funding from United Way and the VT Community Foundation, this March marks two years of the monthly meetups. On March 27, the organization will host "Gather Together" again with cake and ice cream added to the usual hot cocoa and popcorn.

Social Tinkering is also working on a new project: opening a community social hub for the Rutland region it calls a Community Living Room. Instead of having just two hours a month where people can hang out and connect, the Community Living Room will be a physical location that will eventually have similar hours to a restaurant or coffee shop.

Langston described it this way: "Imagine you have a few hours and just want to get out of the house and be around other people but you don't really know anyone or don't have a lot of money to spend. Where do you go? Especially if it's raining!?"

The space will be a welcoming and inclusive, bright and relaxing place, for people of all ages and backgrounds to go and meet up with old friends and new. They plan to co-



ordinate with many community partners to empower people to share their knowledge and skills to all work together to increase connection and help Rutland thrive. The organization is encouraging anyone who is interested in partnering, sponsoring, or volunteering to contact them to get involved.

Social Tinkering is also developing an innovative planning model for community wellbeing that includes offering training and consultation for organizations, businesses, and local governments that help people grow meaningful connections to help them thrive. In the business case, building a well-being culture in a workplace improves employee mental health and engagement. Langston shared that through her community partnership work she hears conversations around retaining employees and residents almost daily now. She believes building micro-cultures of connection and wellbeing are the key to healthy success and sustainability.

An article by Bernie Wong and Kelly Greenwood published in the Harvard Business Review Oct. 10, 2023, called "The Future of Mental Health at Work Is Safety, Community, and a Healthy Organizational Culture" reinforces Social Tinkering's wellbeing planning goals, explaining how focusing on creating and sustaining a wellbeing culture in a workplace can help businesses thrive.

The Social Tinkering team is excited to be building its innovative community connection model in the Rutland region, a place where so many people care deeply about each other.

The group has several more exciting events coming up this spring that will soon be announced including birthday celebrations, donation opportunities, community presentations, and a workshop on storytelling for connection building.

For more info, visit: socialtinkering.org.

← At stake:

from page 11

Ukraine. On Feb. 24, 2022 Russia, under the same presidency, invaded Ukraine, butchering its population and destroying its economy, infrastructure, and cultural heritage. Ironically, Russia still has veto power in the UN Security Council. Seriously? The aggressor country, which once agreed to provide security to its neighbor and had violated the agreement multiple times, is on the

SECURITY Council?

Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me.

When it comes to supporting Ukraine in its patriotic war against Russia's occupation, let me rephrase this: Fool me once shame on you, fool them twice — shame on US — the United States. Fooled once by Russia, Ukraine shall never sign any agreement forfeiting any-

thing, let alone, its territories. It will be a tragedy to submit to an evil Russia and the mass murderer Putin. But it would be a shame for the United States not to fulfill its role as a guarantor to Ukraine. The world and Russia are watching. The reputation of our country is at stake. Not just our reputation, but our own security is at risk.

Svetlana Phillips, Cavendish

← Vt Republican:

from page 11

Jeffords' decision "changed control of the Senate from Republican to Democratic, the first time a switch had ever changed party control."

Party control? Maybe. Introducing... the moderate Republican. Certainly Governor Scott, four-time elected governor, moderate Republican, race car driver, businessman and traditional Vermonter through and through, has earned deep respect among Vermont voters, if not in the supermajority Democratic Legislature, for his commonsensical, compassionate clearheadedness and grasp of not only the issues but the real lives of his fellow Vermonters.

Scott's popularity climbed steadily through four elections since 2016. Wikipedia again: "Scott was elected governor in 2022 with 70.9% of the vote and a margin of 46%,

the largest of any Vermont gubernatorial election since 1996, and the largest for a Republican since 1950."

Governor Scott stepped into the shoes of former Governor Peter Shumlin, a rich-boy from Putney whose favorite word was "bold" and

to manage it are in prison. Boston Magazine called it "Vermont's scandal of the century."

At least when support for Shumlin in the 2016 election lagged, he seemed to be blindsided but was smart enough to throw in the towel.

Maybe it signals a new era of respectful collaboration?

whose bold projects tended to be based on the premise, "Build it and they will come" ... rather, commit to the project and find the money later. His ambitious state health insurance plan sank due to bungled software, and on his watch, another ambitious job-creation project in Newport is still a hole in the ground, foreign investors were cheated, and the crooks who were contracted

We seem to forget that election campaigns — and elections — are not a horse race, not a sport, where the entire objective is to win at all costs. Even though outvoting Trump was a tactic in which Democrats and Progressives perhaps had to swallow their pride, maybe it signals a new era of respectful collaboration between — up to now — bitter enemies?

Julia Purdy, N. Clarendon

← Citizen power:

from page 10

what this will do.

The board will also be stripped of its current authority over Fish and Wildlife rules and the Dept. of Fish & Wildlife will have the authority. The current set up is in place because a half century ago the Legislature acknowledged its lack of expertise around wildlife management and wisely placed it with citizens. Why would we want to make the same mistake again?

Keep the power with the citizens, not the Legislature.

The anglers, hunters and trappers on the current Fish and Wildlife board are Vermont's most committed wildlife advocates and con-

servationists. Don't think for a second that because they fish, hunt and trap that they don't have a deep love for all species and understand the challenges of conserving and protecting the people and wildlife of Vermont.

The starting point for change should be for special interest groups to work with their legislators and donors to find financing and new management structures for the wildlife management they seek, not re-allocate taxes mostly paid by anglers, boaters, shooters and hunters and replace a fish and wildlife management structure that has been successful for over 50 years.

The promoters of S.258 are determined, vocal and have resources. They are truly anti-hunting and trapping, despite their occasional claims about fair-chase.

They should put their effort and money towards future programs that reduce development and vehicle traffic and increase regenerative land use. That will do far more for wildlife in Vermont than S.258 could ever do.

John Gonter, Burlington and Williston, teaches foraging, fishing, hunting and trapping with Vermont Fish & Wildlife and the Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

Perfect for holiday gifts & meals!

Vermont Farmers Food Center ONLINE FARMERS MARKET
Produce, dairy, bakery, meat, maple, and specialty items

Fresh, nutritious, local, and convenient

Shop from local farms online for curbside pick up at 251 West St. in Rutland or at the Killington Welcome Center

vermontfarmersfoodcenter.org/onlinemarket



RUMNEY MUSIC SESSION

MARCH 5, 5:30 PM

WEDNESDAY

3/13

Cribbage for Adults

3-5 p.m. Weekly. Hartland Public Library, 153 Route 5, Hartland. Free. hartlandlibraryvt.org/calendar/ or 802-436-2473

Bone Builders

3:30-4:30 p.m. Weekly. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. Improve balance and enhance energy and wellbeing. chaffeeartcenter.org or 802-775-0356

Silent Reading Group

4-5 p.m. Weekly. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Join us for an hour of silent reading in front of the fireplace. Foster your reading habit in a structured environment. Optional post-reading discussion. Tea, coffee, and cookies provided. normanwilliams.org, 802-457-2295

Adult Open Gym: Coed Pickleball

6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 8-Mar. 27. Killington Elementary School, 686 School House Road, Killington. Buy a 10-visit punch card for \$20 or pay \$5 for every time you come. Partially punched cards from last year are still valid. Enjoy coed team sports in a low-key environment for ages 16 & up. This is a drop-in program, no preregistration and no leagues. For questions please contact Griffin Van Niel at recadmin@killingtontown.com

Wallingford: Extra Stout Band at Town Hall

7-9 p.m. Wallingford Town Hall, School St., Wallingford. Just in time for St. Paddy's Day! Irish, country, folk, rock 'n' roll since 2000. Suggested donation \$15 to pay the band.

THURSDAY

3/14

Bone Builders

10 a.m. Weekly. Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. Weights are provided. sherburnelibrary.org or 802-422-4323

Storytime: Mud and Dirt!

10-11 a.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Free. Storytime promotes early literacy and socialization skills in a fun setting. Each session might offer stories, movement, and an activity. No registration required, free and open to all. Geared towards ages 2-5. rutlandfree.org/calendar-events/ or call 802-773-1860

Domestic/Sexual Violence Support Group

10:30-11:30 a.m. Weekly. Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. Free. Partnering with New Story Center. A different theme each month, flyers available at the Godnick Center or call 802-775-3232. rutlandrec.com/godnick or 802-773-1853

Art at the Chaffee: Artery

10:30 a.m.-Noon. Weekly. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$10 if you bring your own supplies, up to \$20 if supplies provided. Painting in all mediums welcome. No set topic or instructor. Preregister, at chaffeeartcenter.square.site/

Community Lunch

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Thursdays. Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. Over 60, suggested donation is \$3.50; under 59, \$6 fee. Extra donations welcomed. Made possible by Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging and Meals on Wheels. If interested, call 802-773-1853 and leave a message with your name and phone number, the Monday before. rutlandrec.com/godnick

Mendon Senior Lunch

11:30 a.m. Monthly. Sugar & Spice Restaurant, Route 4, Mendon. \$8. Reserve your seat, call Barbara Capman, 802-775-3957.

Ukulele Group

Noon-1 p.m. Weekly. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. Ages 12+. Pre-register by the Wednesday before at 802-775-0356 or at chaffeeartcenter.square.site

Dodji Koudakpo: 'Historic Figures & Nature' Art Exhibit

Noon-6 p.m. Until March 15. VTSU Castleton Bank Gallery, 104 Merchants Row, Rutland. Free. Togolese artist Dodji Koudakpo's art reflects his experiences, people, places, and imagination. In bold colors, his paintings create a bridge between worlds, inspiring and sparking curiosity. djalstarart.com. vermontartscouncil.org

Michelob Ultra Race World

1-3 p.m. Final day. Pico Mountain: Lower Pike or Exhibition. \$50 per individual. Weekly race series at Pico featuring 8 races, where participants can race as individuals or form a team of up to 5 racers. Each race is followed by a party at the Last Run Lounge from 4-6 p.m. Register for the race series: tfaforms.com/5031843. picomountain.com

Play Bridge!

2-4 p.m. Weekly. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Beginners are welcome to observe. normanwilliams.org, 802-457-2295

S.T.E.A.M.

3-4 p.m. Weekly. Hartland Library, 153 Route 5, Hartland. Free. Join us for S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) craft activities. Something different every week! kids@hartlandlibraryvt.org/calendar/ or 802-436-2473

Yoga with Kellie

3:45-4:45 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Free. 802-773-1860

Board Game Night

5-7 p.m. Monthly, 2nd Thursday. Hartland Library, 153 Route 5, Hartland. Free. This month we are playing "Agricola" (Latin for farmer), about raising the most prosperous farmstead. Refreshments provided! 802-436-2473

Ballroom Dance with Patti Panebianco

Thursdays. 1 Brennan Circle, Poultney. Sponsored by Stone Valley Arts Center, Poultney.
5-5:50 p.m. Tango & cha-cha for kids
6-6:50 p.m. Foxtrot for adults
7-7:50 p.m. Salsa for adults
For details and cost, contact Patti Panebianco at 516-909-1686 or email pattidance@gmail.com

Rumney Music Session

5:30-9 p.m. Thursdays. Rumney Barn, Fable Fermentory, 1525 Royalton Turnpike, Barnard. Free. Bow Thayer and Krishna Guthrie. Firepit, woodfired pizza, soup, wine, beer, cider. info@fablefarmfermentory.com or call 802-234-5288

Art at the Chaffee: Sip 'N' Dip

6-8 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$35/person, includes all supplies. Perfect for a night out with friends! Theme: mushroom. Follow along with instructor Sally Hogan, leave with a finished painting. Registration required. chaffeeartcenter.org/adult-classes-coming-soon/ or call 802-775-0356

At the Paramount: U.S. Air Force Heritage

Winds concert

7 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. Free general admission, first-come-first-served. Heritage Winds is the wind-instrument ensemble of the United States Air Force Heritage of America Band. Active airmen, the musicians of Heritage Winds believe in the power of music. Call the box office at 802-775-0903 or email boxoffice@paramountvt.org if you require ADA or accessible seating.

Open Mic Night

7-9 p.m. Alternate Thursdays. ArtisTree, 2095 Pomfret Road, South Pomfret. Free. artistreevt.org/artistree-events or 802-457-3500

Adult Open Gym: Coed Basketball

7-9 p.m. Killington Elementary School, 686 School House Road, Killington. Buy a 10-visit punch card for \$20 or pay \$5 each time. Partially punched cards from last year are still valid. Enjoy coed team sports in a low-key environment for ages 16 & up. This is a drop-in program, no preregistration and no leagues. Ends March 17. For questions contact Griffin Van Niel at recadmin@killingtontown.com

FRIDAY

3/15

Senior Fitness

9:30-10:15. Weekly on Fridays. Spa in the Woods, 53 Woods Lane, Killington. Drop-in only, \$5 per session. spainthewoods.com/workshops or 802-422-3105

Matchbox Madness

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Free. Customize your very own race car! Use marker pens to add racing stripes, decals or other decorations, then test it out on the race track that we'll set up for you. All are welcome, no registration required. rutlandfree.org/calendar-events/ or call 802-773-1860

Story Time at the Library

10:30-11:30 a.m. Weekly. Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. sherburnelibrary.org, 802-422-9765 or 802-422-4251.

Bone Builders

11 a.m.-Noon. Weekly. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. 802-775-0356

Dodji Koudakpo: 'Historic Figures & Nature' Art Exhibit

Noon-6 p.m. Final day. VTSU Castleton Bank Gallery, 104 Merchants Row, Rutland. Free. Togolese artist Dodji Koudakpo's art reflects his experiences, people, places, and imagination. In bold colors, his paintings create a bridge between worlds, inspiring and sparking curiosity. djalstarart.com. vermontartscouncil.org

MSM: Friday Night Piano

5-10 p.m. Weekly. Main Street Museum, 58 Bridge St., White River Junction. Free. Snacks & good company around the firepit to the music produced by piano rolls from the 1900s through the present — and from ABBA to Led Zeppelin. mainstreetmuseum.org or 802-356-2776

Opera Action Figures Premiere & Reception

5:30-6:30. JAM – Junction Arts & Media, 5 S. Main St., White River Junction. Free. Thetford-based twin sisters Amy and Terry Lawrence film costumed artists' wooden mannequins with stop-action to interpret musical pieces. The creators will premiere their new short film, 'Gershwin Preludes: A Thinking Man's Guide to Paris' and screen 'Thank You, Mr. Sondheim.' Q&A after. Their other short films will be on display along with the various sets and figures. uvjam.org

Valley Improv

7-8 p.m. JAM – Junction Arts & Media, 5 S. Main St., White River Junction. RSVP at uvjam.org/event/valley-improv-jam-2/ (required)

Blue Cat Music Series: Patricia Daddona

6-9 p.m. Weekly through March 22. Blue Cat Bistro, 575 Main St., Castleton. Singer-songwriter, balladeer and finger-style guitarist. No cover. 802-468-2791

ART AT THE CHAFFEE: SIP 'N' DIP

MARCH 14, 6 PM





CABIN FEVER FESTIVAL & AUCTION

MARCH 17, 4 PM

SATURDAY
3/16

Vertical Challenge at Pico Mountain

7 a.m. Pico Ski Resort. Free. Skiing meets fun for all ages with ski and snowboard races, festival activities, and prizes. Visit ski-vc.com or killington.com.

Introduction to Stone Carving, Day 1

9 a.m. The Carving Studio, Marble St., West Rutland. \$425. Learn hand-carving techniques, three-dimensional thinking, safe practices and stone carving lore with instructor Ryder Owens. Fee includes use of the Studio's tools and a piece of Vermont marble. Appropriate for beginner/intermediate carvers. info@carvingstudio.org or call 802-438-2097

Mosaic Easter Eggs, Day 1

9 a.m.-Noon. The Glass Shop, The MINT, 112 Quality Ln., Rutland. Member, \$55; nonmember, \$70. Using scrap glass and ceramic tesserae, learn to cut and grind glass in Day 1. Suitable for all ages; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. rutlandmint.org

The Vermont Winter Farmers' Market

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Weekly. Howe Center, Suite 92, 1 Scale Ave. (off Strongs Avenue), Rutland. Free. The Vermont Farmers' Market is one of the largest farmers' markets in the state and the first to operate year round. Find seasonal harvest, winter veggies, handcrafted gifts and more. vtfarmersmarket.org

Local Sewing Bee for "Dress a Girl Around the World" Program

10 a.m. Castleton Community Center, 210 Main Street, Castleton. Join Caren Helm in making simple sundresses for girls worldwide. Register to participate. Contact carenhelm2@gmail.com for registration or donations. For more information, visit dressagirlaroundtheworld.com

Art at the Chaffee

Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. 802-775-0356
11-12:30. Monthly, 3rd Saturday. Acrylic Painting for Kids. \$25 covers all supplies. Ages: 6-10. Attendees follow along with instructor Kristen Partesi. Min. 5 students. max. 12. Must pre-register. chaffeeartcenter.square.site or 802-775-0356
Noon-2 p.m. Drop 'N' Paint, all ages. \$25 per person, instructor fee optional. All ages. Supplies and images to paint are provided. Must pre-register by Friday noon. chaffeeartcenter.org/adult-classes-coming-soon/
1-2:30 p.m. Monthly, 3rd Saturday. Acrylic Painting for Teens. \$25 covers all supplies. Ages: 11-15. Attendees follow along with instructor Kristen Partesi. Min. 5 students. max. 12. Must pre-register. chaffeeartcenter.square.site or 802-775-0356

Shiver Me Shamrocks 5K

1-2 p.m. sharp. Starts at Hop'n Moose Brewery, 41 Center St., Downtown Rutland. Preregistration \$35; day of race \$40. Don your best leprechaun outfit, bring your shillelagh and run or walk to benefit Come Alive Outside. Register at the Paramount. Please no dogs, strollers are discouraged. Registrants get a drink ticket for the Hop'n Moose after-party.

'Dungeons and Dragons' for Tweens

Noon-4 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Free. Ages 10 to 13. All are welcome, no registration required. rutlandfree.org/calendar-events/ or call 802-773-1860

Buddhist Youth Meeting

1-4 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. 802-773-1860

Barnarts 12th Annual Winter Music Carnival

6-10 p.m. Barnard Town Hall, Route 12 in Barnard center. Adults \$25, students \$15, under 6 free. Masquerades and music including jazz, swing & African dance party for all ages. Taco bar with all the fixings, mask making, photo booth. Show up at noon for a free African dance workshop with Crocodile River.

Dance Party with Blue Jay Way Band

6-9 p.m., Ludlow Town Hall Auditorium, Depot St., Ludlow. By donation. Groove to live music by the Blue Jay Way Band with special guest Mark Huntley. Contact 802-228-3238 or info@fola.us for more details.

SUNDAY
3/17

Introduction to Stone Carving, Day 2

9 a.m. The Carving Studio, Marble St., West Rutland. \$425. Learn hand-carving techniques, three-dimensional thinking, safe practices and stone carving lore with instructor Ryder Owens. Fee includes use of the Studio's tools and a piece of Vermont marble. Appropriate for beginner/intermediate carvers. info@carvingstudio.org or call 802-438-2097

Mosaic Easter Eggs, Day 2

Noon-2 p.m. The Glass Shop, The MINT, 112 Quality Ln., Rutland. Member, \$55; nonmember, \$70. Learn to finish and grout the project in Day 2. Suitable for all ages; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. rutlandmint.org

Cabin Fever Festival & Auction

4-6 p.m. Outer Limits Brewing, Village Green, Proctorsville. \$25-\$30. This online auction is now live, to raise funds for the Expeditionary School at Black River. Culminates in the Cabin Fever Festival with beer and pizza. To learn more, pre-buy tix and make a bid, click on 32auctions.com/esbr2024.

Chandler: The Lena Jonnson Trio

2 p.m. matinee. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71 N. Main St., Randolph. \$10-\$45, \$10 for students, free for under 12. The virtuosic and playful fiddle-guitar-bass trio blends Swedish folk tunes with American pop styles and bluegrass. Tix at app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=220815 or call 802-728-9878

Adult Open Gym: Coed Pickleball

2-4 p.m. Final day. Killington Elementary School, 686 School House Road, Killington. Buy a 10-visit punch card for \$20 or pay \$3 for every time you come. Punch cards from last year with holes not yet punched, are still valid. Ages 16 & up. For questions please contact Griffin Van Niel at recadmin@killingtontown.com

MSM: St. Paddy's Festivities for All Ages

Main Street Museum, 58 Bridge St., WRJ. \$10 OBO at the door. mainstreetmuseum.org/events
6 p.m. Potluck supper
7:30 p.m. Live music

MONDAY
3/18

Senior Bone Builders

10 a.m. Weekly. Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. Weights are provided. sherburnelibrary.org or 802-422-4323

Community Lunch

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Mondays. Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. Over 60, \$3.50; under 59, \$6. Donations welcome. In partnership with Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging and Meals on Wheels, the Godnick Center hosts congregational meals. If interested, call 773-1853 and leave a message with your name and phone number, the Thursday before. See rutlandrec.com/godnick for the menu.

Monday Movie

1 p.m. Weekly. The Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. Please call the library for the title of the film. sherburnelibrary.org, 802-422-9765

Poetry Group

4-5:30 p.m. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Are you looking for feedback on your poems? You are invited to join the Poetry Group at NWPL for sharing and critique. normanwilliams.org, 802-457-2295

Master Gardener's Presentation

6-8 p.m. Monthly, 3rd Monday. Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland.

TUESDAY
3/19

Godnick Center: Line Dance for Beginners

9:30 a.m. Tuesdays. Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. Line dance basics plus practice taught by Sharon McKee. No partner or experience needed. 90-minute session follows, learn old and new dances. Call 802-773-1853 for cost and to sign up. rutlandrec.com/godnick

Paint Party on Equinox - Mountain Sunrise

12 p.m. Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. Join Lauren Teton for a free paint session inspired by a beautiful sunrise photo by journalist Victoria Gauthier. All levels of painters welcome. RSVP to the library at 802-422-9765.

Play Chess & Backgammon!

5 p.m. Weekly. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Join us for chess and/or backgammon on Tuesday evenings. All skill levels are welcome, and coaching is available. Bring your own set or use one of ours. normanwilliams.org or 802-457-2295

Queer Zine Making Workshop

6-8 p.m. JAM - Junction Arts & Media, 5 S. Main St., White River Junction. Free. All ages. Instruction by S. Mirk, Center for Cartoon Studies Fellow. Materials included. RSVP at uvjam.org/event/queer-zine-making-workshop/

Ballroom Dance for Adults with Patti Panebianco

Tuesdays through June. Wallingford Town Hall, School St., Wallingford.
6 p.m. Tango for adults
7 p.m. Salsa for adults. New students, 1st class is free. Individual classes or back-to-back. Regular tuition varies by number of classes attended, so check out wallingfordvt.com/community-events/ or contact Patti Panebianco at 516-909-1686 or email pattipdance@gmail.com

Paint Party on Equinox - Mountain Sunrise

6 p.m., North Star Lodge, 78 Weathervane Drive, Killington. \$40. Join Lauren Teton for a paint 'n sip party inspired by a beautiful sunrise photo by journalist Victoria Gauthier. All materials provided. All skill levels welcome. Food and drink available for purchase at the Star Lounge. RSVP to Lauren at 914-420-2194.



BarnArts Masquerade Jazz and Funk Winter Music Carnival has something for everyone

Community-based, family-friendly celebration with food, music, and fun!

Saturday, March 11 at 6 p.m.—BARNARD—The BarnArts annual celebration of winter almost being over, Masquerade Jazz and Funk Winter Music Carnival is scheduled from 6-10 p.m. Saturday, March 16 at the Barnard Town Hall, 274 Barnard Road, Woodstock. This all-ages community celebration includes a taco bar, mask-making table, and photobooth in addition to four hours of music.

The musical lineup has something for everyone starting with modern jazz from saxophonist Michael Zsoldos accompanied by pianist Sonny Saul. Saul's own band, Sonny & the Grey Cats, follows with a set of swinging jazz tunes selected to inspire dancing. The evening is headlined by Crocodile River Music, who will bring an interactive African dance party that BarnArts revelers won't soon forget! Based in Worcester, Massachusetts, Crocodile River consists of members from Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Tanzania, and the U.S. and specializes in immersive performances that showcase African and African-influenced music including Brazilian, Caribbean, and flamenco. Their performances include teaching dances and rhythm and highlight African instruments.

Beyond the stellar line up, ticket holders get dinner, too, by way of an expansive taco bar with all the fixings as well as non-alcoholic beverages. A mask-making table will entertain creatives of all ages while the photo booth area will give folks the perfect place to show off their creations with friends. Crocodile River Music is making the most of their time with

BarnArts, aligning with their mission to educate and connect people of all ages, backgrounds, and capabilities. They'll visit Barnard Academy and Woodstock Union High School/Middle School on Friday, March 15.

Sonny & the Grey Cats is a group of four local musicians who have played all sorts of combinations of originals and classics over the years.

While BarnArts usually brings a headliner, from out of state, for this fun party known locally just as "Masquerade," the lineup always features excellent local professionals who call Vermont home. Tenor saxophonist Michael Zsoldos opens the event most years with a rich jazz duo, to give the purists something to savor. This year he is partnering with Sonny Saul on piano, and they will perform compositions by Tadd Demeron and Coleman Hawkins, icons of sax and piano jazz. Both Michael and Sonny live in Woodstock and relish the opportunity to perform together as a duo. Sonny & the Grey Cats is a group of four local musicians who have played all sorts of combinations of originals and classics over the years. For this Masquerade, they promise to inspire an early start on the dance floor with a focus on swing music. The Grey Cats consist of Sonny Saul on piano, Mark van Gulden on drums, Kathleen Dolan on flute, and Glendon Ingalls on bass. Four hours of music, plus an expansive taco bar, a create-your-own-mask table, and a photo booth come with the price of a ticket to BarnArts Masquerade Jazz & Funk Winter Music Carnival.

Tickets can be purchased online at barnarts.org. Adults \$25, Students \$15, and those under 6 get in for free. BYOB. For more info, visit barnarts.org.



By Troy Thompson

BarnArts welcomes Crocodile River Music from Worcester, Massachusetts to be the headliner for the 12th annual Masquerade Jazz & Funk Winter Music Carnival on Saturday, March 16 at the Barnard Town Hall. Members hail from Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Tanzania, and the U.S. A free African Dance Workshop will also be provided by Crocodile River Music.



By Alex Montañó

Every year a make-your-own mask table is very busy with kids and adults who want to join in the fun spirit of this party.



Courtesy BarnArts

Woodstock resident and tenor sax artist Michael Zsoldos will open the evening with a set of classic and modern Jazz, performing with Sonny Saul on the piano. They promise a set of Tadd Demeron & Coleman Hawkins compositions.



Courtesy BarnArts

A popular part of BarnArts Masquerade festivities is showing off costumes and masks in the photo booth!



Courtesy BarnArts

Sonny & the Grey Cats will be playing a dance-y swing set to initiate the dance party starting at 7pm: Sonny Saul (piano), Mark van Gulden (drums), Glendon Ingalls (bass), Kathleen Dolan (flute).



Courtesy BarnArts

Zili Misik kept the crowd dancing in 2023.

[MUSIC Scene]

By DJ Dave Hoffenberg
Have a music scene coming up? Email djdavehoff@gmail.com

WED 3/13

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Daniel Brown

6 p.m. Rivershed – Rhys Chalmers

7 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub - Tee Boneicus Jones

8 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Nick Bredice

LUDLOW

6 p.m. Off the Rails – Learn to Line Dance

QUECHEE

6 p.m. Public House Pub – Chris Pallutto

RUTLAND

5 p.m. Moose Lodge – Ryan Fuller

8 p.m. Center Street Alley – Full PA/Backline Open Mic hosted by Josh LaFave

THUR 3/14

BARNARD

5:30 Fable Farm – Rumney Barn Sessions with Bow Thayer & Krishna Guthrie

BRANDON

5:30 p.m. Red Clover Ale Company – Open Mic hosted by Emily Nelson

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. Pico's Last Run Lounge – Ski Bum Apres Party with Daniel Brown

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Open Mic hosted by Grateful Gary

6 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – Duane Carleton

6 p.m. Rivershed – Chris Pallutto

6 p.m. The Foundry – Liz Reedy

7 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Crooked Coast

8 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Jenny & Friends

LONDONDERRY

7 p.m. New American Grill – Open Mic Night hosted by DJ Jazzy Joel & Catnip John

LUDLOW

6:30 p.m. The Killarney – Irish Sessions with Gypsy Reel

QUECHEE

6:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Name That Tune Bingo with DJ Dave

RUTLAND

8 p.m. Angler Pub – A Sound Space Open Mic hosted by George Nostrand

8 p.m. Center Street Alley – Karaoke 101 hosted by Tenacious T

SOUTH POMFRET

7 p.m. Artistree – Open Mic Night

FRI 3/15

BOMOSEEN

5 p.m. Lake Bomoseen Lodge – Scott Forrest

BRIDGEWATER

8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club– HickoryTDAU's Birthday Variety Show, Night One

CASTLETON

6 p.m. Blue Cat Bistro – Pat Daddona

KILLINGTON

1 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Duane Carleton

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Nick Bredice & Daniel Brown

3 p.m. Summit Lodge – 9th Annual Killington Irish Festival

4 p.m. The Foundry – Jamie's Junk Show

6 p.m. O'Dwyers Public House – County Down

6 p.m. Rivershed – Rob Pagnano

7 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Nick Bredice

7 p.m. The Foundry – Jenny Porter

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Craic Agus Ceol

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Liquid A

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Jamie's Junk Show

9 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – Last Chair Band

9:30 p.m. Wobbly Barn – 3AM Tokyo

LONDONDERRY

6 p.m. New American Grill – St Patrick's Day Party with Gypsy Reel

LUDLOW

6 p.m. Coleman Brook Tavern at Okemo – Sammy B

QUECHEE

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – John Lackard

SAT 3/16

BARNARD

6 p.m. Town Hall - BarnArts 12th Annual Masquerade Jazz & Funk Winter Music Carnival

BOMOSEEN

5:30 p.m. Lake Bomoseen Lodge – Ryan Fuller

BRIDGEWATER

8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – HickoryTDAU's Birthday Variety Show, Night Two

KILLINGTON

12 p.m. Summit Lodge – 9th Annual Killington Irish Festival

1 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Nick Bredice

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Daniel Brown

5 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Jamie's Junk Show

6 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – Duane Carleton

6 p.m. Rivershed – Rob Pagnano

6 p.m. Wobbly Barn – KGB

6 p.m. O'Dwyer's Public House – County Down

6:30 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Sammy B

7 p.m. The Foundry – Jenny Porter

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Craic Agus Ceol

8 p.m. Northstar Lodge Lounge – St Patrick's Day Party with DJ Dave

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Liquid A

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Live Music

9:30 p.m. Wobbly Barn – 3AM Tokyo

10 p.m. Pickle Barrel Crows Nest– Jamie's Junk Show

LUDLOW

9 a.m. Okemo's Sunburst Six Bubble – Lift Line St Patrick's Day Party with DJ Dave O'Hoff

2 p.m. Apres Afternoons at Clock Tower Base Lodge – St Patrick's Day Party with DJ Dave O'Hoff

2 p.m. Apres Afternoon at Jackson Gore– Adam McMahon

Trio
6 p.m., Ludlow Town Hall Auditorium – Blue Jay Way Band with special guest Mark Huntley

6:30 p.m. The Killarney – St Patrick's Day Party with Gypsy Reel

QUECHEE

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – St Patrick's Day Party with George's Back Pocket

STOCKBRIDGE

7:30 p.m. Wild Fern – Rick Redington & Tuff Luv

SUNDAY 3/17

KILLINGTON

12 p.m. Summit Lodge – 9th Annual Killington Irish Festival

12 p.m. Rivershed – Brunch with Rob Pagnano

1 p.m. Pico's Last Run Lounge – Duane Carleton

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Rhys Chalmers

3 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – St Patrick's Day Party with music by Craic Agus Ceol

4 p.m. O'Dwyer's Public House – County Down

5 p.m. The Foundry – Jazz Night with the Summit Pond Quartet

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tee Boneicus Jones

6 p.m. Rivershed – Trivia

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Open Mic Night with Indigenous Entertainment

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Jenny Porter

LONDONDERRY

2 p.m. Black Line Tavern at Magic Mountain – Nick Bredice

LUDLOW

3 p.m. The Bull at Okemo - St Patrick's Day Party with Gypsy Reel

6:30 p.m. The Killarney - St Patrick's Day Party with Gypsy Reel

STOCKBRIDGE

7:30 p.m. Wild Fern – Rick Redington's Looping Mayhem

MONDAY 3/18

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Duane Carleton

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Chris Pallutto

5:30 p.m. Mary Lou's – BAK'n

6 p.m. Rivershed – Mandatory Mondays with Name That Tune Bingo by DJ Dave

LUDLOW

8:30 p.m. The Killarney – Open Mic Night with Indigenous Entertainment

TUESDAY 3/19

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Rhys Chalmers. 5:30 p.m. Mary Lou's – Bow Thayer & Krishna Guthrie

6 p.m. Rivershed – Nick Bredice

8 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Taco Tuesday with Rick Webb



ATM LOTTERY

killington market

GROCERY

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beer and wine

DELICATESSEN

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Pizza ~ Maple Syrup

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March 19, 2024 - Celebrating National Certified Nurses Day

**Educated,
Skilled,
and Certified.**



Rutland Regional Medical Center recognizes and honors the unique contributions of our Board Certified nurses on Certified Nurses Day. Certified Nurses Day is an annual worldwide event dedicated to celebrating certification as a means to ensure high standards of patient care and promote continuing excellence in the nursing profession. In alignment with the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet Recognition Program®, Rutland Regional nurses continue to demonstrate their professionalism, leadership, and commitment to excellent patient care.

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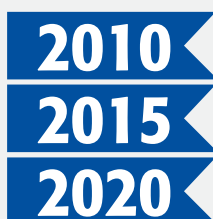
Jodi Hyndman, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC, RNFA

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Girls on the Run Vermont participant registration is open

Girls on the Run Vermont's registration for its spring program is now open statewide. GOTR is a physical activity-based, positive youth development program that inspires students in grades 3-8 to be joyful, healthy, and confident.

The 10-week program incorporates movement to empower participants to develop critical life skills, build confidence, cultivate positive connections with peers, manage their emotions, and stand up for themselves and others.

Volunteer coaches utilize a research-based curriculum to engage teams of girls in fun, interactive lessons that foster the social, emotional, and physical wellbeing of participants.

The spring season begins the week of March 18 statewide. Teams meet twice a week for 90 minutes and the program culminates with all teams participating in one of two noncompetitive, celebratory 5K events in Essex at the Champlain Valley Expo (June 1) and Manchester at the Manchester Recreation Fields (June 8).

These events bring together family, friends, and community members to celebrate the participants' growth throughout the season.

Girls on the Run Vermont is an independent and 501 (c)(3) recognized council of Girls on the Run International (GOTRI), which has a network of over 200 councils across the United States. Since 1999, Girls on the Run Vermont has empowered

approximately 38,000 Vermont girls grades 3-8 to develop physical, emotional, and social wellbeing through an after-school program delivered in communities throughout the state.

The program fee for the spring 2024 season is \$130 and financial aid is available to those who need it. The program fee includes registration and activities for the end of season 5K event, a program t-shirt, personal journal to use throughout the season, cinch sack, water bottle and more.

With trained coaches ready to empower these participants, Girls on the Run (grades 3-5) and Heart & Sole (grades 6-8) are currently set to take place at the following

sites:

Rutland: Barstow Memorial, Benson Village School, Castleton Elementary School, Currier Memorial School, Fair Haven Grade School, Mettawee Community School, Neshobe School, Rutland Town School, Shrewsbury Mountain School, Tinmouth Elementary, Wallingford Elementary School, Wells Village School.

Windsor County: Chester Andover Elementary School, Ottauquechee School, Rochester Elementary, Stockbridge Elementary, South Royalton Elementary School, Woodstock Elementary School.

For more information, visit: gotrvt.org.

These events bring together family, friends, and community members to celebrate the participants' growth throughout the season.

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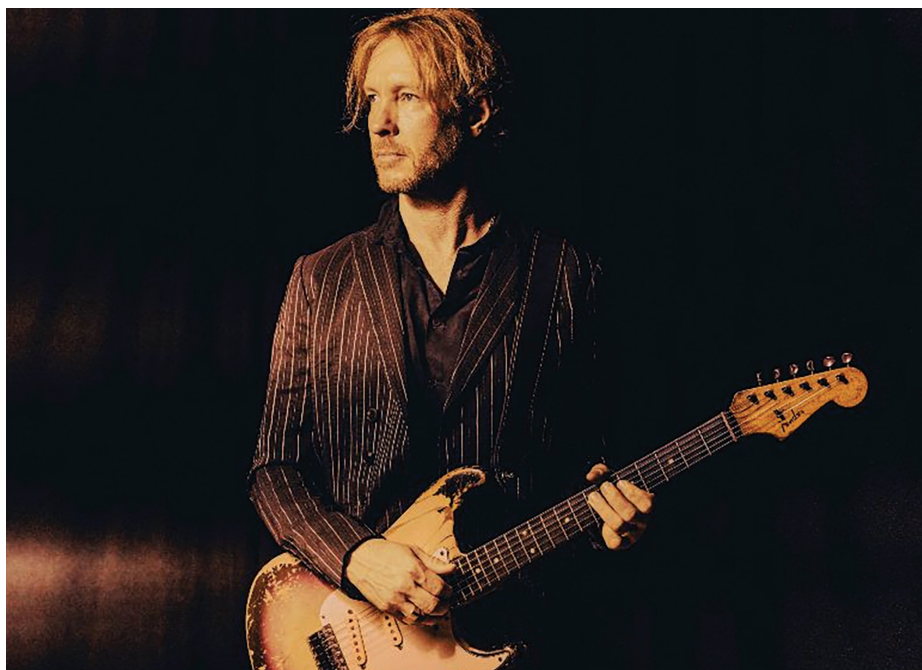
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Submitted

Kenny Wayne Shepherd, a Grammy-nominated multi-platinum bandleader, will perform at the Paramount Theatre in Rutland on Wednesday night, March 20 at 7:30 p.m. His latest album, "Dirt on My Diamonds, Vol. 1," explores new musical avenues and uses a blues-infused rocker as a metaphor for life's moments.

Come hear the future of the blues with Kenny Wayne Shepherd

By Alan Sculley, Last Word Features

Wednesday, March 20, at 7:30 p.m.—RUTLAND—Next Wednesday night the Paramount Theatre hosts Kenny Wayne Shepherd a Grammy-nominated, multi-platinum bandleader who still sounds like the future of the blues.

Kenny Wayne Shepherd has always sought to give fans something unexpected each time he releases an album.

"I don't want to be a predictable artist like in the sense that you hear 'Kenny Wayne Shepherd is coming out with a new record' and you feel like you already know what it's going to sound like before you even hear it," he explained in a late-January phone interview. "That's not the kind of artist I want to be. I'm always striving to do something different and always striving to get better."

Shepherd's latest release, "Dirt on My Diamonds, Vol. 1," certainly fulfills that mission statement.

While the 46-year-old singer-songwriter-guitarist has generally been considered a blues-rock artist ever since he arrived on the scene at age 18 with his 1995 debut album, "Ledbetter Heights," the new eight-song release finds Shepherd exploring some fresh musical avenues.

"Dirt on My Diamonds, Vol. 1" opens on a punchy note with the title track, a blues-infused rocker that uses an affection for things that have a lived-in-and-lived-through character as metaphors for the way life encompasses times of beauty, love, loss, challenge and redemption. It's a song that feels like signature Shepherd. But elsewhere "Dirt On My Diamonds, Vol. 1" adds some new wrinkles. "Best Of Times" has a decidedly gritty and funky feel, and its sharp horn parts introduce a soul element that's also prominently featured in the slinky ballad "You Can't Love Me," the greasy shuffle of "Man on a Mission" and the hard-hitting "Bad Intentions."

"I feel like there's soul in everything that we do. But you hear a lot of different influences on this record," Shepherd said. "As time has gone on, I have taken the liberty to pull from a lot of different musical genres over the years. But it always starts with blues. Everything we do, like, the core of it is the blues foundation that I've always built my music off of. But this one just pulls from a few (more) different directions than maybe some of the older stuff."

The way Shepherd approached writing for "Dirt on My Diamonds" also fits with his desire to continue exploring new musical facets with his album projects.

Rather than scheduling various writing sessions with his collaborators, Shepherd took the opportunity to set up shop with his co-writers at the legendary Fame Studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, where career-defining albums by the Rolling Stones, Aretha Franklin and the Allman Brothers Band, to name a few, were made.

"We all drove down there. We made it a trip," Shepherd said. "We just decided we wanted to do something different, something outside the norm. It's just trying to change things up a bit. We went down there and we were in there for about four or five days, I think. We just started writing away, man. We just wanted to soak up that vibe that they have down there. So much legendary music was made there."

Shepherd then took the bones of the newly written songs to Band House Studios in Los Shepherd →37



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The Vertical Challenge at Pico Mountain drops in where skiing meets fun for all ages

Saturday, March 16 at 7 a.m.—KILLINGTON—Pico Mountain is hosting the Vertical Challenge, a series of free, casual ski and snowboard races held at ski resorts throughout the Northeast during each winter season. The event will be held this Saturday, March 16. The event includes a festival element, featuring snowy activities for all ages and prizes given away throughout a fun day at the mountain. It's also a lot more. In fact, Killington/Pico Ski Resort was the very first mountain to host the event back in 1991.

About the Vertical Challenge:

Skiers and snowboarders are divided by gender and age to compete for gold, silver, and bronze medals in each category. In addition to the races, attendees enjoy a festival element, featuring snowy activities for all ages, plus prizes given away throughout a fun day at the mountain.

Over the Vertical Challenge's 30 years of operation, the priority has been focused on making a difference in the lives of attendees through guidance and mentorship.

Registration:

The Vertical Challenge races are free for participants, with costs paid by tour sponsors. All entrants need to do is purchase a lift ticket from the host mountain and complete a registration form, which can be done in advance at ski-vc.com. The VC will once again work with NASTAR for racer registration and results.

Participants can register online until 5:00 p.m. on 3/15 or on-site during the morning of March 16.

Saturday Schedule:

- Registration open: 7-11 a.m.
- Sponsor Village open: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Racecourse open: 10 a.m.-Noon
- Vertical Victory Party & awards: 1:30 p.m.

**All information here is subject to change. All events will take place slope side or inside of the Pico Base Lodge.*

For more information, visit ski-vc.com or killington.com.



Courtesy Pico Ski Resort

Ski enthusiasts mentor young racers during the Vertical Challenge at Pico Mountain, where skiers and riders get experience racing through gates. Pico Mountain hosts the Vertical Challenge, a free ski and snowboard race series in the Northeast, sponsored by tour sponsors. The event, which offers snowy activities for all ages, features gold, silver, and bronze medals.



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Sixth Local Sewing Bee Will Help 'Dress a Girl Around the World' Program

Saturday, March 16 at 10 a.m.—CASTLETON— Caren Helm of Fair Haven is hosting the 6th sewing bee for the “Dress a Girl Around the World” program at Castleton Community Center, 210 Main St., Castleton. A complimentary light lunch and beverages will be served. Registration is a must to get a lunch count.

Helm will teach participants how to make a very simple sundress. “This is a preventative project that offers hope and dignity to young women around the world,” Helm said. “Simple, brightly colored cotton sundresses are sewn and donated to Hope 4 Women, who then distribute them.” Hope 4 Women International is a non-denominational, non-profit organization. To date, over 2 million dresses have been sent to 81 countries. The program has partnered with Partners for World Health, Rotary around the world and other such service organizations. The dresses are also intended to keep girls less vulnerable to rape and sex trafficking; every dress has a pocket with a label that indicates the girl has family and community who care. This is believed to be a deterrent to predators.

This is the sixth sewing bee Helm has hosted locally; she notes that the response to this project has exceeded her expectations. The yearly dress count has climbed steadily as the word gets out of the project’s

importance. The first-year goal was 100 dresses and 467 dresses were sewn and distributed. In 2023, 792 beautiful sundresses made their way to villages around the world. “The project has a passionate life of its own,” Helm says. “People just need to know where the need is, and they are right there to volunteer.” Helm noted that a local high school has integrated it into a Home Arts class. “I think this is an important topic that young women need to know about,” Helm says. “These students have rallied around the project and have sewn beautiful dresses.” A group of Vermont “snowbirds” took kits with them to Florida and will return with dresses this spring. Local churches have gotten involved. Individuals who love to sew, all come together to ‘sew for the cause.’

Sewing bee participants are asked to bring a sewing machine, notions and tools. Kits with all the supplies and fabric will be available. Sewers attending will learn the specifications of making the dresses and return home to make more. Kits are available with everything the sewer needs to complete a dress.

Helm is always accepting cotton fabric and notions donations. Fabric must be at least one yard. She also is seeking extra-wide, double-fold bias tape, 1/2” or 3/4” elastic, in any color. Other ways to volunteer include working at home washing

and ironing donated fabric, attending kit making workshops, assembling kits for sewers, baking cookies for the bee or making a monetary donation.

To register, contact Helm at 802-265-2145 or carenhelm2@gmail.com.

For more information, visit dressagirlaroundtheworld.com



Courtesy [dressagirlaroundtheworld](http://dressagirlaroundtheworld.com)
“Transforming Lives, One Stitch at a Time.”: Join Caren Helm as she hosts the 6th sewing bee for the Dress a Girl Around the World program at Castleton Community Center. Learn to craft sundresses destined for Hope 4 Women International, a non-denominational organization that has delivered over 2 million dresses to 81 countries. With 792 sundresses distributed in 2023 alone, this initiative continues to exceed expectations.

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This pet is available for adoption at
Springfield Humane Society
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 *Open by appointment only. spfhdhumane.org



Bella—11 months old. Spayed female. German shepard. If you are looking for an active young girl look no further! Bella absolutely loves the outdoors and needs plenty of exercise. She is a very sweet and affectionate girl!



NINA

Nina—9-year-old spayed female. I came to Lucy Mackenzie with my best friend, Maria, after our previous owner could sadly no longer take care of us due to health reasons. We're here now, though, and this is the best place for us to be while we wait to begin our next chapter. We're both affectionate little souls with a lot of love to give. Oh, and we're extremely bonded! So, we would like to live together with the same family once we find our forever home. We're so bonded we even drafted this "write-up" together!

This pet is available for adoption at
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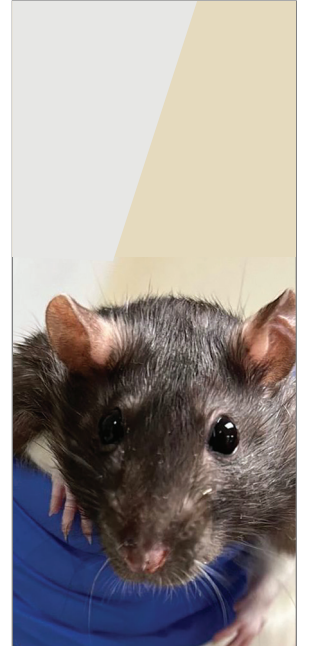
Chico—10-months old. Neutered male. Mixed breed. Chico loves attention, treats and time with people, and approaches new situations with cautious curiosity.



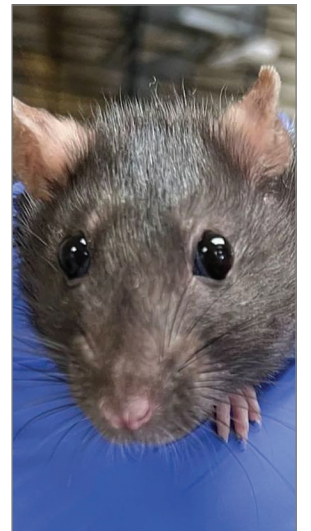
Squid—10 months old. Neutered male. Mixed breed. Squid is sweet and gentle; and is learning to love attention, treats and time with people, but approaches new situations with cautious curiosity.



Dolce—15y/o. Neutered male. Mini poodle mix. Dolce's vision, hearing, and agility aren't what they once were; but he'll happily greet you with a tail wag and a spin-kick.



Penelope—1y/o. Female. Fancy rat. Penelope came in with her friend Tild. They are the sweetest rats you will ever meet!



Tilda—1y/o. Female. Fancy rat. White/brown. Tilda came in with her friend Penelope. They are the sweetest rats you will ever meet. They like to snuggle and interact with people!



CLIFFORD

Clifford—9 y/o. Neutered male. Domestic shorthair. Clifford is a very handsome boy who loves attention and never says no to a good pet.

All of these pets are available for adoption at
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Cosmic Catalogue



Aries
March 21 - April 20

With Mercury in your sign for the next two months you have the chance to understand yourself a bit better. Get curious! What makes you tick? How might you like to improve personally? What do you want to learn more about? Whatever it is that pops into your mind, explore it. Caution though – don't take on more than what you have the energy for. A frazzled mind generally isn't good at making smart choices.

Leo
July 21 - August 20

Some relief arrives this week as Mercury lights up your discovery and travel zone for the next two months. This week, start making plans around what you want in this part of your life which may include any study plans too. Don't overlook the details. Initiate conversations or do the required research so when the time is right, you can confidently head in the right direction. Relationships may be tricky territory so avoid creating unnecessary drama.

Sagittarius
November 21 - December 20

Life at home may begin to feel a little bit sweeter this week. This may come as welcome relief as it's been tricky to find a solid foundation or there have been obstacles to surmount. While things may be far from perfect, things will sure feel better at least. Mercury activates your fun zone, reminding you that while you may have some challenges to do battle with, that's no excuse to not have a good time along the way.

Taurus
April 21 - May 20

Your patron planet, Venus, will move into your friends zone this week. Thus, making time for your friends and social networks both on-line and in real life has cosmic support now. If you're stressed or worried about something, talking it over with a trusted friend will be just what you need. Also, time with friends can provide a much-needed distraction, helping you get out of your own head too. Problems shared can be problems halved.

Virgo
August 21 - September 20

Relationships have been a bit tricky recently when it comes to figuring out your limits and setting boundaries. Go too far in one direction and things feel tough and rigid. Go too far in the other and it feels like you're simply giving way too much. Now that Venus has arrived, chances are you'll find the perfect Goldilocks "just right" balance. Lean into sweetness and connection and things will feel so much better.

Capricorn
December 21 - January 20

Giving some thought to home and family matters comes into focus this week. Mercury in your Home Zone for the next two months is likely to shift some of your priorities as well as family logistics and communication among family members. Before things really get set to be churned up here, start taking some action around what you'd like to see happen regarding your domestic situation. Changing your mind and things happening faster than you think are possible.

Gemini
May 21 - June 20

With your personal planet in your luck and friendship zone for the next two months, you can expect that much fortune can come your way. Fortune in the sense of not so much what you know, but whom. Rubbing shoulders with the right people can literally change your life right now. As you embrace new people into the fold, be prepared to let old friendships fade, if required. Also, be seen in your best light at work.

Libra
September 21 - October 20

There's so much about yourself you've tried to actively change in recent months. Some people have supported these changes, while others have struggled as you've let go of old habits and patterns. Now, it's time for you to practice clear communication about what you want and need in relationship. Now that you're thinking differently about so much to do with life and love, don't leave someone special in the dark about what is on your mind.

Aquarius
January 21 - February 20

As Venus leaves your sign this week, take this as your reminder to continue to be gentle on yourself. Thanks to Venus' exit, you're left with Mars and Pluto in your sign which is likely not going to feel great. Try and harness this energy for good by taking care of your body, mind and spirit. Don't neglect your physical fitness and avoid using retail therapy about what isn't going right in your life right now.

Cancer
June 21 - July 20

It's time for you to show up with more confidence when it comes to your career and life direction. With Mercury in your professional zone for two months, give some thought about what you want in this area of your life. It won't be long before eclipses shake this up. So before that happens, get a rough plan about what you want so you don't end up on the back foot.

Scorpio
October 21 - November 20

Finding the sweet spot between your duties and obligations and living the good life may be a challenge this week. It will really depend on what your priorities are at the moment. If love, romance and children need your attention, then give it. If you really need to tighten up your schedule or pay attention to tasks you've been avoiding, then that's what you need to do. A combination of the two may be necessary.

Pisces
February 21 - March 20

Finally, some sweet relief comes your way in the form of Venus in your sign. It's been a year now since serious Saturn entered Pisces and the hard work, the challenges and the obstacles you've overcome start to pay off. If it's possible, reward yourself! Do something nice for yourself or let other's do something good for you. Luxuriate a little bit! Also, start making some decisions regarding your finances, too!

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Cassandra has studied astrology for about 20 years. She is an international teacher of astrology who has been published all over the globe.

War of words will ensue

With Mercury in Aries and Venus sliding into Pisces this week, it might be easy to think that the tide is changing and everything is different. This isn't entirely true. With Mercury in Aries for the next two months, arguments, battles and a war of words will ensue.

As the fog of recent weeks dissipates, this week is ideal for giving thought about what clear and direct communication looks like to you. This isn't the time to mince your words or be evasive. A clear and well thought out mind is less likely to fall victim to gas-

lighting, propaganda and flat out lies. Be prepared to call something out for what it

is. Not all circumstances require nuance and context. Duality has its place, but it's less likely now.

Venus in Pisces, in contrast, adds a soothing balm that adds a touch of the sublime. While one area of life may feel furious and fraught, another will feel like a soft landing and a much needed sweet distraction.

Before the astrological temperature gauge ramps right up, the stillness of this week allows you to lean into what you're fighting for as well as what you cherish.



Cosmic Catalogue
By Cassandra Tyndall

Spring snow

All the snow starts to melt,
Suddenly a big snow-storm comes through.

Mother Nature likes to tease us,

Telling us spring has come,

The warm weather is here,

But then the snow comes falling out of the sky,

Beautiful as always,
Sparkling and bright,

The spring snow comes through

Year after year,

Teasing us about spring really being here.



Poetry Is Power
By Bree Sarandrea

Our ice skating rink and potbelly stove Building a Killington dream lodge, part 5

Mom and I perfected the art of dressing in bed when it was cold, which was quite often in Vermont's Green Mountains. We giggled as we wiggled out of and into our clothing. It wasn't easy, especially for me, inside my narrow mummy sleeping bag. I felt like a mini female Houdini. But it was worthwhile staying warm as we dressed, and fun beginning and ending days with laughter.

When the weather turned bitter cold, water froze on our basement floor, sometimes as much as half an inch thick. Elegant icicles hung from the ceiling as our winter wonderland glittered.

"Let's wear our ice skates," I suggested.

"Welcome to the Dye Family Skating Rink!" Mom declared.

Our exhaled words formed breath clouds in the air. At that point, Mom said, "Enough is enough. It's nuts to be here. I quit. I'm tired of freezing!"

Extreme measures were required. So, Dad bought a second-hand potbelly stove to warm up the basement in cold temperatures. Since it's Vermont, we burned logs quite often. Dad chopped the wood, which we then piled in the sun. But a tarpaulin

was frequently needed for the on-again, off-again rain and snowstorms.

When Dad fired up the potbelly stove, the heat was heavenly and warmed up our room. We held out our hands and turned all around so we could warm up our derrières. I loved to sit with my feet out in front to warm up and dry out my wet socks and shoes.

Slowly the heat thawed the ice on the floor. After a while, we donned rubber boots and waded around our sinking ship. If the potbelly stove burned into the night, the ice continued to defrost and drip. I dreaded waking up with my pillow soaking wet, with damp

Meditation → 33



Mountain Meditation
By Marguerite Jill Dye

Maple sugaring adapts to a changing climate

Boiling maple sap into syrup is a time honored tradition in the Northeast, to the olfactory delight of anyone who has spent time in a steamy sugarhouse while inhaling the sweet maple scent of the season. It used to be that trees were tapped in late March, and evaporators in sugar houses fired up in early April. In recent years, however, both the timing and management of sugaring season have shifted to match the earlier onset of sap flow in the trees.

"For the last five years, we've been tapping earlier than we ever have. The season still lasts as long as it has, but we're setting taps about a month earlier than we used to, and finishing up two to three weeks earlier," said Curt Allen, manager of Spring Brook Farm in Reading.

"In the early 1980s to 2000s, we wouldn't tap until well into March, and the sugaring season lasted well into April," said Allen. He said they now tap trees starting in early February and complete the sugaring process by early April, when maple buds begin to swell and the flavor of the sap changes.

This mirrors trends seen over a broad geographic area by researchers at University of Vermont's Proctor Maple Research Center in Underhill Center. According to Extension Maple Specialist Mark Isselhardt, data gathered from maple producers from the 1960s through the early 2000s revealed that, by the end of that span of years, the sugaring season was arriving one to two weeks earlier, and the duration was about 10% shorter.

Milder temperatures, drastic weather events, and changes in growing conditions are impacting maple sugaring in myriad ways. Optimal sap flow occurs when temperatures are in the 20s F. at night and rise into the 40s F. during the day.

"The immediate threats are the weather and its influence on the number of ideal sugaring days," said Isselhardt. "Some of the colder sugarbushes are probably going to weather the changes better."

Isselhardt also noted that "natural disturbances, extreme wind events, heavy rains, and drought throughout the year" have an impact on tree health. "Unnatural disturbances can be accentuated by extreme weather, like the severe precipitation we had in December of 2023," he said. "The western side of the Green Mountains had 80- to 90-mile per hour gusts and people lost crop trees. These trees are perennials that have been growing, in some cases, for 200 years."

The particular conditions that trees experience as a stretch of cold weather sets in can have a profound impact on how they respond. "The way a tree goes into a freezing event can dictate how much sap is taken up

into the tree," said Isselhardt. "A long, slow freeze, and a tree will take up more sap into the tree. A short, quick freeze, there is less time for an uptake."

Abnormally high late-winter temperatures, such as we saw in 2012, and to a lesser extent in 2021, can stop sap flow abruptly. Under these conditions, producers have fewer days in which to produce their crop of syrup. "10-20% of your annual crop can be impacted by one or two big events," said Isselhardt.

Sugaring operations are also responding to the changing environment by adopting new technologies. These include vacuum pumps, which allow sugar makers to harvest more sap per tree; reverse osmosis, which concentrates the sugar in the sap before boiling; and more energy efficient evaporators. "We used to get about a quart of syrup per tap," said Allen, "but because of vacuum pumps we're now getting about half a gallon of syrup per tap." With these new systems, Spring Brook Farm has been able to reduce the amount of wood burned by two-thirds while still increasing syrup production.

In an age of shifting climate, the old adage of "time waits for no one" applies even to venerable rural traditions such as maple sugaring. The relatively rapid transition being made to the earlier timing and unpredictable nature of the sugaring season reveals how farmers are acclimating to our increasingly capricious environment.

Michael J. Caduto is a writer, ecologist, and storyteller who lives in Reading, Vermont. He is author of 'Through a Naturalist's Eyes: Exploring the Nature of New England.' The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: nhcf.org.



I'll stand by you

During college, a friend and I got into a bit of a predicament after a long night of partying. We were highly compromised and foolishly thought it might be fun to break into the school's gymnasium to shoot baskets.

At the time, I was in charge of the men's intramural basketball program and therefore had keys to the gymnasium (so the idea of "breaking in" wasn't entirely accurate). However, even though I had keys in my possession, it was expected that I only use them in accordance with my duties.

Back then, there were no security systems or cameras, so if you could get into a building, you were pretty much free to roam. It was also the 1980s when minor offenses were still being shrugged off as long as no harm was incurred. These two points made the idea of trespassing easier to swallow. And given that I was barely 20 years old, intoxicated, and working without a fully developed frontal lobe, it was easy to understand why this felt like a legitimate idea.

After stumbling over to the gym, I opened the door, turned on one set of overhead lights, and grabbed a couple of balls from the rec office. We then proceeded to shoot around. As expected, this quickly devolved into trying to make baskets from the bleachers and other unlikely locations.

At one point, I wandered over to the water fountain to get a drink. As I was gulping up water, a loud, angry-sounding voice suddenly bellowed through the gym. When I turned around, a campus security guard was walking onto the court toward my friend.

My first instinct was panic, which caused me to freeze. However, as he was interrogating my friend, I slyly shuffled to the side of the bleachers where I could observe the confrontation undetected.

I could hear the guard chastising my buddy and asking him how he got access to the building. It was hard to understand their conversation given the echo in the building, but my friend was obviously taking the heat and not admitting to my presence.

After a brief interchange, the two walked to the doors where the security guard ushered my friend out. He then walked back into the gym and started to inspect the area. I could see his location through the slats in the bleachers where I stood motionless. After a few minutes of investigation, the guard headed to the doors, turned off the lights, and left.

I stood under the bleachers in the dark for what seemed like an eternity. After I was

sure the guard was gone, I snuck into the rec office to look out the windows. It was still dark outside, but the first glimpses of the sunrise were sneaking in, allowing me to determine that the coast was clear.

I quietly opened the door and exited the building and then quickly headed for the first set of dorms, even though they were not in proximity to my apartment (I knew I had to blend in fast to not bring attention to myself).

Thankfully, I never saw another individual on my journey back to my dorm room.

The next day, my friend showed up to my room while I was still asleep. I apologized profusely, thinking that he was going to be angry that I never 'fessed up to my presence. Instead, he found the whole thing humorous, joking that the security guard was borderline inept because he easily fell for my friend's excuse that the gym door was wide open and that he wandered in out of curiosity. My friend also said that he knew my job would be in jeopardy if I got

caught, so he was happy to take the fall for me.

When nothing became of the event, we surmised that the security guard must have thought that he left the door open and that it was better for him if the whole episode just disappeared, which we were happy to oblige.

But the greater lesson for me was the importance of being friends with people who have your back if things get rough.

In this week's feature, "Ricky Stanicky" starring Zac Efron and John Cena, we meet another loyal individual who always seems to be covering for his hapless friends.

From the comedic mind of director Peter Farrelly ("Dumb and Dumber," "There's Something About Mary," "Shallow Hal"), "Ricky Stanicky is just as offensive and unruly as you would expect. Thankfully, there's plenty of laughs intertwined.

John Cena is the main comedic driver in this film, proving once again that the muscle-bound wrestler has the chops to carry a major Hollywood production. There's more to this guy than most people realize, although he's making it hard to ignore with each successive portrayal.

Check this one out if you're looking for a solid comedic release. It doesn't reach the upper echelon of Farrelly's best projects, but it is goofy enough to keep you entertained.

A "C+" for "Ricky Stanicky," now available to stream on Amazon Prime.

Got a question or comment for Dom? You can email him at moviediary@att.net.



The Movie Diary
By Dom Cioffi



Two feet of snow!

The only light was coming from the street lamp, giving my car an almost ethereal glow. Snow was falling from the sky, as it had been for the past few hours while I worked my final shift at Liquid Art. It was one of those nights where so much snow was falling, the plow trucks had difficulty keeping up with the demand.



Living the Dream
By Merisa Sherman

I like those kind of nights. And I certainly love that much snow falling. To go to work with the ground covered in brown and then step outside quite a few hours later to find everything covered in a blanket of white.

In this case, a very thick, heavy white. We were all laughing and joking around as we left the building, but as we approached our cars you could feel the noise getting picked up by the snow.

And so we set to work on our tasks: unburying our vehicles.

Now many people rejoice in having a garage so they can just pull out in the morning and set off to the mountain. Not so with me. I love shoveling off my car, especially when I haven't had to do it in what feels like forever. It's a chance to get to know the snow, to feel the texture and grain, similar to a layer test in avalanche

territory.

In this case, a midnight test of the snowpack on my vehicle meant that it would be okay to sleep in on Sunday — no need to fight over blower pow when there wouldn't be any.

And so I took my time, first clearing off the heavy snow on the driver's door with my gloves. I like to make sure the doorway is clear before opening the door to prevent snow from dropping onto the driver's seat and giving me a wet butt. The first layer was heavy, but the base layer kinda stuck to the car. This also implied that the drive home would probably be a very slow one, predictably greasy under the thick heavy wet stuff that would build a beautiful base for the fluff that would come on Monday.

I am currently having scraper issues, as in, I really don't like the one I have now but it was all that was left at Home Depot last year when my old one broke. I was devastated. My old scraper brush and I had been through three cars together and this new one has a twist extender which means that the brush keeps rotating around in the heavy snow. I almost threw it across the parking lot but then I would have had to spend time finding it in the snow. So, instead, I just kept brushing away, using one hand to hold the brush and the other to keep the stupid thing from twisting.

Between the lights and the snow, it was a pretty zen 20 minutes. I like to work from the driver's side door around the back of the car. I start at the top, brushing off the Yakima box with little jumps to get all the way across. Then, diving underneath the box and getting trapped in the cross bars, always wondering why someone has not yet developed a more

Livin' the Dream → 33

Spring is around the corner

"Springtime is the land awakening. The March winds are the morning yawn," said Lewis Grizzar.

March can be a bit dismal as many await the end of a long winter and the coming of spring. It's like winter is holding on tight but spring is trying to get its foot in the door.



Senior Scene
Gerrie Russell

We have to operate on good faith that spring will return.

Sunday, March 17, is St. Patrick's Day. St. Patrick was a 5th Century missionary, who is credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland. He became a legendary figure by the end of the 7th Century and is considered a patron saint of Ireland. By the time of his death on March 17, 461 A.D., he had established monasteries, churches and schools. Many legends grew up around him. For example, it is said that he drove the snakes out of Ireland and used the shamrock to explain the Trinity. Ireland came to celebrate his day with reli-

gious services and feasts.

Today, it is more of a secular day celebrating all things Irish. So, wear your green, cook the traditional corned beef and cabbage and have a green beer.

The Sherburne United Church of Christ is a small church but mighty in its deeds. Better known as "the little white church," it provides a food shelf and is open to anyone who may need a little help. Please call Nan Salamon, 802-422-9244 or Ron Willis 802-422-3843. Members of the community can donate items and there is always a need to replenish. As you shop for yourself, pick up a little something for the food shelf. Right now they need the following: peanut butter, jelly, ketchup, paper towels, tissue, napkins, dish soap, clothes soap, pudding, cookies, brownie mix, granola bars and any kind of other snacks. You may call Nan or myself 908-783-1050 for pickup or bring your items to the senior lunch held every Wednesday at The Lookout, starting at 11:30 a.m.

Monday is Movie Day at the library. The show starts at 1 p.m. and popcorn is available.

Senior Scene → 37



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← **Meditation:**
from page 30

limp hair at the top of my bed. I was amazed my body stayed toasty in my down sleeping bag, under Hudson Bay woolen blankets.

Mom gave up heading north once the snow and ice arrived. "I'll return in the spring when it's warmer."

She didn't realize in Vermont, it's "mud season." So, sometimes just Dad and I drove up to ski. I was a novice, snowplowing and turning at a snail's pace, but Dad was patient. He taught me to parallel ski across slopes, but I still used the snowplow to turn and slow down.

One winter weekend, Dad and I drove to Killington to go skiing and stay at a friend's home. The snow was too deep and the temperature too cold to rough it in our basement shell. We skied all day with hot chocolate breaks to warm up by the roaring ski lodge fire. When we were

done, Dad wanted to check on how our basement was holding up. He parked the car on Roaring Brook Road's edge, then ascended our drive up Mt. Everest. In 6 feet of snow without snowshoes on, it was exhausting and very slow going. Once at the top, to open the door, he had to shovel away mounds of snow. I don't know all he did when he entered, but most likely, he checked systems and leaks. At last satisfied, he returned to the car.

Dad was gone quite a long time while I waited in our Country Squire. The heat had quickly dissipated and the cold fully took over. My leather ski boots and socks were damp. Ice was still caked on my pants. I sang songs and chewed on Fig Newtons but it didn't stop my teeth from chattering or my body from shivering. By the time Dad returned, my toes were

numb. At our friend's home, Dad and Ann Wallen ran cold water over my white toes. I didn't understand why they didn't use hot, but gradually they turned the temperature up. Cold or warm, my toes hurt a lot as they thawed out from frostbite. Since then, they have remained quite numb. I barely feel when my toenails are cut. But I take it as my badge of bravery for not complaining about that cold waiting. I wonder what my mother must have said when Dad revealed what had transpired...

In spite of each new "challenge of the week," we cheered when we crossed the Vermont state line and again, when we arrived in Killington (which we still do, to this day).

To be continued....

Marguerite Jill Dye is an artist and writer who divides her time between Killington and Bradenton, Florida.

← **Living the Dream:**
from page 31

snow friendly system.

Then I work my way down to the windows, first brushing then scraping. I like to do a vertical scrape on the windows, pushing the ice up and then doing the border as a circle. I'm not sure if there is one way to clean off a car, but this is mine. By the time I get to the front window, the defroster has kicked in and things seem to go a wee bit faster.

That is until you have to deal with the windshield wipers. I could probably write an entire chapter on how frustrating those can be to clean. No matter how little or much snow, you never seem to be able to get it all. Use the brush, use the scraper, then give up and use your hand. It never seems to work. I honestly want some kind of snow

vacuum to get in there and get every nook and cranny.

The snow on the front hood merely slides off, and you know you're in the home stretch. That is, unless it's a really windy night and you have to go and redo the side windows again. But that always means that tomorrow is going to be a pretty damn good day of skiing.

And so I don't mind cleaning off my car, once, twice or even three times a day. In fact, that's one of the best feelings ever. Because if you're cleaning snow off your car, there was snow on your skis. And nothing is more wonderful to a ski bum than having fresh snow.

Merisa Sherman is a long time Killington resident, local Realtor, KMS coach, Killington town Lister and member of the Development Review Board.



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Playa smiles: A husband and wife expand dental services for tourist and locals

Editor's note: Bruce Bouchard, former executive director of The Paramount Theatre, and his partner Maureen McKenna Padula have traveled from Rutland to the Riviera Maya for the past three years. This series covers adventures, food, and testimonials from Vermont to the tropics.

I sat with Ricardo Perez, DDS and orthodontist for beers at Manne's, a popular German Bier Haus in Playa. Perez is a tall, affable man, carrying a warm, ready smile. He is a beer enthusiast and is an excellent dentist/orthodontist. Along with his wife, Cecilia, they established a practice in Playa in 2008. (Full disclosure: They are our dentists.)



Tales:
Riviera Maya
By Bruce Bouchard

Ricardo was raised by a family of dentists in Guadalajara. His father came from a large family of eight siblings. His father's oldest brother, Viviano, was also a "dentist" — self-taught, mind you — who specialized in pulling teeth for all comers free of charge in one of the central squares in little towns in Guadalajara. He was known for his *charro* (one of those giant Mexican hats) and an outsized personality. One day per week, his uncle pulled teeth (that was dentistry in the old days, according to Ricardo). "Pull it, cauterize it and you are on your way," he explained. "Uncle Viviano was very good at it...and became 'the legendary tooth puller'."

However, his uncle was also a compulsive gambler, and a serial womanizer. His love of women must have

impaired his judgment, as one of his mistresses was the mistress of a powerful Guadalajara "politico," and on one of the "pulling" days in the square he was gunned down and "killed" (per Ricardo). Uncle Viv had pulled his last tooth. Following his tragic end, the entire Perez family had to flee to Monterrey, as "the politico" was threatening violence against the whole family. Ricardo's father (also a self-taught dentist) met and fell in love with his wife soon thereafter, but she had one iron-clad condition: he had to receive a formal education in dentistry. He readily complied.

Ricardo had began working at his father's Monterrey practice — observing and helping in any way possible; and, thus, was born his love of dentistry. He learned much from his father and had a good head start on his formal education. He got his dental degree in the University of Nuevo Leon, an orthodontist degree at the Latin American University in Mexico City. During his dental studies he met his wife, Cecilia Mendoza from Bolivia, and immediately labeled her as "very sweet" (I concur, from times of her working in my mouth). He told me that he exercised great caution with Cici, and two years later they were wed.

During his time working in a practice in Monterrey, he became part of an incubator and launched a study to analyze the growth of dentistry in three specific locations: Monterrey, Puerto Vallarta and Playa, for both locals and the burgeoning dental tourism industry. Playa was the choice they made and they arrived in 2008.

I asked Ricardo about the growth in dental tourism and how that breaks down in percentage of patients.

"I am most enthusiastic about this new phenomenon and its rapid growth over time: 60% of my practice is dental tourism and 40% is local," he said. "One of my concerns was to maintain a high level of care so I founded the Medical Tourism Association and helped to create a code of ethics to monitor this new line of service."

"What do you believe in, Ricardo, what is your mission?" I asked.

"Three main things: We seek to offer the best options for care, at the best price and in a manner most convenient to the client."

Maureen and I both needed some work done: bridge work and crowns. These procedures were perfectly done (best dentistry ever); and this work was delivered at 30%-35% of the cost of the same work in the U.S.

"How do you give back to the community?" I asked.

"In addition to maintaining a high standard of service to the dental tourism patients, I founded the Orthodontic Association of the state," he continued. "Through Rotary we established my newest commitment, a service to correct cranial facial deformities in children of poverty. This is an invaluable service done in Playa del Carmen with doctors from Merida, Chetumal and Monterrey," he said showing me before and after pictures of this breathtaking surgical work. "What could be better than to give a child an opportunity to rise, to feel good about what they see in the mirror, to no longer be 'different,'" he said.

Ricardo Perez is a man of distinction, class and compassion; a true gentleman.

For more information visit: playasmiles1.com.



Dentist Ricardo Perez founded the Orthodontic Association of the state and a Rotary service to correct cranial facial deformities in children of poverty as seen in the three photos above.

Courtesy Bruce Bouchard
Dentist Ricardo Perez (left), a dentist and orthodontist, established a practice in Playa in 2008, expanding dental services for locals and tourists. He is pictured above with Bruce Bouchard (right).

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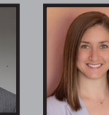
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Senior Scene:

from page 31

The Bookends Book Club will meet on Wednesday, March 27 at 1 p.m. The selection for this month is “The Cloisters” by Katy Hayes. A mystery that spirals out of control when one questions if tarot cards can not only teach about the past but also about the present. After the discussion, a special presentation will be given on tarot.

A group of volunteers meets on most Tuesdays to help prepare the library for it’s summer programming. Last year featured a very long snake and an alligator. So be prepared as we never know what the projects will be. All are welcome and we start working around 1 p.m. and finish up by 3 p.m.

The Sherburne Killington Historians will meet on March 16 from 10-11 a.m. The “Thoughts on Aging” group meets the third Wednesday of each month. On March 20 we will have an open discussion on anything that has caused alarms to go off or at the opposite end of the spectrum, we can discuss all the good things that are happening to us. We don’t solve any problems but we sure get a lot of things out in the open. All are welcome and there is only one rule: What’s said in the discussion doesn’t leave the room and all opinions are valued.

On March 19 there will be a paint and sip session. Please call the library and reserve a spot.

The Spa at The Woods is now offering a senior fitness class for those over 65 that will utilize body weight exercises, balance exercises and resistance exercises. This class will run for six weeks as a drop in class at \$5 per session. It began March 1. The weather will

soon change and hopefully we’ll all be outside and more active. This is a good way to get us in shape so we’ll be ready. Balance or lack of balance is one of the leading causes of senior falls. As I have reminded you many times: knowing how to get up from a fall is equally important. Hope to see you there!

Staying healthy is probably the most important thing we can do. We are constantly exposed to bacteria, viruses and pathogens that could potentially make us sick. While it’s not something we consciously think about, our immune system is always on guard, fighting off these invisible enemies. Composed of a multitude of cells, tissues and organs, this complex system identifies and neutralizes harmful invaders. Our diets play a crucial role so our first goal is to eat right. Every day we see articles about what to eat and more importantly what not to eat. Daily exercise is also important. Regular physical activity increases the circulation of immune cells, making them more efficient in hunting down pathogens. Whether it’s a walk or an intense workout, physical activity is an inexpensive way to ward off illness.

How well did you sleep last night? The value of sleep in immunity is immeasurable. During sleep our bodies go through a series of restorative processes. Prioritizing sleep is not merely an act of self-care. It’s an essential strategy for staying healthy. Constant stress can lead to the production of stress hormones like cortisol, which suppresses immune function. Try meditation, mindfulness and breathing exercises to reduce the stress in your life.

Getting vaccinations that your doctors recommends for certain diseases are a good tool to help the body fight specific pathogens. The environmental factor can’t be ignored. Pollution can lead to inflammation and weaken our immune systems. Air purifiers, houseplants and just opening windows for fresh air can improve our overall wellbeing. Proactive healthcare versus reactive healthcare should always be the case but in this day and age we all know it is not. That’s why we have to take on this responsibility ourselves. Pay attention and eat right, exercise, get enough sleep and manage stress. It will be a gift to ourselves!

I am sorry to share the news of Dorry Lusher’s death. She lived in Bermuda but spent many summers in Killington and made many friends here. She attended our senior lunch, was part of a bridge group, played a round of golf every once in a while and attended Bone Builders. We will miss her and her stories. I sent a note to her family on behalf of the seniors but if you would like to send your own please contact me for the address.

I have mentioned a little book called “Daily Sunshine” by Clare Josa. My latest reading in the book was titled “Ten Happiness Secrets That Children Would Love Us To Learn.” Children can be the best of teachers and they remember so much more than we do about how to feel happy. Here are 10 secrets to happiness that they would like us to know:

1. Ask for what you want. It’s ok to be honest about our needs and desire.

2. Say what you are thinking. Of course, use compassion, but there’s no point in lying.
3. Cry, if you want to. Let those emotions out. Then let go and move on.
4. Wear your wellies, if you want to. It’s ok to express who you really are through what you are wearing. And jumping in puddles is fun.
5. Don’t care what anyone else thinks. As long as your conscience lets you sleep at night.
6. Spend time with those you love. Prioritize time with loved ones over all other activities.
7. Tell silly jokes. Laughter is an essential element of a happy, healthy life.
8. Get creative. Doing things with your hands... making things gets you out of your thinking head and back into the present moment.
9. If at first you don’t succeed... keep tweaking what you’re doing until it works.
10. Go and pick a daisy, stopping to admire a sunset or marvel at the beauty of a little daisy can help us get things back in perspective.

Spring is just around the corner. Every day deserves a chance. Days turn into weeks, weeks turn into months and months turn into years. Let’s vow to make them the best that we can by reaching out to each other and always being grateful. Love who you can. Help where you can and give what you can.

Shepherd:

from page 23

Angeles and Galt Line Music in Nashville, where he and his go-to co-producer Marshall Altman and musicians [which included core members of Shepherd’s touring band Noah Hunt, who splits vocals with Shepherd, bassist Kevin McCormick and drummer Chris Layton] brought the songs to life playing together in the studio.

“That’s how we always do it, real musicians playing together in a room at the same time. That’s the way I’ve made records,” Shepherd said. “The creative process happens in the studio. We don’t walk in the studio with all of the parts predetermined. I do very basic acoustic demos of these songs when we write them. And then I allow for the creative process to happen when we’re in the studio. That’s the whole point.”

With “Dirt on My Diamonds, Vol. 1,” having been released in November, Shepherd and his seven-piece band [which includes a horn section] will spend much of 2024 on tour, playing songs from the new album and from his nine other studio albums.

“The goal, obviously, is to feature some songs from the new record,” Shepherd said. “There are [also] some standout songs that I believe the fans look forward to hearing every time they come to see us. Obviously, ‘Blue On Black’ [the hit single from Shepherd’s platinum-selling 1997 album “Trouble Is...”] is a song we play every time (as well as) staple songs I think people hope will be

in the set every time they come. So we’re trying to include as many of those as possible. But we’ll also bring some material into the show that we haven’t played at least in the past couple of years, some things I think people will

be excited to see back in the set lists. So we’re going to be covering songs that go all the way back to the first album and a little bit of everything in between.”

In the months and years to come, fans can expect to see Shepherd add several more albums to his catalog. First up will be the companion “Dirt on My

Diamonds, Vol. 2,” which could be released as early as this fall.

The guitarist said the second volume will complement the music that was released on “Dirt on My Diamonds, Vol. 1.”

“It’s different, but there is a common thread,” he said. “It was all kind of done around the same time, but it’s different. The eight tracks on ‘Vol. 2’ are not just like different versions of songs from ‘Vol. 1’...Every song on ‘Vol. 2’ brings something different to the table. Like if you put these two together as one big, long record, every song will contribute something different.”

There’s also a newly recorded version of “Ledbetter Heights” in the works for that album’s 30-year anniversary in 2025. It follows in a somewhat similar vein to the re-recorded version of “Trouble Is...,” which was released

in December 2022 to mark the 25th anniversary of that career-making album.

“We took a little more liberty with the recording of this one,” Shepherd said of the in-progress new version of “Ledbetter Heights.” “We want people to recognize the record. We don’t want to alienate the [fans of] the original album. But Noah [Hunt] is going to be singing and I might sing a couple of the songs on it as well. But the original singer on ‘Ledbetter Heights’ was Corey Sterling. He hasn’t been with my band since we did that record. So the nature of the new version is going to be different from the get-go because it’s going to have different voices on it. So knowing we can’t do an exact replica of the original, it kind of opens up more opportunities for us to experiment a little more with it.”

Finally, there’s an album of cover songs that was recorded with producer Jerry Harrison [formerly of Talking Heads] and is planned for release toward the end of 2026. Shepherd said fans shouldn’t expect an album made up of his versions of songs by blues heroes like B.B. King or blues-rock peers like Jonny Lang.

“Obviously, they are all songs that we dig and we appreciate. They’re by artists that I respect,” Shepherd said. “But I like doing things outside the box, too. I think it’s a compelling idea that you would see this list of songs by these artists and you would just go ‘Hey, I never would have thought I’d hear Kenny Wayne Shepherd do that song.’ In the moment it might be a little head scratcher, but when you hear it you go ‘Wow, that actually sounds great. It makes total sense.’”

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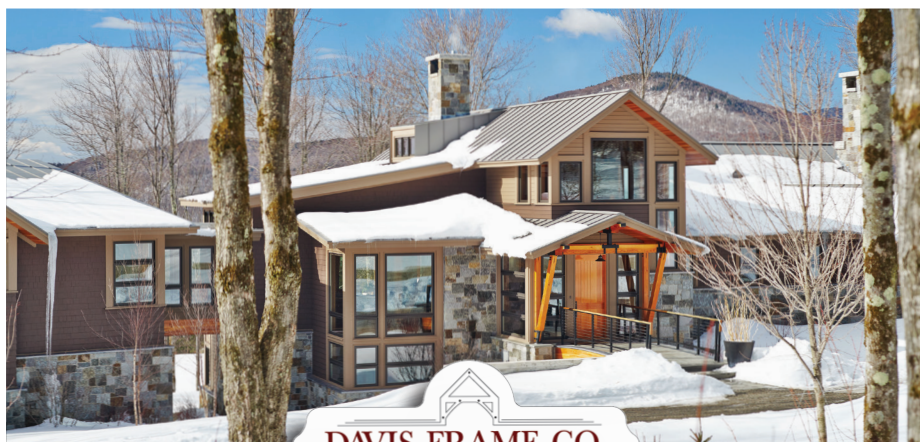
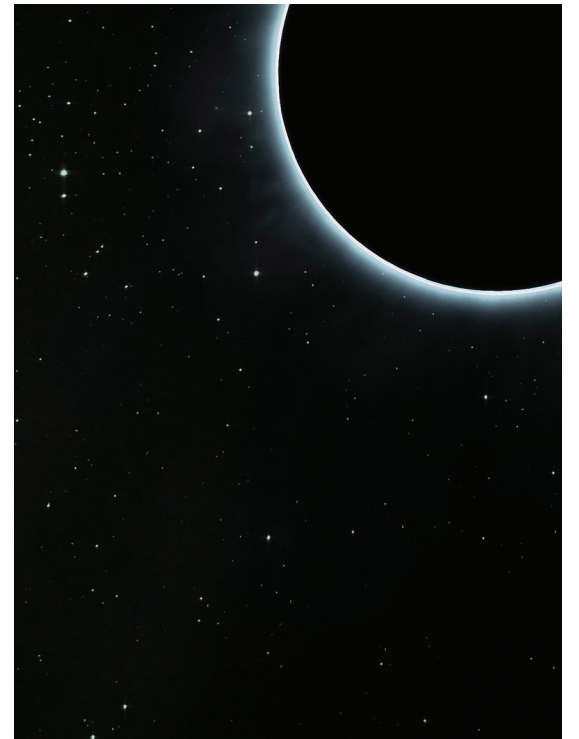
A conversation in the shadows of the sun in Cavendish

Tuesday, March 19 at 6 p.m.—CAVENDISH—The Cavendish Community and Conservation Association's (CCCA) Walk and Talk Committee will host a talk by noted astronomer Claudio Veliz about the upcoming total solar eclipse on Tuesday at the Cavendish Fletcher Community Library, 573 Main Street in Proctorsville. Safe, solar-filtered glasses will be handed out to attendees, complete with instructions on their use during the eclipse.

For more information, visit cavendishcommunityconservation@gmail.com.

Solar eclipse

A solar eclipse occurs when the moon passes between the Earth and the sun, obscuring all or part of the sun's light from the viewpoint of Earth. This happens only during the new moon phase when the sun and moon are aligned. Depending on the alignment and the observer's location, a solar eclipse can be total, partial, or annular. Total solar eclipses occur when the moon completely covers the sun, while partial eclipses occur when only a portion of the sun is obscured. An annular eclipse happens when the moon covers the center of the sun, leaving a ring of sunlight visible around the moon's edges.



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A collection of uniquely designed 4-bedroom townhomes within a private, gated community setting.

- New construction
- 3000+ square feet
- 4-bedroom/4-bathroom
- Direct ski in/ski out access
- Bear Mtn. ski trail views
- 2-car heated garage
- Landscaped grounds

Please call for details regarding the reservation process.

ABOUT US

We're different. We sell real estate exclusively in Killington, the town we love and call home. We specialize in listing and selling Killington condominiums, townhomes, single-family homes, multi-family homes and land. Work with us and you'll experience unrivaled customer service and top-notch local knowledge!

Heidi Bomengen 802.342.0355 **Kaitlyn Hummel** 802.353.6665 **Liz Sailer** 802.353.5555



TRADE CRAFT TIME FOR AIR TIME.



The Beast's Youth Mountain Bike Camps are for riders ages 7-17 of all ability levels who want to improve their skills, gain confidence and have the time of their lives in the fresh mountain air. Explore 30+ miles of lift accessed trails with the help of our skilled coaches and make this a summer you won't forget. Book your session before they fill up!

Scan code or visit killington.com/bikepark to learn more.

